

GCSE English Language and English Literature

Hub network meeting

Presentation slides booklet

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GCSE English: Hub schools network meeting

Autumn 2019



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This meeting will be recorded

Exam boards have an Ofqual requirement to record event audio.

Recordings are kept for the lifetime of the specification and not shared as an accompaniment to session resources.

The recording will begin now.

Focus of the session

Empowering students through vocabulary: Part 1 – Reading

- What is the 'word gap' and why does it matter?
- What is in the school's power? Whole-school approaches to tackling the issue
- Assessment of reading – a picture of performance so far
- Reading with confidence – Shakespeare and 19th century texts

Opening discussion

Have a look at the facts and figures in your booklet on page 4.

- Do any surprise you?
- Which ones resonate with you most?
- Do you agree/disagree?

What is the 'word gap'?

'The importance of vocabulary may be the elephant in the room.'

Geoff Barton, OUP, 2018

What is the 'word gap'?

'The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.'

Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1921

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What is the 'word gap'?

- Typically used to refer to children entering primary school with a vocabulary far below age-related expectations
- Presents in children throughout education into adulthood
- Some groups more likely to have a limited vocabulary (SEND, EAL) but affects all learners

'Regardless of age, it can be boiled down to if there are words in a task that you do not comprehend you will struggle to complete that task.'

Lionel Bolton, OUP, 2018

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Why does it matter?

Discussion

- Why is this emerging as an issue now? Or has it always been an issue?
- Has the word gap increased?
- Left unchecked, what is the impact on young people and your teaching?

Root cause

- Research suggests that the rate at which children develop language is determined by the amount of input they receive from their parents and primary caregivers.
- It's both the **quantity** of words a child comes into contact with on a daily basis and the **quality** of those interactions that matters.
- Language-rich environment.

The impact of having a limited vocabulary

- Weaker comprehension skills
- Slower than expected progress in reading and writing
- Difficulty reading exam questions and underperformance in national tests
- Difficulty following what's going on in class
- Difficulty working independently
- Impact on mental health and confidence – teachers surveyed reported low self-esteem, negative impact on behaviour, motivation, difficulty securing work after leaving school

Closing the word gap: a whole-school matter?

Only 29% of secondary school teachers who took part in the survey said they have a school-wide programme in place. Does your school have a whole-school policy? How successfully has it been implemented? Is it tokenistic or has it meaningfully changed practice?

- Read the case study in your booklet (page 6). Share your thoughts and reflections.
- 75% cited insufficient time to dedicate to the teaching of vocabulary as a main challenge. What are the barriers?

Hub network meetings 2019/2020

Empowering students through vocabulary

Autumn: Part 1 – Reading

Spring: Part 2 – Writing

Summer: Part 3 – Spoken language

Focus on reading: Can you read this?

I cnduo't bvlleiee taht I culod aulacly uesdtannrd waht I was rdnaieg. Unisg the icndeblire pweor of the hman mnid, aocdcnig to rseecriah at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it dseno't mttar in waht oderr the lterets in a wrod are, the olny irpoamtnt tihng is taht the frsit and lsat ltteer be in the rhgit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it whoutit a pboerlm. Tihs is bucseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey ltteer by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Aaznmig, huh? Yaeh and I awlyas tghhuot sleinpg was ipmorantt!

Cambridge University

Pause for discussion

Why are reading and vocabulary so intrinsically linked?

See page 7 of your booklet for some ideas to support your discussion.

Remember this?

Chinua Achebe |

In the greyness
and drizzle of one
day by
of
skipping high on
bones of a dead tree
close to his
to hers. Yesterday they
the eyes of a swollen
in a
and ate the
stayed in its
their
keeping the
of cold
eyes...

Strange
Indeed how love
the
going home for
the day with
clinging
to his hairy

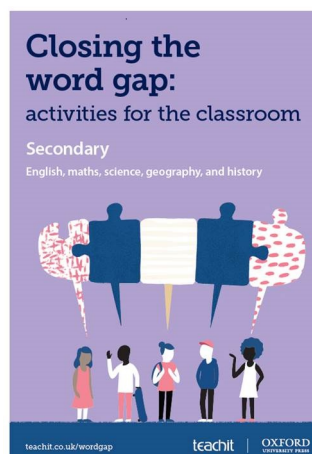
postrills will stop
at the
and pick up a chocolate
for his
waiting at home for Daddy's
return...

Praise
if you will
that grants even an ogre
a tiny
of a cruel
heart or else
for in the very germ
of that love is
the
of evil

Strategies for learning new words: Have a go!

In *Closing the word gap: activities for the classroom*, Teachit suggest various strategies to help students learn new words.

In your booklets on pages 10–11 we have provided a sample of the suggested strategies for you to try.



Assessment of reading

How do we assess reading?

In the booklet on pages 12–18 you will find different question styles designed to assess particular reading skills as defined by the Assessment Objectives (AOs).

Consider the progression from Entry Level to GCSE and how the level of demand is reflected in the construction of the question.

(Note we are not covering subject terminology – this was covered in the [Summer 2018 Hub](#).)

A note on *Step Up to English*

High and medium frequency words list

This resource is designed to support the teaching and marking application of AO6 on the writing tasks for *Step Up to English*.

These lists are editable so you can make them relevant for your students.

You can also use them diagnostically to test a student's ability to recognise and spell each word.

National picture of performance

In your booklet on page 19-20 you'll find comments from reports on the exams indicating themes and trends in students' ability to engage with and understand vocabulary in the exams.

Read each comment and discuss on your tables whether these trends/themes are indicative of your students. What strategies have you put in place to tackle these pitfalls in performance?

Reading confidence

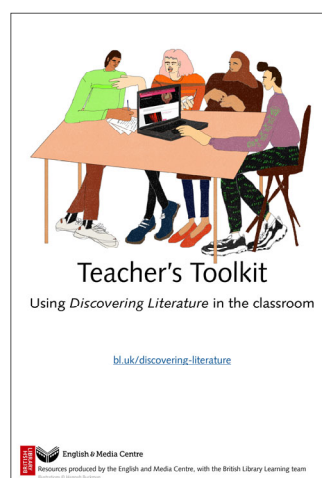
‘All of us who work in education are acutely aware of the importance of words, the power they contain and the worlds they unlock... our duty is to ensure that all students are equipped with all the words they need for a lifetime of opportunities.’

Bolton, OUP, 2018

British Library Teacher’s Toolkits

There are two free Teacher’s Toolkits which show you how to make the most of the wealth of critical and contextual materials on *Discovering Literature*.

One is specifically for *Macbeth*. The other is full of tips for teaching any text on the site.



What can be achieved if you're confident?



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Risk or opportunity?

'Vocabulary is an unconstrained skill: we learn the meanings of new words throughout our lifetime, and an important source of new word learning is written text. This is because written texts are a much richer source of new words than spoken language; they have less common vocabulary than does every spoken language, so they afford more opportunities for learning new vocabulary.'

Cain and Oakhill, OUP, 2018

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Discussion point

- How do you introduce new texts to your classroom?
- How do you talk and behave when introducing texts that you or the students perceive to be challenging?
- What's the tone or atmosphere in the classroom?

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How can we make students feel comfortable?

‘Whether that is pronouncing a word that they’ve learned from a book incorrectly, or using the wrong word when writing. This can lead children to be fearful about taking a chance on a more adventurous word choice. Children need to be encouraged to play with language and sometimes get it wrong.’

Clements, OUP, 2018

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Teachit – modelling a growth mindset

How do you instil confidence when reading new texts, such as Shakespeare?

How do you sustain a positive learning environment when tackling potentially unfamiliar vocabulary?

Do you have any tips, techniques or lesson ideas to share?

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The Globe – SWOT analysis

1. The teacher could set up a gallery around the classroom showing quotations about Shakespearean language.
2. Each student should have a few sticky notes in two different colours – one for positive and one for difficulties.
3. Support the class in collating these into a simple table of two columns or in a slightly more advanced SWOT analysis table (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats).
4. Summarise key findings and stress that the approaches the class will be using are active and fun.

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The Globe – Script Machine

LANGUAGE

ACT 1. SCENE 3 ACT 2. SCENE 2 **ACT 3. SCENE 4** ACT 4. SCENE 3

TOOLS -- SELECT A LITERARY TERM -- Show/Hide Directors Edit

FIRST MURDERER: Most royal sir, Fleance is 'scaped.

MACBETH: Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect, [20]
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

FIRST MURDERER: Ay, my out of control he bides, [25]
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH: Thanks for that:
There the grown serpent lies: the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom feed,
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [30]

Exit MURDERER.

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The Globe – tracing reoccurring motifs

Students should work in groups of three, with each group assigned one of the following motifs. Each student should scour a section of Act 2 Scene 2 looking for evidence of where that particular motif is used:

- night and day
- the skies
- religious language
- danger and death
- nature
- change.

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The ERA licence

The Education Recording Agency (ERA) website contains a whole host of resources to showcase how TV and radio broadcasts can be used in your teaching.

In England, all schools are covered centrally by the Department for Education. Independent schools are licenced individually.

Go to era.org.uk to find out more.

Let's take a look: shakespeare.ch.bbc.co.uk/

19th century texts – studied and unseen

How do you prepare students for reading unseen 19th century texts?

How do you use reading of the 19th century novel as an opportunity to develop confidence in reading the unseen 19th century language source?

Creating meaning by context

‘Children who are better at inferring the meanings of new words from context will acquire the meanings of more words, through reading; and better vocabulary knowledge will support better reading comprehension...

Children should be encouraged to try to work out the meaning of unknown words in a text by using the context to develop and test hypotheses about a word’s meaning. A rich discussion about different children’s hypotheses and justifications for these word meaning could ensue.’

Cain and Oakhill, OUP, 2018

Task: *The Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth*

Page 27 of your booklet includes three entries from Dorothy Wordsworth’s journals.

Complete the tasks at the bottom of the page and discuss your ideas.

Paper 1, Paper 2 and 19th century fiction

Download free source packs from the 'Teach' page on the GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature areas of the website.



Contexts of sources in question papers

GCSE English Language (June 2019)

The Crossing

An extract from James Cracknell and Ben Fogle's autobiographical account of crossing the Atlantic, published in 2006

Idle Days in Patagonia

An extract from W H Hudson's travel writing, published in 1893

See page 28 of your booklet for the full statements.

Focus of questions - unseen poetry

GCSE English Literature (June 2019)

Question 21.1

In 'The Richest Poor Man in the Valley', how does the poet present ideas about living a happy and contented life?

Question 21.2

In both 'Nobody' and 'The Richest Poor Man in the Valley' the poets describe ideas about how to live your life. What are the similarities and/or differences between the methods the poets use to present these ideas?

Discussion point

- How do your students use contextual information?
- How do you encourage students to use the source context and question scaffolds to instil confidence when reading unknown or unfamiliar vocabulary during their exams?
- Do you teach this implicitly or explicitly? What are the ideas, tips or techniques you use?

Context of sources – GCSE English Language

***Idle Days in Patagonia* – An extract from W H Hudson’s travel writing, published in 1893**

In 1893, William Hudson travelled by sea to Patagonia, a remote area in South America, to study birds. In his book *Idle Days in Patagonia*, he describes the journey to get there.

See page 29 in booklet.



Make vocabulary fun

- What’s your favourite word and why?



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- What simple and quick activities do you use to make vocabulary fun and accessible on a day-to-day basis?

Resources

The electronic materials from this event will be made available to you in the customer portal of our online booking system.

Once we receive notification that you have attended the course, you will be sent a certificate of attendance by email. When you receive your certificate, please log in to your account and the materials will be available from the 'my resources' tab on the welcome screen.

How did we do?

Please take a moment to complete a brief evaluation form for today's event. Your feedback is very important to us as it helps us improve and plan future training.

You should have been emailed the evaluation form. Please check your inbox (possibly your junk mail folder). If you haven't received it please give your trainer your name, centre name/number and email address so that we can look into it for you.

Thank you.

Get in touch

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Thank you

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