

What is Oracy?

The term oracy was coined in the 1960s and most simply can be defined as the ability to express oneself fluently and grammatically in speech.

In history, this could be a fluent, logical and grammatically correct verbal discussion, debate, speech etc.

What does the research say?

Geoff Barton shows that the variety and breadth of language used in children's homes varies by socio-economic status, and that for the sake of social equality, teaching students to talk is of paramount importance.

Robin Alexander sees talk as essential to children's thinking and learning, and cites over 20 international studies as to how it positively impacts academic attainment.

Voice 21 argues that through high quality oracy education, students learn *through* talk and *to* talk. This is when they develop and deepen their subject knowledge which has been planned, modelled and scaffolded to enable them to learn the skills to talk effectively.

Further Reading

www.voice21.org

David Dideau 'It's talking time'

Using Oracy

There are a myriad of ways you can use oracy, including teaching talk for thinking, learning, communicating, engagement, teaching and assessing. The key way to embed oracy into your history classroom, is to think about teaching both exploratory and presentational talk as detailed by the strategies below:



Dialogic Discussion
Teaching students to explore historical ideas and arguments through scaffolded discussion. This works effectively in pair/groups in which students create ideas, evaluate different interpretations, support or challenge each other and negotiate conclusions.

HINT: Provide students with a 'talking frame' with key phrases and words you want them to include, or even set talking roles with question stems e.g. challenger, summariser etc.



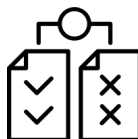
Say it Again
'Say it Again' is a simple strategy for teachers to use during questioning, assessment and in live modelling (to name a few). Simply, it moves us away from the shackles of Initial Response Evaluation (IRE) and encourages students to think more deeply, to develop their fluency in historical communication and consolidate their thinking and learning. This could include asking students to "Say it Again, including a quote from the Kerhsaw's Interpretation of Hitler" OR "Say it Again without saying 'like', 'init'" (a few from the Y11 dictionary).



Talk it Out
There is no doubt that history is highly driven by literacy and as research illustrates the positive impact oracy can have on written work, it should be an integral feature of classroom activities. Giving students the opportunity to 'Talk It Out [a plan, an exam question, an essay]' with their peers, aloud to themselves, or even recording it in selfie mode on their phones, allows them to pick out inaccuracies and structural issues. The verbalisation of their learning also helps consolidate knowledge, moving it from the working memory to the long term memory.

Do's and Don'ts

Useful tips on using Oracy in the classroom and importantly, things to avoid!



- Model excellent standards of oracy and communication
- Hold students to account for using poor oracy
- Create a culture that promotes excellent oracy
- Challenge the use of slang 'init' 'coz' 'erm'.
- Explicitly teach students to talk, like you would to read
- Don't include oracy as a quick win – it needs specifically and consistently teaching to students
- Don't rush – this takes time and is most effective when it is embedded, not an 'add on'
- Confuse oracy with 'speaking and listening' – this is one element of it

In the History Classroom

• No Pens Day

Have a day where student outcomes don't involve writing. Try historical expression through verbal continuums, debating, hot seating, group presentations etc. Practice for fluency.

• Verbal Planning

When planning an essay or exam Q, get students to verbally plan it collaboratively using talk stems and phrases, whilst developing metacognition.

• Talking Frames

Give students 4-5 compulsory phrases you want them to use in their discussion. This can develop their historical analysis and variety of language – plus you'll see them in their writing!

• Questioning and Feedback

Embed oracy into daily questioning and feedback, including student led feedback, allowing them to drive discussion, probe, question and listen to one another's views.

What are worked examples?

A worked example is a completed 'problem' that students can see and refer to

In history, the problem could be a completed task, paragraph or essay.

What does the research say?

Cognitive Load Theory tells us that one of the most effective ways to reduce cognitive load is to use worked examples.

Sweller has suggested that using worked examples through a '*step-by-step demonstration of how to perform a task or how to solve a problem*' is beneficial to supporting your working memory.

Rosenshine has emphasised using worked examples, teacher instruction and practice is effective in helping students grasp concepts and processes. For example source analysis and essay writing.

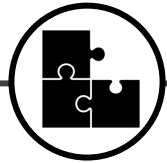
Worked examples allow you to highlight excellence to students

Further Reading

Rosenshine; Principles of Instruction
Sweller; Cognitive Load Theory
Runeckles: Making Every History Lesson Count

Using Worked Examples/

There are several ways you can use worked examples in the history classroom



Completion Examples

- Use a partially completed model, with students completing the 'missing' parts
- This allows you to focus on specific parts of the process, for example using specific knowledge, in an answer



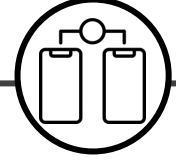
Live Modelling

- Script an answer in-front of the class, talking through each part
- Use either a visualiser or typing 'live' on your computer screen
- Insist in silence, pause to explain the process and encourage students to critique your model



Backwards Fading

- Also known as "*I, We, You*"
- When teaching a new skill, start with teacher led instruction and worked examples
- Then phase out support, by creating collaborative models and then students create their own independently.

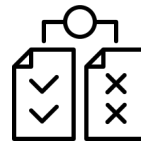


Problem Pairs

- Model answering a short answer to a question
- Then provide students with similar question (so they can't just copy your answer) that allows them to apply thinking
- This is perfect for shorter questions

Do's and Don'ts

To really maximise your use of worked examples, follow this guidance on do's and don'ts



- Pre plan your worked example, plan what to emphasise and question
- Use a student answer from previous years
- Explicitly talk through the process whilst modelling the task – narrate!
- As students become more expert, reduce your instruction but
- Don't just give students a 'model answer' for them to read themselves, deconstruct it together
- Don't just provide 'Grade 8/9' worked examples, deliberately share multiple models to compare
- Don't rush to getting them doing it independently
I, I, We, We, I, You, We, You

In the History Classroom

Below are some examples of how you could use worked examples within the history classroom

Source Utility

Completion examples allow you to focus on the key parts in a source answer, e.g. using source evidence

Paired Work

Give students 2 to 3 examples to compare and explain which is better, and why

Extended Writing

I, We, You is brilliant for longer answers, combine with highlighting the key parts of a paragraph

Setting a task?

Explain the task and leave a worked example of what you expect on the board

