



Getting started with oracy Transcription: Video 4

Interviewees

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Let's talk about talking points

Rachel West

Sometimes learners are reluctant to challenge and disagree with each other. Talking Points is a strategy which aims to increase engagement and discussion between learners and to encourage them to develop their dialogue skills and to practice following the talk ground rules. They're a really useful technique to get started with dialogic talk in the classroom.

Cynthia James

Talking points are some form of stimuli for talk that encourage disagreement, they are usually in the form of provocative statements or common misconceptions and these are useful tools for stimulating discussions.

Rachel West

The talking point statements can be invented for any subject and be used to introduce information about a new topic to elicit prior knowledge and experience about a topic, and also to bring out common misconceptions and invite deep critical thinking.

Cynthia James

When challenging an idea, it is important to remember that what is being challenged is the idea and not the individual expressing the idea.

Rachel West

So during the talking point discussions, the learners are practicing following the ground rules that they've previously agreed as a group. It's important that everyone participates in the discussion and that the group seek to reach a consensus even if they don't all agree in the end. At the end of the discussions, the teacher will facilitate a whole-class discussion about the talking points that caused the most disagreement and encourage lots of learners to share their ideas and their reasons for thinking that. It's really important at this point, that the teacher withholds their own judgement and encourages learners to evaluate each other's contributions. And after this wider group discussion, there should also be an opportunity to reflect on the dialogue in the small groups for learners, for them to think about which ground rules did we managed to follow, which did we not really manage to follow.

Victoria Renfro

But it's also really important that as educators, we practice dialogic discussions ourselves. The two things that I think that we can find difficult to develop are active listening and how to challenge respectfully. If we want to build a more dialogic setting, we have to build those skills ourselves.

Dr Martin Johnson

So things like respectful disagreement will come into play where maybe politeness, you know, just trying to say things in certain ways which make them sound less harsh, which actually keeps the conversation going, it maintains the relationship and allows us to sort of get someone together, which you know, that's a key element of talk.