

Application to practice

In this session, you have explored the importance of setting up and leading structured discussions which promote the principles of Accountable Talk.

Explicitly and deliberately teaching pupils Accountable Talk skills across all phases and subject disciplines gives them the opportunity to observe and practice the strategies in different formats. Planning and preparing for structured classroom discussions will help you to consider pupils prior knowledge and understanding, the facts and evidence they'll need to justify their claims and the possible errors or misconceptions that will need exploring during the discussion. Pupils will understand the importance of making thinking "visible"; they will learn to express their thoughts and to reason, argue, explain, justify and clarify them to improve learning and challenge their own and others understanding.

Some pupils may find it harder to share their thinking and articulate their thoughts and ideas, but you can support pupils by valuing their contributions and guiding discussions so that pupils are increasingly able to use Accountable Talk in both teacher-led and learner-led discussions.

Mentor submission

The following formats for developing Accountable Talk skills were identified in the research paper and offer opportunities to improve classroom discussion. Use an upcoming sequence of lessons where you think you could implement some of the Accountable Talk skills that you have explored. Show how you would use Accountable Talk in two of the following formats by creating a plan that would fit into the sequence of lessons:

- Teacher-led classroom dialogue
- Small group, student-led discussions
- Partner talk
- Computer-mediated talk

When planning, think about how you will adapt the above formats to fit your discussion goals and improve classroom talk in the year group and subject you teach (if you teach Primary or Early Years, choose a subject to focus on).

When planning, it might help you to outline the following:

- The discussion or dialogue format being used for the Accountable Talk opportunity e.g. teacher-led classroom dialogue or partner talk
- The discussion goal/s
- The information sources that pupils will have access to
- Sentence openers you will use to support pupils
- Prompts you can use to guide and direct the discussion
- Questions you will ask to elicit understanding and encourage pupils to explain, reason, argue, justify and clarify to reach solutions and conclusions
- Misconceptions or errors that pupils might have and consider how you will explore them

You can submit this to your mentor using the [assignment tool](#) if you wish to discuss this further with them.

Remember, your submissions here are not graded or formally assessed, and are here for you to share your ideas and responses with your mentor for future discussion.

Possible strategies

You might also want to consider how you can further support pupils by using some of the strategies from the research paper that help to develop Accountable Talk, which are outlined below. Remember that the skills or strategies you teach and the way they are implemented will look different across all phases and in different subjects, so you will need to consider how you will need to adapt them to the subject you are teaching.

- ‘Distribute responsibility’ and ‘distribute participation’ to engage pupils and show pupils that all contributions are valued
- Assign roles to structure engagement and encourage participation
- Use praise to ‘mark’ use of Accountable Talk
- Explore errors and misconceptions
- Clarify and verify pupil contributions
- Probe pupils to encourage them to explain and elaborate
- Use ‘wait time’ - give pupils time to answer so they know they have the time to think first
- Encourage pupils to share and model the process they used to solve a problem or reach a solution
- Challenge and explore viewpoints to consider alternative options
- Make tasks challenging – use open ended questions to probe pupils to make thinking ‘visible’ and help them to elaborate
- Explore and compare ideas – ask pupils whether they agree/disagree or ask them to compare similarities and differences
- Create flashcards or sentence openers to prompt pupils and help them to develop
- Present ‘real’ problems – set up real tasks or simulated discussions in which pupils can use the language features relevant to the subject discipline being taught
- Model making valid arguments – argumentation will look different depending on the subject discipline. Pupils need to learn to use the evidence and ‘genre of talk’ in the subject being taught – observing and practicing different forms will help them to develop the skills needed in that particular discipline

Building on your understanding

In Module 4, you will learn about effective assessment, monitoring misconceptions and making feedback purposeful and manageable. When completing the module, think about the strategies used to support Accountable Talk and how they can support you to assess, monitor and feedback during discussion opportunities.

In the Module 5 session, ‘Developing high-quality oral language’, you’ll learn more about developing high-quality talk and the importance of developing this alongside reading and writing.

The stretch session in Module 5 will further support your understanding of the impact that high quality talk can have on writing.