Supporting the voice of the reluctant speaker with a positive whole-school climate for oracy

Lorraine Field

Assistant Headteacher

Hope High School

Disclaimers



I haven’t heard the input of our keynote speakers!



My content comes from my own experience



You need to decide if and how my experiences can support your learners

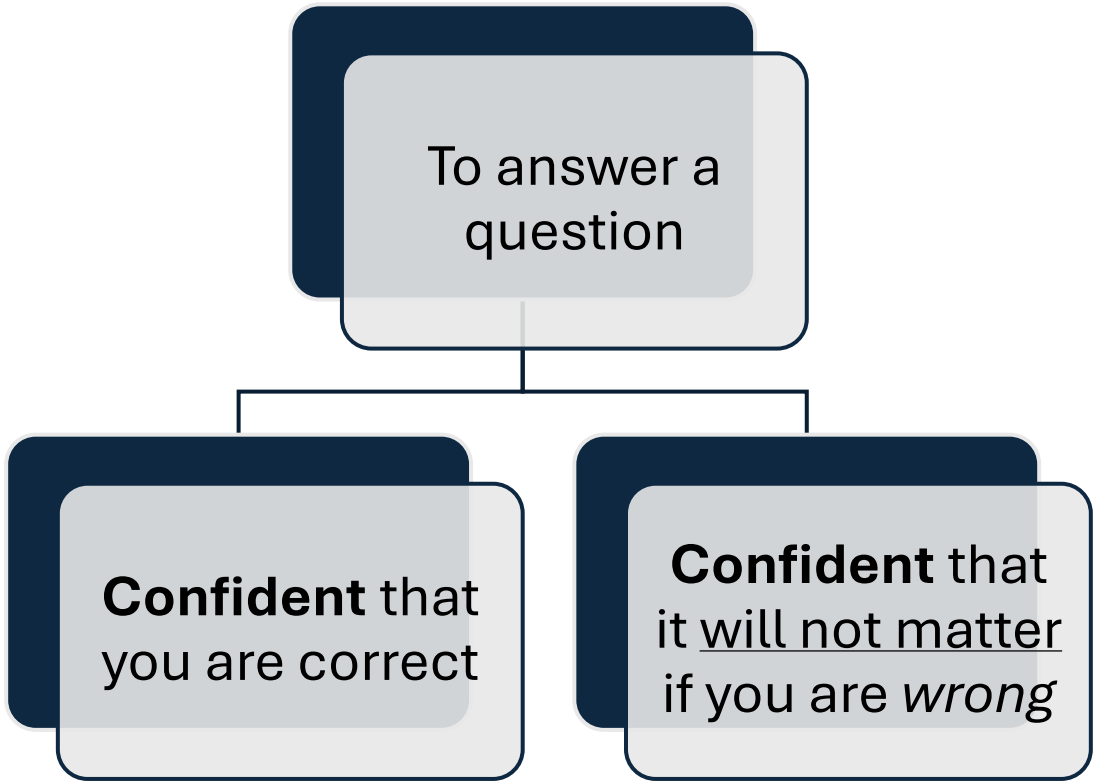


I am happy to help!

My experience in context

- Hope High School – Skelmersdale, Lancashire
- 11-16 special school (119 on role– all pupils have an EHCP
- Primary category of need is SEMH
- Diverse cohort of learners, abilities and needs
- Head of English/Assistant Headteacher in Ormskirk School for 11 years
- Teacher of English/Head of English at Hesketh Fletcher, Atherton for 7 years

Classroom talk



Reluctant speaker?

Selective mute?

shy?

Special Education Needs – speech and language

Special Needs children



Have felt acute failure, probably for most of their school lives



Lack confidence, self esteem and probably a sense of belonging



Lack social skills but know they don't fit in without knowing why



May feel confident about an interest which may have led to negative interactions with others



Trauma around speaking out, being seen

Creating a positive whole school climate for oracy

From the contentious to the practical...

Five contentious ideas

1 - Make the worst assumptions about your pupils when it comes to talk







Five contentious ideas

2 – Beware the silent classroom

- Silence is a tool, not a behaviour management system
- Belonging?
- Why would you choose to speak in an environment where it is usually forbidden?
- Real life?
- Listening is the norm?

Five contentious ideas

3 – Be cautious of cold calling

- Formative assessment or behaviour management?



The answer?

- Ask someone who knows

Five contentious ideas

4 – Be serious about shouting out

- Shouting out silences some and empowers others
- Shouting out is sharing
- It’s all about the control!
- Use it to teach

Five contentious ideas

5 – welcome (some) distractions

Encourage questions, curiosity and discussion

Learn from them!

Safeguarding and wellbeing

Creating a positive whole school climate for oracy

Now the practical…

1 – create a sense of belonging

- Meet and greet and mean it
- Form time and form tutors
- Key staff for those who need it
- Extra curricular clubs
- School trips – widen their horizon, shared experiences
- Events – problem solving, interacting, teamwork
- Create a charter - Mutual respect for opinions with gentle challenge where needed
- Restorative practices
- Allow them to speak!

2 – Time for Talk

Part of <u>every</u> lesson

- Starter activities where we discuss/ask questions/share opinions
- Use of peer discussion and support – turn and talk activities
- Class discussion – sharing responses and ideas, planning and writing together
- Don’t be afraid of group activities!

2 – Time for Talk

Tag it on!

- Form Read Aloud – add discussion, prediction, reviews as standard
- Accelerated Reader – book recommendations/oral reviews/Q&A
- Highlight oracy practices for other initiatives – writing, formative assessment, recall, prior knowledge

2 – Time for Talk

English Curriculum

- Showcase for alternative forms of assessment
- Utilise their ‘specialism’ to develop oracy (Extreme Sports Magazine)
- Drama, role play, debates, mock court cases

3 – Flagship subjects

Target and develop other subjects as flagships for embedding and prioritising oracy:

- PSHE
- Religious Education
- History
- Food Technology

Selective mutism

