

GETTING THE ROOM TO THINK (ALOUD!)

The Catalyst

Questioning

Driving deeper cognitive engagement

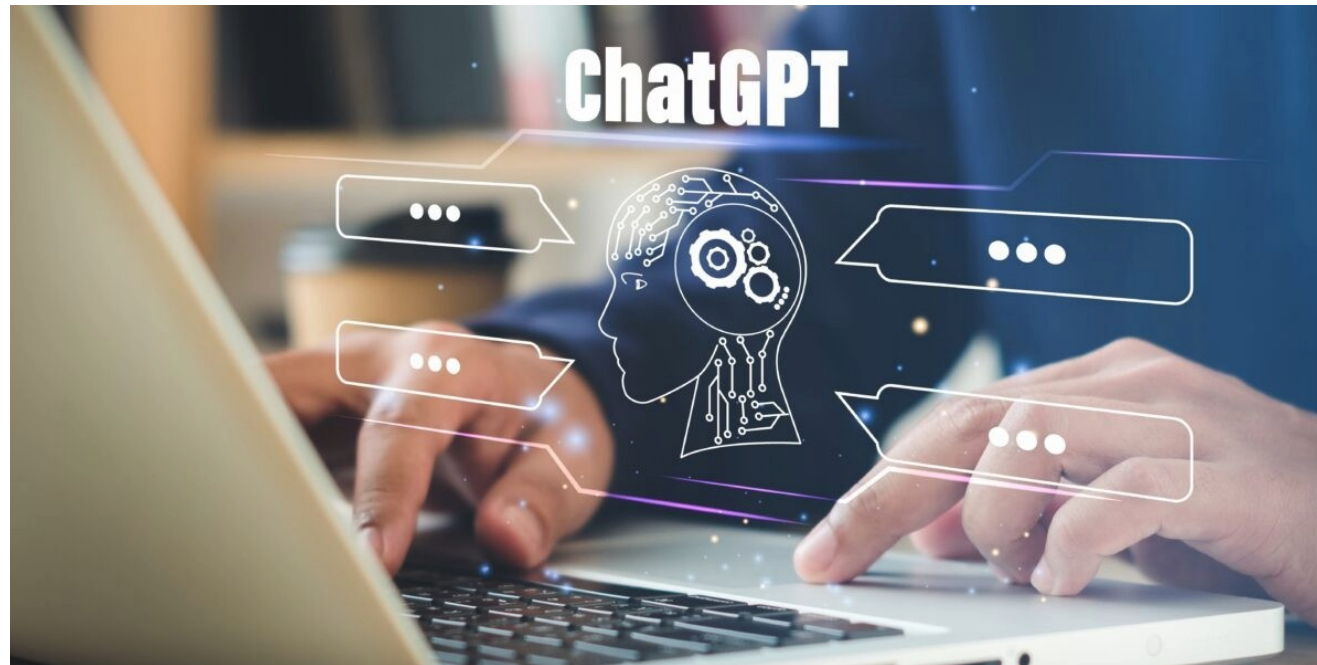
The Goal

Oracy

Empowering structured classroom talk

My question for you today...

Should students be allowed to use AI to complete their homework?



New question, different rules

Should schools remove homework completely?

SPEAKER 1

Make a claim and give a reason.

SPEAKERS 2–6

Build on, challenge or question an earlier idea.

ONE TABLE

Name one agreement and one unresolved disagreement.

No isolated answers: the next contribution must connect to the last.



What changed in the learning?

LISTENING

In which version did you actually have to listen to each other?

THINKING

In which version did your thinking change or become more sophisticated?

TEACHER MOVE

What was the teacher (me) doing differently to make this happen?

More voices $\neq$ better oracy.

Better connections between ideas = greater potential for learning.

What does good oracy actually look like?



Cognitive

thinking through talk

Explaining reasoning, evaluating evidence, making connections, challenging assumptions and revising ideas.



Linguistic

expressing ideas clearly

Using subject-specific vocabulary, complete explanations, appropriate sentence structures and precise language.



Social and communicative

engaging with others

Listening actively, taking turns, inviting contributions, disagreeing respectfully and building on what others say.

Oracy in Practice: Analyzing Scenarios

2:00

A student gives an accurate, articulate explanation, but nobody else contributes.



Students enthusiastically exchange opinions but don't justify them or respond to each other's ideas.



Students listen carefully and take turns, but struggle to express their reasoning using the language of the subject.



For each scenario: Which element of oracy is strongest, and what is missing?

Activity: Let the talk develop the thinking

Is it more important to teach students what to think or how to think?

01 THINK



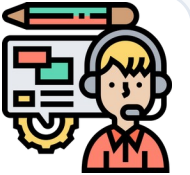
Note your initial position.

02 CLAIM



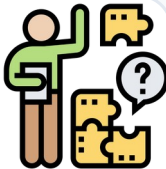
State your view and justify it.

03 PARAPHRASE



Restate your partner's argument before responding.

04 BUILD/CHALLENGE



Extend or respectfully question an existing idea.

05 REFLECT



Explain how your thinking developed.

DEBRIEF

What made this talk productive?

Four routines that open the door to oracy



EVERYBODY WRITES **Think first**

Every student
formulates an idea
before speaking.



TURN AND TALK **Rehearse & respond**

Students explain and
engage with a
partner's thinking.



WAIT TIME **Give thinking space**

Students have time
to process and
compose reasoning.



COLD CALL **Widen accountability**

Sample thinking
beyond volunteers;
build a supportive
climate.

Opportunity to speak ≠ quality of dialogue



Foundation

ROUTINES CREATE THE OPPORTUNITY

Establishes consistent structure, safety, and time for students to talk.



Mastery

EXPLICIT TEACHING DEVELOPS THE SKILL

Direct instruction elevates discourse quality and cognitive rigor.

Students need to be taught what good dialogue sounds like:

01



LISTEN

Accurately paraphrase

Restate and summarize a peer's perspective accurately before adding your own contribution.

02



REASON

Explain with evidence

Ground claims in concrete evidence, textual references, and clear logical justification.

03



RESPOND

Build, question, or challenge

Constructively expand upon ideas, pose critical questions, or respectfully challenge assumptions.

What are observers (yes, including inspectors) looking for?

1 Purposeful talk

The discussion is tied to a specific learning goal.

2 Explicit expectations

Students know what productive listening, reasoning and responding look like.

3 Student-to-student dialogue

Students refer to, question, extend or challenge peers' ideas.

4 Broad participation

Talk is not dominated by the same confident students.

5 Cognitive depth

Students explain, justify, compare, evaluate or revise their thinking.

6 Teacher use of dialogue

The teacher listens to student talk and uses what they hear to guide next steps.

Where could we get the room thinking aloud?

In groups: redesign the A3 lesson using the annotation spaces.

1

Read the lesson

Identify where student talk could genuinely deepen understanding.

2

Design the talk

Add purposeful questions, talk moves and suitable TLAC routines.

3

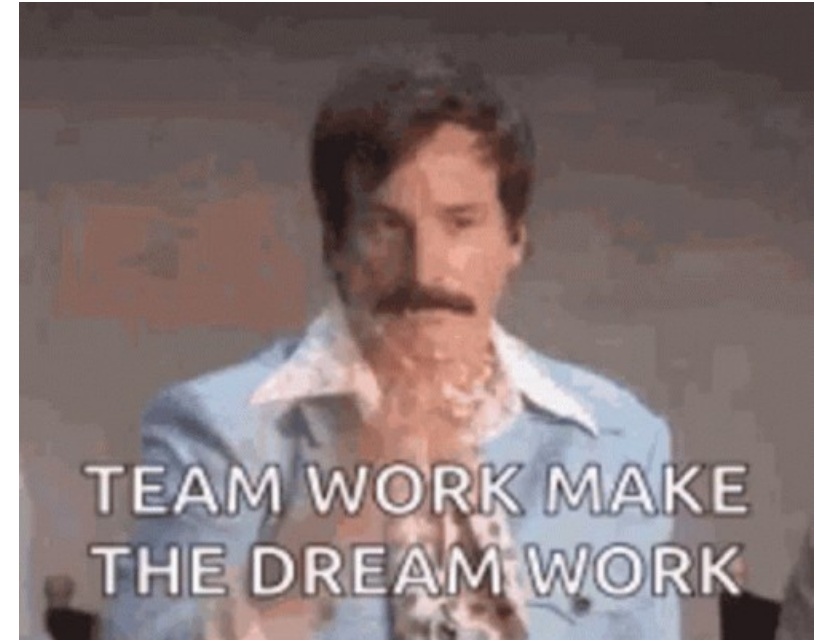
Make learning visible

Decide what you will listen for and how it will change your next move.

4

Critique

Share your strongest change and receive one improvement suggestion.



The five questions before any talk task

01



WHY?

**What learning
will talking
advance?**

02



ABOUT WHAT?

**Which problem
requires
reasoning?**

03



HOW?

**What must
pupils do with
others' ideas?**

04



WHO?

**How will
participation be
distributed?**

05



EVIDENCE?

**What will I
listen for
afterwards?**

Exit Ticket: Sort it out



Look at the cards and decide which questions are quick check and which ones lead to purposeful talk



QUICK CHECK

Characteristics:

- Assesses immediate recall or surface comprehension
- Requires brief, factual, or closed responses
- Verifies individual understanding quickly



PURPOSEFUL TALK

Characteristics:

- Provokes reasoning, evaluation, and deeper dialogue
- Encourages peer-to-peer discussion and debate
- Promotes building, challenging, or extending ideas



<https://tinyurl.com/ycycht85>

Professional Meeting Log 2026-2027

Meeting Name:

Getting the Room
to Think (Aloud!)
(Mon 19 Oct)