

# Facilitating Accountable Talk in Early Childhood Classrooms

Presented by WSRA's Early Childhood  
Committee

# Accountable Talk

*“Accountable talk seriously **responds to and further develops what others in the group have said**. It puts forth and demands knowledge that is accurate and relevant to the issue under discussion.*

*Accountable talk **uses evidence** in ways appropriate to the discipline (for example, proofs in mathematics, data from investigations in science, textual details in literature, documenting sources in history).*

*Finally, **it follows established norms of good reasoning**. Accountable talk sharpens students’ thinking by reinforcing their ability to use knowledge appropriately. As such, it helps develop the skills and the habits of mind that constitute intelligence-in-practice.”*

Resnick, 1999

**Sounds great but how does that look in an early childhood classroom?**

# Today we will...

- Learn about the role of language in literacy acquisition.
- Learn practical ways to infuse rich language practices in our classrooms.
- Consider ways to assess our student's language and provide feedback that will propel them further.

# Why Talk Matters...

- Both Vygotsky and Piaget considered language essential for cognition.
- Piaget stressed social language between peers of same ability.
- Vygotsky stressed the role of a More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the importance of scaffolding
- Vygotsky argued that higher level thinking is social before it becomes individual
- “...striving for an explanation often makes a learner integrate and elaborate knowledge in new ways” (Vygotsky, p. 158).



# Relationship between Language and Cognition

- Young children's conceptual development improves when mothers provide advanced conversation during read alouds (Adams, 1987).
- "Mothers or carers who have an "elaborative" conversational style have children with more organized and detailed memories...Mothers who...seldom use elaboration and evaluation, have children who recall less about the past. Longitudinal studies have show that it is the experience of verbalizing events at the time that they occur that is critical for long-term retention." (Goswami and Bryant, 2007, p.8)

# Research exploring Language Practices

- Children who lag behind their peers in oral language are more apt to latter reading failure (Juel, 1998)
- Children raised in homes with more opportunities for talk come to school with a wider vocabulary than their peers (Hart and Risley, 1995)
- Strong correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.

# The Role of the Teacher

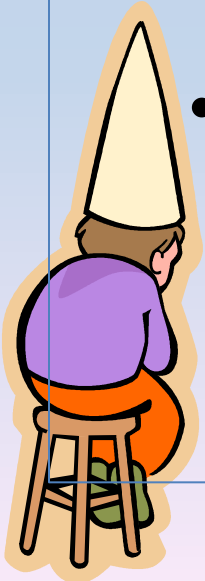
## Teacher Centered



- Teacher controlled Q & A session about the text
  - Initiate a question
  - Students Respond
  - Teacher Evaluate or provides feedback

• **T-S-T-S-T-S-T**

**LIMITS READING  
COMPREHENSION**



## Student Centered



- Purposeful – discussion has a purpose
- Students *are taught* how to talk with each other
- Students *are taught* how to ask questions; challenge ideas
- Teacher knows how to scaffold with the right kind of questions.

• **T-S-S-S-T-S-S-S-T**

**ENHANCES READING  
COMPREHENSION**

# Facilitating Oral Language in a Whole Classroom Setting





# Technology and Oral Language

*The Day That Albert Einstein Feared Has Arrived!*



*Having coffee with frens*



*A day in a beach*



*Cheering your team*



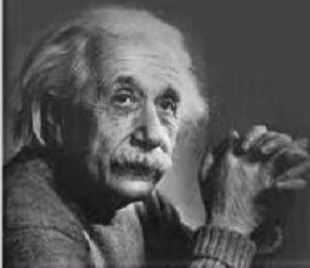
*Out on an intimate date*



*Enjoying the sights*



*Having dinner*



*"I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots"*

*Albert Einstein*

# Oral Language Cards

## Students will:

- discuss meanings and examples of vocabulary words from each week of our Wonders program from McGraw-Hill.
- talk with a partner and share with a partner examples of the given word
- learn to take turns and listen to each other



# Community Circle

I use the community circle from the Tribes program.

**Students will:**

- show respect for the student speaking
- talk in complete sentences about the topic given for the day
- students will learn how to express their ideas about their life



# Read to the Class

## The Reader:

- reads a book of his/her choice to the class
- needs to know all the words in the story
- should have practiced at home
- fills out a book report to share with the class

## The rest of the class:

- practices listening skills
- gives appreciations to the read once finished



# Star of the Week Interview

## The Star of the Week:

- shares his/her poster
- answers questions from peers

## The rest of the class:

- asks questions to know more about the star
- learns to listen to each other
- shows respect to the person talking



# HedBanz Game and Oral Language

HedBanz by  
Spin Master  
Games

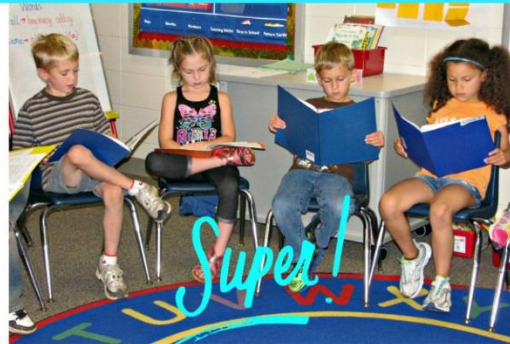
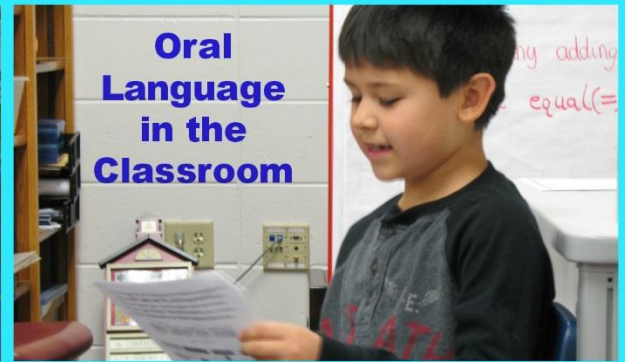
**Students will:**

- give clues to a partner
- listen to their partner to figure out the given word
- have fun





# Building Confidence and Trust





# Oral Language in Small Group Setting



# A Conversation with Myself about Accountable Talk and Intervention

Do I foster accountable talk during intervention?

The short answer: Not nearly as much as I would like.

Why not?

- Focus of intervention as constrained skills K-1 (even as we read books together to develop some of those skills and students begin reading).
- Current guidelines/student needs have made more 1-1
- In 2nd grade, greater focus on comprehension strategies focused the lesson on the strategies more than fostering the conversations

# A Conversation with Myself about Accountable Talk and Intervention

## What have I noticed with those in interventions K-2?

- Brady has gained strong word ID strategies but not the ability to talk about text.
- Katie was so shy we hardly heard any talk K and she did 1-1 in first grade; in second she began to be more talkative but was so worried about being “wrong” she rarely completed thoughts or ventured opinions
- Alice had behavior issues K-1 and was 1-1 partly because of it. Likes to talk about the reading but created her own evidence much of the time
- Emily struggles with memory and language issues and the effort takes away from her ability to talk about the text.

# A Conversation with Myself about Accountable Talk and Intervention

## So what can I do?

- Integrate and model accountable talk
- Be in their classrooms to see how it is fostered there

## What about the second graders?

- We engage in this as appropriate and I don't worry if we don't get to as many constrained skills. Ability to talk about the texts/topics creates greater engagement.

## What about the younger students?

- K Once a week we focus on the shared reading as a point of discussion and practice how we talk about a text.
- 1st 1-1 Use read aloud or her book to model and practice accountable talk.

# Assessing and Developing Children's Oral Language Ability

- Language Experienced Approach (LEA): is a method for teaching and assessing oral reading in which children dictate a story based on an experience they have had. The dictated story is written down by a teacher and used to instruct the students in reading.

# Assessing and Developing Children's Oral Language Ability

## **Imaging**

- The reader makes or creates mental pictures of scenes, actions, events, and characters in a text. Imagery is important to the readers because it evokes emotions, and induces them to think actively while comprehending and composing.

# Assessing and Developing Children's Oral Language Ability

## **Miscue analysis of IRIs**

- Miscues are oral reading responses that are different from the expected or correct responses.
- Miscue analysis is the process of determining which cueing system or combination of cueing systems (semantic, syntactic, or phonologic) a student is using. It is used to determine how they are using these systems, and analyze their word-identification errors or miscues.

# Assessing and Developing Children's Oral Language Ability

Goodman (1972) suggests three questions that you might ask yourself about a child's oral reading:

1. Why do readers make miscues?
  2. What categories or patterns do the miscues make?
  3. What is the significance of the miscue pattern?
- Miscues are significant when they:
    1. Alter the meaning and interpretation of the text.
    2. Reflect consistent word analysis patterns that over-rely on one cueing system, for example, graphic, phonemic.



# Assessing and Developing Children's Oral Language Ability

- Rubric- is a description of the traits or characteristics of standards used to judge a process or a product. A written description of what is expected in order to meet a certain level of performance and is accomplished by a sample of typical performance.

# Assessing and Developing Children's Oral Language Ability

Sample of Rubric for Oral Retelling of a Narrative