

The Talking Classroom

Developing Oral Language Skills within the Classroom

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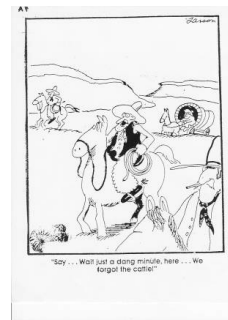
Big Ideas

- ❑ Create meaningful opportunities for talking in the classroom.
- ❑ Reinforce active listening skills
- ❑ Learn engaging activities that emphasize listening, models of good language, authentic conversation and sentence elaboration.

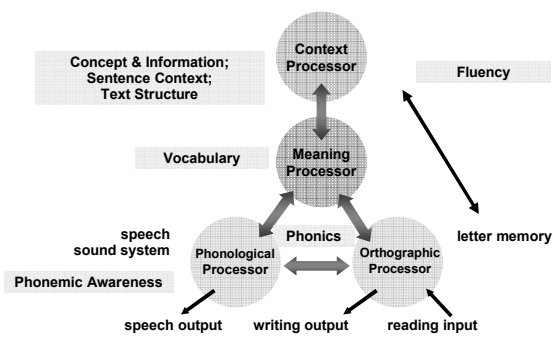
Disclaimer:
We may not have time for all the slides



An Important Missing Link in the Chain of Reading Comprehension



Four Part Processing System



The Four Part Processor

- Activities work best when they are engaging and require reflection on language and thinking
- Talking Classroom activities emphasize the meaning and context processors.
- However, listening and repeating models of good language engage the phonological processor as well.
- Reinforcing oral language with opportunities to write deepens language learning.

Early Predictors

- ⇒ “The most important aspect to evaluate in child care settings for very young children is the amount of talk actually going on, moment by moment, between children and their caregivers.”

*Betty Hart and Todd Risley
Meaningful Differences*

- ⇒ We can use this as a basis to begin thinking about the importance of conversation in the classroom for school-age children.

The Situational Model

- ⇒ “Cognitive scientists agree that reading comprehension requires prior “domain-specific” knowledge about the things that a text refers to, and that understanding the text consists of integrating this prior knowledge with the words in order to form a “situation model.”*
- ⇒ Talking can facilitate the development of a situation model. (mental model).



*E.D. Hirsch, The Knowledge Deficit – on the work of Walter Kintsch

Balancing Knowledge and Reading Skills

- ⇒ How much do you know about baseball???
- ⇒ Students who were good decoders but knew very little about baseball did not comprehend as much as their peers who were weaker decoders but had good domain specific knowledge about the game.
- ⇒ But.....both are important!

*W.Schneider and J. Korkel, Contemporary Educational Psychology, 14, (1989)

Language and Learning

- ⇒ Language is a tool for thinking 
- ⇒ Language is a reflection of thinking 



- ⇒ If we want our students to think better we must help them learn more so they have more to think about.

Restricted Talk vs. Elaborated Talk

- ⇒ Home Talk = brief, unelaborated, assumes shared situational background knowledge, used more in homes with less education.
 - Parent wants a child to move over
 - “Move, Jimmy.”
- ⇒ School Talk = elaborated code, used more in homes with higher levels of education, increased use of explicit content knowledge and less dependent on shared situational knowledge.
 - “Jimmy, will you please move over so your sister can see the television better.”

Research: Recorded Vocabulary Size

Professional Family

Parent : 2176 Child: 1116

Working Class Family

Parent : 1498 Child: 749

Welfare Family

Parent: 976 Child: 526

Hart and Risley, 1995
Meaning Differences



When Does Listening to Language Begin?



Avery listens at two months old!



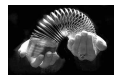
How many of your students listen as attentively as Avery?

Making the Connection

Connecting oral language and printed language is a critical skill for learning to read.



Speech to Print



- ➔ **Some:** make the connection automatically through rich and frequent exposure to oral language.
- ➔ **Most:** benefit from explicit instruction in that essential relationship
- ➔ **Few:** will not develop the understanding unless they have explicit, direct instruction plus many opportunities for repetition in order to become proficient readers.

Oral Language is the Heart of Literacy Instruction

Who: The classroom teacher

When: All day – Every Day

How:

- * Focus on activities that develop speaking, listening and conversational skills.
- * Create opportunities for purposeful talk
- * Model the use of rich and interesting language



Engagement and Motivation

Language learning requires:

- ❖ Attention
- ❖ Listening
- ❖ Motivation
- ❖ Making connections
- ❖ Opportunities for practice

Television and Language

- ➔ The more television watching a toddler did before the age of 3, the lower their scores on later tests of reading achievement.

» Zimmerman and Christakis, 2005

- ➔ TV talk is not the slow, expressive talk of parents as they interact with their infant.



Second Language Learners Low Language Students

Some Helpful Strategies:

- Oral Language development throughout the instructional day
- Increased modeling, guided feedback and frequent, distributed, paired practice
- Seat students close to you for increased opportunities for feedback.

Second Language Learners Low Language Students

- Preview whole group lesson in small-group setting
- Positively reinforce all attempts at oral language
- Use of objects and pictures
- Increased “wait time”
- Emphasis on multi-sensory and engaging oral language activities

Second Language Learners Low Language Students

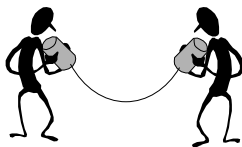
- Music and rhythmic patterns increase engagement and learning
- Use clear, short sentences, increasing complexity as language skills increase
- Support language development with activities that structure sentence formation (sentence stems)
- Texts used that are simple and culturally sensitive

Tune in to Language



Activity: The 30 Second Conversation

Make time for
authentic conversation



Activity: The 30 Second Conversation


- Choose students who have weak oral language skills.
- Take 30 seconds each day to engage them in authentic conversation.
- Notice changes in their responsiveness.



Activity:
The 30 Second Conversation

Let's Try It:


- Walk around the room and introduce yourself to someone you do not already know.
- Have a 30 second conversation with each partner speaking and responding in an authentic conversation.
- We will repeat this 3 times.



Activity:
Random Words of Kindness

Random Words of Kindness


- Affirmations, Affirmations!!!
- Teacher to Student Affirmations
- Student to Student Affirmations
- Affirmation Chains
- Note paper, sticky notes
- Reinforce and reward kindness



Activity:
Random Words of Kindness

Let's Try It:


- Brainstorm affirmative words in table groups
- Use chart paper and record affirmative words that enhance welcoming, connection, authentic praise, I messages etc.
- Report and share words with entire class
- Word lists can create a resource list for all class members if they choose to record the ones they like as they are read to the class.



Activity:
Recipe for a 600 Book Kid


**Recipe for a
600 Book Kid**

Based on the work of Steven Stahl




Activity:
Recipe for a 600 Book Kid

- Cooking Time: One Year
- Ingredients for a 600 book kid:
 1. **One Teacher**
 2. **One Class**
 3. **Good Books**
- Method:
 - Read 3 books a day, every day and you will wash your children in words and create a 600 book kid!



Activity:
Recipe for a 600 Book Kid


- Do it again in first grade
- By the middle of the year you will have created a 1000 book kid!
- Notice, as they understand and engage in oral language more easily.



**Activity:
Buddy Talk**


- Making connections to what is already known links new learning to old and deepens new learning.
- Students take new learning (words, concepts etc.) and each student shares a personal connection with their neighbor.
- Emphasizes 100% engagement in oral language response.

**Activity:
Buddy Talk**




Work with a partner

- Find a talking partner who you haven't met yet.
- Take time for each partner to share a personal connection to the word rewarding.
- Move on to a new partner and share with that person what your first partner found was rewarding.





Speaking from the Heart

- The heart becomes a touchstone for language
- Students hold a heart when they are speaking
- Students pass the heart to their partners when they are done speaking.
- The heart passes back and forth during the conversation
- Structure this conversation around theme or vocabulary study.





**The Talking Classroom
Activities:
Making Better Sentences**





Flyswatter Sentences

- Use content specific pictures to stimulate sentence formation....
- Put pictures in a row and ask students to swat the picture of...."children talking"
- Ask the student who swats it to create their own sentence about the picture - 2 points.
- If the student on the other team can also make a sentence they get 1 point.





**Flyswatter Sentences:
Basic Vocabulary**



 **Flyswatter Sentences:
Feelings - primary**



 **Flyswatter Sentences:
Feelings - secondary**




 **Flyswatter Sentences:
Content Information**



**Activity:
Fill in the blank!!**


A koosh ball game that reinforces the ability to fill in the blank within a word!


- She wore a _____ wig.
- At the end of the concert, they sang the _____ song.



**Activity:
Clothesline Sentences**

- Students build sentences and place each word on a card or on a paper shaped like a piece of clothing. These are placed on a clothesline with a clothes pin.
- Students can expand sentences and add more clothes to the clothesline
- Students read various clothesline sentences and copy their own on a piece of paper.




**Activity:
Magnetic Sentences** 

This activity encourages longer sentence formation as students want the fun of marking and sweeping up more words with their magnetic wand:

- Students are motivated to make sentences grow as they place markers in word boxes to represent the words in a sentence.
- In the second row of boxes students write the words and say the sentence.
- Students repeat the sentence fluently as they collect the "word markers" with their magnetic wand.

Activity:
Magnetic Sentences

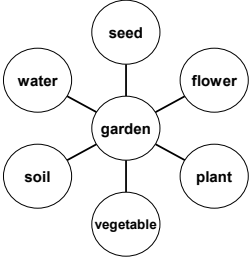



The	little	puppy	ran	very	fast.		
The	colonists	struggled	hard	to	survive.		

Activity:
Word Web Sentences


Give each student a copy of the graphic organizer.

Have students **touch** the words they use as they create their sentences.

I can plant flowers and vegetables in my garden.

Building Vocabulary and Background Knowledge





**The Wisdom of Words:
Learning from Proverbs**

Proverbs are popular sayings which contain advice or state a culturally accepted truth.

- ❖ As students work with others to work out the meanings of the proverbs they are studying, they share experiences and values as they think, listen, speak and ultimately write.

What is the Proverb?

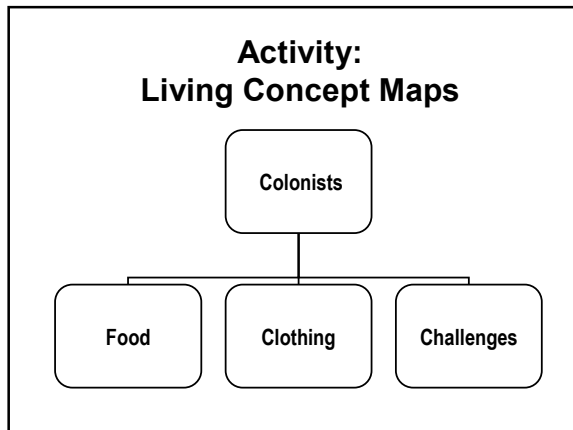
Look before you leap. All that glitters is not gold.

Activity:
The Wisdom of Words


Can you think of some proverbs?
How would you act them out or draw them?
Here are some examples:

- Don't judge a book by its cover
- Better late, than never
- He who hesitates is lost
- Look before you leap




- Activity:
Living Concept Maps**
- Write a word that relates to one of the sub-category on a sticky note or index card.
 - Take your card and stand on that part of the concept map.
 - Use your word orally in a sentence.
 - Connect two or more words in a sentence.
 - Let's create a paragraph from our concept map
 - We could then write our paragraph, or a 5 paragraph essay.



- Activity: Heroic Talk**
- Read and study about a hero as a group
 - Individual and small group study about a selected hero.
 - Students prepare and share their knowledge with the class (report, skit etc.)
 - Students fill out a hero worksheet about someone else's
 - Students share information orally using the worksheet to help structure their oral sharing.
- 



- The Home-School Connection**
- Partner for success
 - Create a positive climate for parents
 - Positive teacher expectations
 - Educate parents about the oral language-school achievement connection
 - Affirmations for parents
 - Call early, call often, call with compliments for children and parents whenever possible.
- 

Read me a Story

- Parents or family members are given tape recorders and books to record stories for children to listen to when they are not able to read to them in person.



Table Talk Topics

- Students are given topics to discuss at home and share information about their discussions at school – encouraging oral language and family time.



Car Talk

- Ideas for parents, siblings and students to talk about in the car
- ❖ Friends
- ❖ Feelings
- ❖ Something learned
- ❖ Something funny that happened



Mingle, Mingle

- Share a new concept or activity you learned during this training that you can bring to your classroom.
- Share your most significant learning today.

Let us Begin....

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. ~ Anne Frank

