

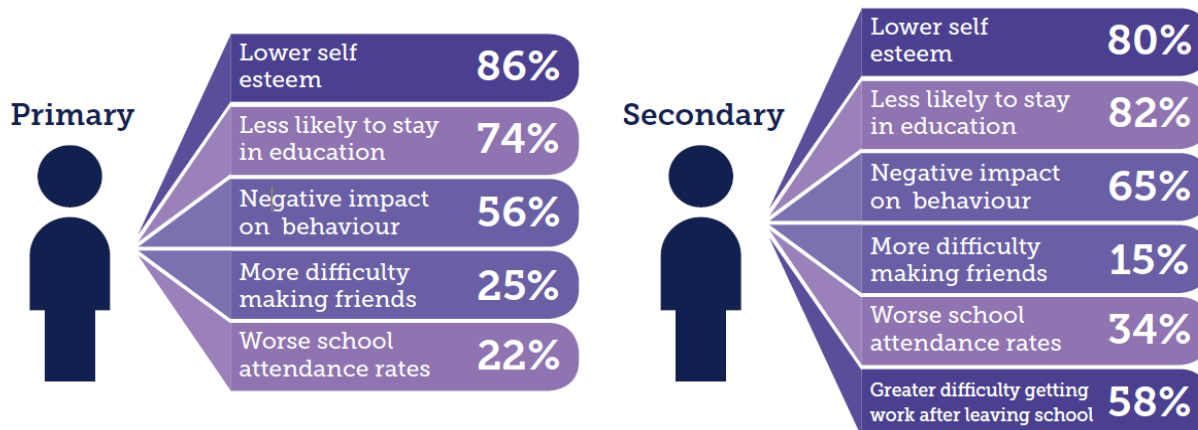
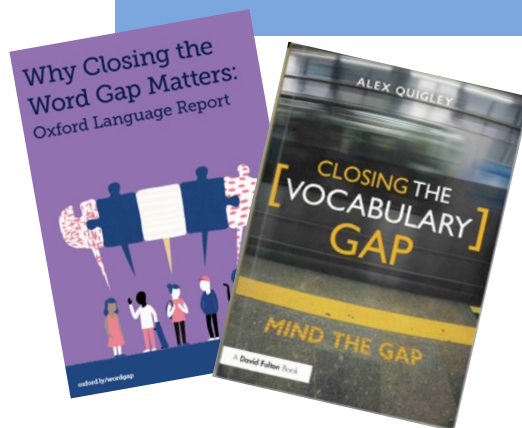
Vocabulary - caught or taught?

Recently, a range of publications have been released focusing on language acquisition and the impact of 'the vocabulary gap' on pupils in schools and beyond. Our last Teacher Talk looked at articles from the Oxford Language Report and resources from Alex Quigley's book, which are recommended reads for all teachers. Inside this issue, read Emily Iszatt's one-page-summary of 'Closing the Vocabulary Gap' and her top take-aways.

In this issue:

- NACE Project: Intervention & findings
- Closing the Gap: Vocabulary
- 2018 NQT Project: Curriculum

'Language opens doors. It unlocks the world of reading and the imagination, the excitement of writing, the capacity to explore new subjects and releases our potential to learn and grow as an individual. In schools, it underpins progress, impacts on attainment throughout primary and secondary years, affects self-esteem and behaviour and plays a huge role in a child's future life chances. Without enough language – a word gap – a child is seriously limited in their enjoyment of school and success beyond.'



Self esteem, behaviour and a child's ability to make friends were all felt to be negatively affected by low levels of vocabulary. The diagram above illustrates the proportion of teachers surveyed who believe the word gap is impacting on pupils in the following ways. (OUP 2018)

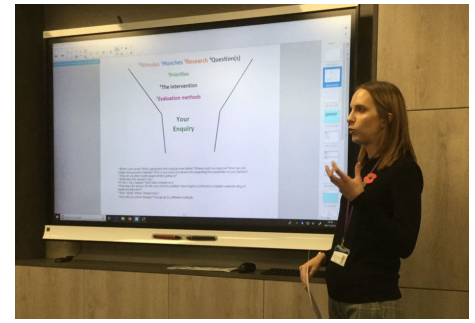
TEACHER TALK

Date: Thursday 20 June 2019, 4.00pm
Venue: Training Facility, Portswood Primary School

Topic to be announced soon!

NACE Research Project

Harriet Bryant - Portswood Primary School



Harriet worked on a project with Professor Bill Lucas from Winchester University with the research question being:

“If I teach my Year 2 children a structure to solve Mathematical problems, will it lead to greater independence when problem solving?”

Intervention

I taught the children a step-by-step structure to use when problem-solving, with pictures to represent each step. We used it to solve problems; first as a group, then working in pairs. I observed if the children used it, how they used it and whether it helped them work independently. I then took away the prompt to see if the children continued to use the 'steps' when problem solving and if it led to less need for adult intervention and reassurance.



Key Findings

- It was beneficial to take time to talk through ways to approach more complex problems with the children.
- The children were able to find patterns and connections.
- Building confidence - having something to refer back to made the children more confident when approaching a problem.
- Normalising our emotional responses to maths - giving the children a way to help solve a problem increased their positive reaction to them.

If you are interested in using this approach please email Harriet: harriet.bryant@portswoodpri.org.uk

Closing the Vocabulary Gap

Emily Iszatt, EAL Leader - Portswood Primary School

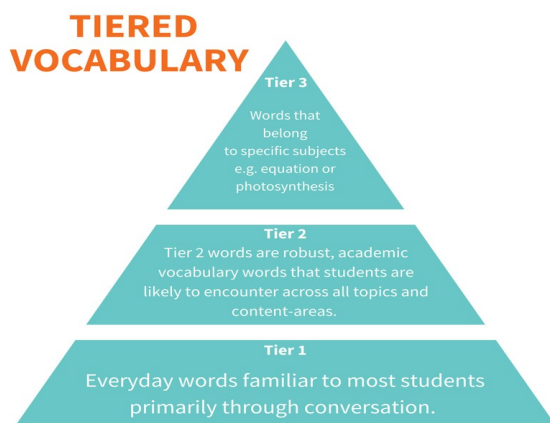
Children need 50,000 words to thrive in school and beyond - if we can 'close the gap' we can offer children vital academic tools for school success, as well as confidence for later on in life. The 'gap' begins before school but typically widens as a child progresses through.

We need to ensure that children have academic vocabulary, specifically 'Tier 2' vocabulary.

To ensure comprehension of a text, a pupil needs to understand 95% of the words. Children need to have background knowledge and a range of experiences to access challenging texts beyond Year 5. Disadvantaged children and EAL children simply don't have this or don't have it in English - how can we bridge this gap in our teaching and learning?

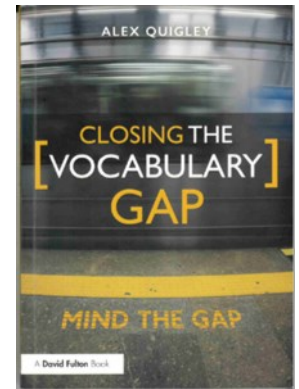
- Pre-teaching vocabulary, discussing the meanings of words, finding definitions integral to our classroom practice
- Receptive vocabulary – words we hear and read
- Expressive vocabulary – words we say and write
- Rich structured talk combined with high quality reading
- Just encouraging reading for pleasure isn't good enough - children who haven't got the vocabulary simply can't read for pleasure.

If you can't access 95% of words, the text becomes inaccessible. Accessing this academic text is significantly easier once you have the vocabulary:



_____ is marking a _____ on a measuring _____. This involves _____ the relationship between _____ of a measuring _____ and _____ or _____, which must be _____. For example, placing a _____ in melting ice to see whether it reads zero, to check it has been _____ correctly.

_____ is marking a scale on a measuring instrument. This involves establishing the relationship between indications of a measuring instrument and standard or reference values, which must be applied. For example, placing a thermometer in melting ice to see whether it reads zero, to check it has been _____ correctly.



A common area that needs addressing is idioms - 'chips and fish!'

Steps that we need to take to bridge that vocabulary gap

- Train teachers to become more knowledgeable and confident in explicit vocabulary teaching.
- Teach academic vocabulary explicitly and clearly, with coherent planning throughout the curriculum.
- Foster structured reading opportunities in a model that supports students with vocabulary deficits.
- Promote and scaffold high quality academic talk in the classroom.
- Promote and scaffold high quality academic writing in the classroom.
- Foster 'word consciousness' in our students – sharing the etymology and morphology of words.
- Teach students independent word learning strategies.

How do we balance raising standards whilst maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum?

Emma Pinney & Dan Atkins - Tanners Brook & Portswood Summer 2018 NQT Project



Studies have often shown that learning within schools with curriculums based on links between core and foundation subjects is of higher quality. A common approach is to link English writing with foundation subjects. As a result of our initial research our question then became:

How effective are foundation hooks at improving outcomes in English?

We conducted a small classroom-based research project in an attempt to answer this question.

Methodology

- 62 Year 5 children across 2 schools
- Each class split into two groups
- One was given hook before lesson; other was not
- Asked to write a description of a battle/warrior
- Questioned/interviewed afterwards

Results

It was clear from results that the writing from children who were given a hook was higher quality. The group without the hook found the writing harder and didn't enjoy the task as much. Real experiences such as immersive learning, trips or role-play had a positive impact on the children's quality of writing. They were able to add more detail because of their first-hand knowledge. The children also mentioned in their interviews that reading a text similar to the topic helped them to gather ideas for their own writing.

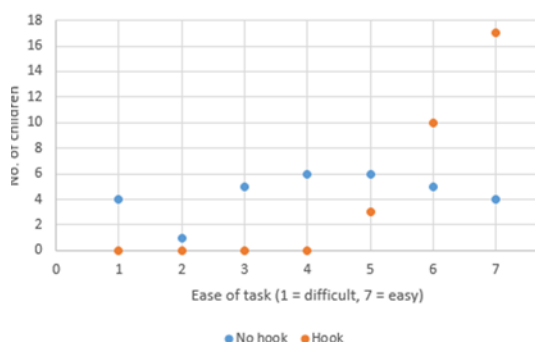
Teacher questionnaire

We also sent out a survey to teachers across 3 schools regarding their opinion on the impact of foundation hooks in English. 89.65% of those surveyed believed the impact was positive. Most believe children were more engaged and teaching the writing was more successful.

One of the most effective ways of raising the quality and frequency of cross curricular writing is to plan outcomes in advance rather than deciding on opportunities along the way.

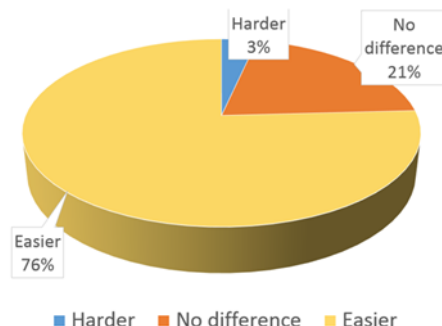
Learning was much greater if pupils had had a real and memorable experience to build on, to question and to evaluate

How easy was it to write??



Data from children's questionnaires

Does using foundation hooks make teaching English easier?



Data from teacher survey