



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Headteacher
Mrs F Gill B.Ed



2 Beaumont Road, St Judes, Plymouth, PL4 9BE Tel: 01752 225420 Fax: 01752 252293
E. Mail: holy.cross.rc.primary.school@plymouth.gov.uk Web site: www.holycross.plymouth.sch.uk

Dear Parents/Carers

Wednesday 7th September 2022

Oracy at Holy Cross

What is Oracy?

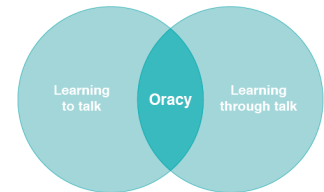
Oracy is the ability to communicate effectively by articulating ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language. Our aim is to overcome communication barriers and enable children to be confident and effective communicators.

We want every child at Holy Cross School to find their voice and to be proud of it.

At the heart of good oracy is the dialogic classroom: a classroom rich in talk, in which questions are planned, peer conversations are modelled and scaffolded and the teacher uses talk skilfully to develop thinking. There are a range of opportunities for children to develop confidence in talk and to learn how to analyse and discuss effective communication skills. Oracy develops children's confidence, fluency and readiness to learn. A high-quality oracy education empowers children, regardless of their background, to find their voice for success in school and in later life.

There are two core elements to oracy:

1. Learning through talk – quality of talk in the classroom
2. Learning to talk – explicit teaching of skills



The four key strands of the oracy framework are:

- **Physical aspects** – how we use our voice and body to communicate;
- **Linguistic aspects** – how we structure what we say and choose appropriate vocabulary;
- **Cognitive aspects** – staying focused whilst speaking and when listening to others, asking appropriate questions and explaining opinions using reasons;
- **Social & emotional aspects** – working with others, listening and responding, increasing confidence.

Sentence stems

Our children are encouraged to speak in full, coherent sentences when sharing their ideas and using spoken language. We have created a bank of differentiated sentence stems which our learners have access to in their classrooms and are carefully used in teacher's planning. Please feel free to use these with your children at home; a copy will be posted on Dojo.

Oracy at home

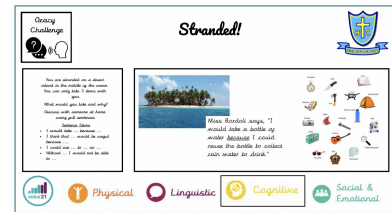
Opportunities for oracy do not end in the classroom. Talk at home is equally critical for children's healthy development. Time is precious at home and experts recommend squeezing in as many opportunities to enjoy talking with your child as possible, for example during mealtimes, journeys, playing together and so on. The following ideas may help you to enjoy even more oracy at home.

Read aloud to each other

Facilitating reading at home, each day wherever possible, is the most powerful way in which you can support your child with their learning. Set aside some time and find somewhere quiet without any distractions wherever possible. Even confident readers benefit from being read to regularly as it can expose them to a broader range of vocabulary.

Talking Tuesdays

Each week, we will be sharing an oracy challenge on Dojo for you to try at home for 'Talking Tuesday'. You could talk about it on the way home or around the dinner table.



Use a range of vocabulary

Our typical spoken language tends to reuse the same words: sad, happy, nice, nasty, cross, little, big, run. Young children soak up words incredibly quickly, much more quickly than we are able to, so don't hold back! As adults, we know thousands of words that we can share with children – each one of us is a walking thesaurus! Try to use a range of words and phrases with similar, but slightly different, shades of meaning (synonyms). Encourage your children to use these words for themselves. Build interesting sentences with your child, for example: "what a miserable, gloomy day! Would you like a crunchy apple for snack?"

Engaging in a conversation

Oracy skills are all about speaking and listening. What better way is there to do both of these than by having a conversation? Try asking your child more specific questions to avoid the typical 'I can't remember' answer. Ask them what games they played at lunchtime, what made you feel happy today? Who made you laugh today? What was your favourite part of the day? What are you most proud of yourself for? It can help to narrow the focus so children know where to start when sharing their thoughts.

Activities that use instructions

One way to improve your child's active listening skills is by giving them activities which require them to follow instructions. Baking is one such activity where, if instructions are not followed carefully, very different results can arise.

Playing games

Would you rather...? Eye spy, Simon Says, Story Time, The alphabet game Word association Board games, Get creative by inventing a family fairy tale! The first person starts with "Once upon a time..." and offers a complete sentence, then the second person adds to the story with their own sentence. This continues with each person until the story reaches a conclusion.

Songs and rhymes

Children enjoy songs and rhymes and they are extraordinarily effective for language development. By making 'mistakes' while singing, you are helping your children to develop their listening skills.

If you would like more information or have any questions at all, please do get in touch.

Thank you for your continued support,

The English Team

Miss McCalley, Miss Heaton and Mrs Shaw