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Why is oral language so important?

- Oral language – i.e. speaking and understanding spoken language – is the most essential element of human communication.
- Thinking and self-talk need words. If we don't know many words, our ability to manipulate thoughts, interact with others and make well-considered decisions is curtailed.
- In all our waking hours, we use a self-talking internal voice. Feeding and nourishing this internal voice is an essential human need. The human brain is built to self-talk.
- When speaking, we must first manipulate our self-talking thoughts into words. High-quality day-to-day teaching provides opportunities for this to happen in all subject areas, from the first day in pre-school until the closing moments of the high school graduation ceremony!
- Writing and reading are the 'solid forms' of spoken language. They each in their own way help define, streamline and enrich the thinking process.
- The better the vocabulary, the more agile and intricate the brain's synaptic connections become.
- Reading, listening to those with a good vocabulary and subsequently using these words helps develop one's own word knowledge. This in turn enables the words that most accurately reflect a thought to be 'on duty in the wings of the mind' as it were, able to go 'on stage' and perform the moment they are needed.
- Face-to-face oral language interaction gives its speakers and listeners opportunities to not only observe the speaker's mouth, face and body language as a part of the message, but to also hear the inflexions, syntax, meaning, word order and non-verbal inferences.
- The ears need to hear new words and the mouth muscles experience not only how they are said, but how they can be correctly incorporated with other words to form a sentence. Thinking, reasoning and speaking with meaning is thus possible, words in a book make sense, and self-expression in writing is able to happen. .

An effective and language-rich learning environment in the classroom is the essential key that unlocks the door to greatness.

Oh no! ii

Teach the concept that the eyes jump to a new line quickly before moving more slowly along each line. Punctuation can also be briefly mentioned here.



ant



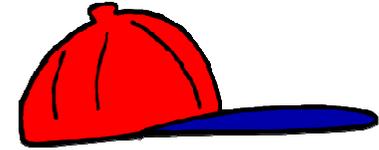
hut



map



cat



cap

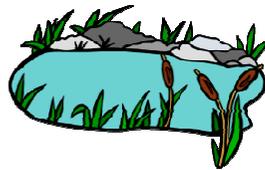
Oh no!

A cat is in the box, an ant is on the cup,
the mop is in the cap, a peg is on the map
and the hut is in the pond!

Draw soft zig-zag lines to show what and who goes where.



box



pond



cup



mop



peg

H H H Happiness for the letter aitch

Teacher Talk: Pretend you are a steam train and exhale in little puffs of air while following the line of *h* letters below. Feel your breath on your fingers as you become louder and then softer. Note the silent *h* for *hours* in the final line of the second rhyme.

h h h h h h h h h H!

A one-breath rhyme

Hurry Harry, hurry home,
Let's pack our bags and head for Rome!



A two-breaths rhyme

Have you heard the honey bees
Humming in their hives?
Hurrying in amongst the flowers,
Working hard for hours.



Teacher Talk pronunciation tips for often-mispronounced words in English:

Practise saying *ow-ers* and *flowers* as a warm-up exercise. Feel the lower jaw go from an open position to the almost closed one. Note the silent *h* in *hours*

Your dictionary has the word *aitch* but not *haitch*. The letter name is aitch, and the sound is a voiceless exhalation of air.

Also take care with *could have* (not *could of*).

Mischievous has no *cheeve* in the middle, and the first syllable has the stress.

Nothing has *thing* as the second syllable, not a *k* sound.

Watch out for the *then* and *than* confusion. Correct examples are: *He is taller than me.* (comparison); *We'll eat at home and then go out.* (event sequence)