

# Disciplinary Literacy Newsletter

January 2022



Dear Colleagues

We have been working on the Education Endowment Fund report on Disciplinary literacy – here are some of the ideas we have trialled and found to be successful. In the first term we concentrated on Recommendation One: Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject

- Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language.
- Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words.
- Teachers should prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.
- Teachers and subject leaders should consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning.

f) Encouraging the class to make their own to challenge one another.

I have been trying this with all of my Key stages and have had some very positive results. I have found that it is very useful for helping students to gain control over a particular narrative, to refresh their knowledge and key vocabulary; or even a skills process from an exam question.

## Successes in Art - Shelagh McNicholas

Promoting the use of subject disciplinary language has already proven valuable to pupils' learning and understanding of art, artists and art movements. KS3 pupils are engaged in keeping a written record of the subject specific keywords, where they heard it, writing a definition in their own words, links to other words they know and recording when and where they have used the word in their own learning.

Vocabulary skills at age 13 strongly predict both Maths and English Literature GCSE results more strongly than socio-economic background<sup>23</sup>.

## Word Strings - Amanda Campbell

I have been experimenting with a task called Word strings. The idea is that you give your class a group of jumbled words and they have to work out if they can place them in a narrative order and then explain what the connections are.

Sometimes you can vary the task by:

- Providing the first and the final words.
- Creating shorter or longer sets of words.
- Using a combination of names and events.
- Asking the students to use very precise dates or examples in their explanations.
- Telling the class that there is a very specific order, or vice versa.

Word	Where did I hear it?	Definition in my own words	Links to other words I know	Tick when used it in my own learning
Authentic	My teacher used it when talking about original artworks.	genuine and not a copy	That original	✓
Abstract	I heard the word when a friend was talking about a painting.	It's that it not realistic, it's the only shapes and colors.	generally, not representational, abstract	✓
Bold	I heard that the word when talking about a painting.	It's that it's stand out or contrast	strong, stand out, eye catching, bold	✓
Culture	I have heard the word when talking about the history of art.	the ideas of a certain society	Tradition, History, Tradition	✓
Culture	I have heard it when my teacher was talking about the history of art.	The ideas of a certain society	Abstract, representational, traditional	✓

Year 12 student Ruby Hagan, was able to confidently and competently explain her artwork style and influences during her interview with the Royal Academy of Art. She said she was extremely grateful for the written tasks designed to develop expression of opinion and analysis of artists' work. Success!

## Punctuation Pauses – no checkee, no markee Hannah Murphy

I have been exploring ways to empower my students to take responsibility for checking their punctuation. I have used punctuation pauses, inspired by both the

# Disciplinary Literacy Newsletter

January 2022



Education Endowment Fund report and the ITV programme 'Take Me Out', to create 'No checkee, no markee'. This idea is relatively simple. Students complete a task and are then directed to check their punctuation, making appropriate alterations in a different colour pen.

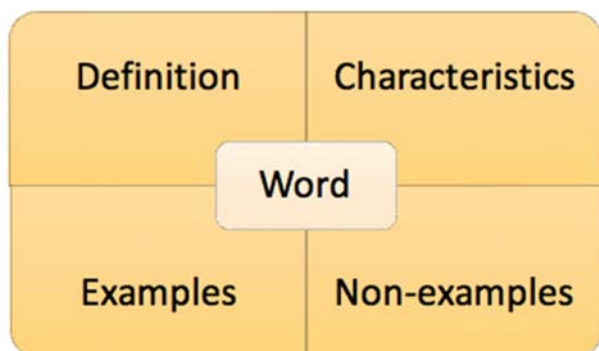
I have found this to be incredibly effective at highlighting the importance of punctuation to students, identifying common punctuation errors within my subject as well as reducing the most frustrating workload of an RE teacher, writing 'God is a noun and He needs a capital G'!

## Language Detectives - Jen Wildman

Year 7 and 8 are undertaking a pilot 'Language Detectives' programme. For each cycle of the timetable pupils are taught a root word or prefix and two detectives from each form have the responsibility of looking out for this in their reading and in their lessons and reporting back to their class where and when they have seen the root word or prefix in action. Our aim here is to improve our pupils' knowledge of the building blocks of words so they can decode unfamiliar words that they come across in challenging texts. House points are available for the most successful detectives to reward them for their efforts.

## Inset Day Reminders

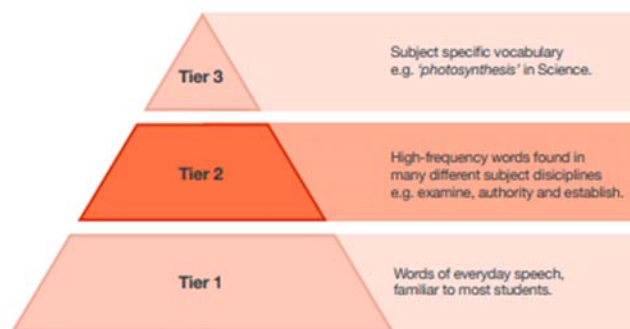
Frayer models appeared frequently in PM lesson observations. Please keep the momentum up on this as it is a great way to check and cement precise understanding.



## Team Work in departments

Establishing key vocabulary is closely tied to developing effective schemes of work. There needs to be agreement about a common 'word hoard' that each teacher will help each class to develop in each unit. This will normally be Tier 3 vocabulary. It is worth spending time checking that you have word lists and word banks which you are using with the pupils. A pupil needs to hear and use a word 24 times to be confident in using it themselves

Figure 3: Tiers of vocabulary



## Ideas for the new term – reading academically complex texts

Late last term we began looking at teaching pupils to be skilful readers, especially in KS4 and 5. We identified some barriers

- ❖ Lower levels of tier 2 vocabulary
- ❖ A reluctance to use a dictionary
- ❖ A reluctance to extract information from a text independently (as opposed to being told something by a teacher).

We decided to try ideas from reciprocal reading to help overcome these barriers and will report back on this in the next newsletter, together with an update on our whole school drive on reading for pleasure

Please let us know if you try any of these ideas. Punctuation Pause is also a great way to address SPAG whilst reducing marking time!