

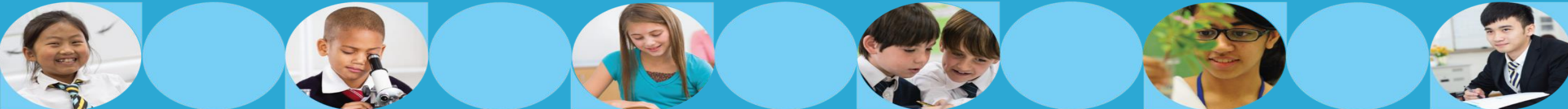


Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Language is power: Developing oracy across the whole school

Paul Ellis & Helen Rees-Bidder

Cambridge Schools Conference
September 2019



Speaking but not listening...

Think of a time when you felt that the person you were speaking to wasn't listening.

Split into pairs and share stories.

Identify **3** things that demonstrated non-listening.

What was the impact on you as the speaker?

What lessons can we learn for the classroom?



Breakout outline

In this session we will explore together:

- ▶ The power of language
- ▶ Active listening
- ▶ Oracy
- ▶ How to create the right environment
- ▶ Practical classroom ideas



The power of language

There are two key strands to language:

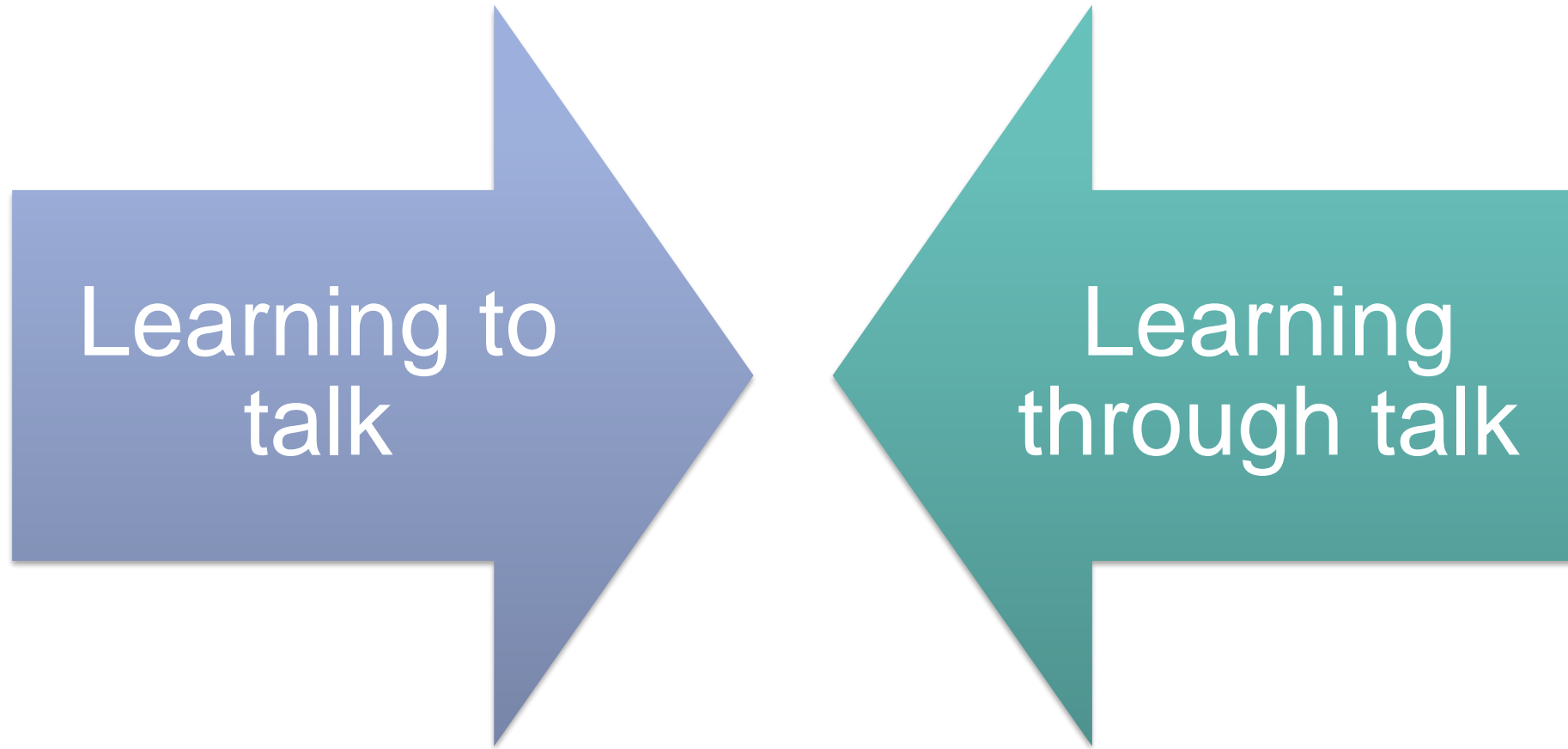
1. An ability to speak and be understood
2. An ability to listen and understand

These strands need to work together for language to be powerful.

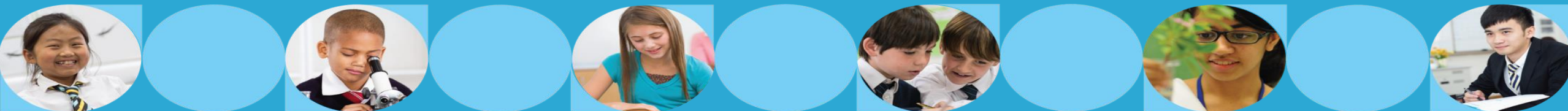
Being a confident and effective orator is not enough – we need to develop **listening** skills, as well as collaborative **communication** skills.



Highly effective talk



Active listening



Active listening

How can we develop active listeners in our classrooms?

Discuss in groups.



Make listening necessary

1. Avoid repeating yourself
2. Devise activities where careful listening is necessary to complete a task
3. Make sure that learners answer the exact question which was asked
4. Encourage learners to speak audibly so everyone can hear
5. Sometimes speak quietly

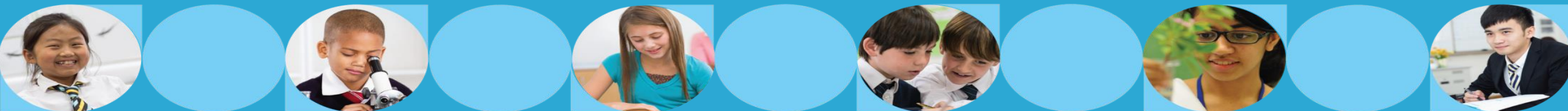


Encourage active listening

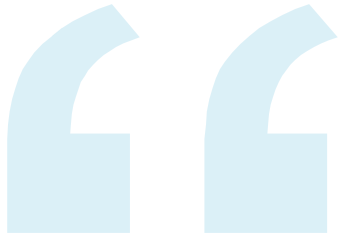
1. Get learners to identify non-verbal clues such as gestures or pauses
2. Use language with prompts to support listening, such as signaling with your voice a change in focus
3. Suggest strategies to structure listening, such as questions
4. Ask learners to paraphrase what they have heard
5. Invite learners to reflect on their listening



Oracy



What is Oracy?



Oracy is to speaking what numeracy is to mathematics or literacy to reading and writing. In short, it's nothing more than being able to express yourself well. It's about having the vocabulary to say what you want to say and the ability to structure your thoughts so that they make sense to others.

English Speaking Union, 2019



Why does oracy matter?

A photograph of a diverse group of people sitting around a table in what appears to be a meeting or classroom. A man in the center, wearing glasses and a grey sweater, is speaking and gesturing with his hands. Other people are listening attentively. The background shows a whiteboard and some papers on the wall.

“It is the bedrock of pupils’ ability to use language and communicate.” – Voice 21

“Talk is the most powerful tool of communication in the classroom and it is fundamentally central to the acts of teaching and learning.” – Prof Frank Hardman

“Real concepts are impossible without words, and thinking in concepts does not exist beyond verbal thinking. That is why the central moment in concept formation ... is a specific use of words as functional tools.” – Lev Vygotsky

Skills development

- ▶ What **skills** can be developed through speaking and listening activities?
- ▶ In groups, discuss and list the skills
- ▶ Use the handout to categorize them

- ▶ Now look at the work of other groups – did you miss anything?



Speaking & Listening skills: Get up and go

Physical	Linguistic
Cognitive	Social and Emotional

Speaking & Listening skills

Physical	Linguistic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voice• Body Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocabulary• Language• Rhetorical techniques
Cognitive	Social and Emotional
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Content• Structure• Clarifying and summarising• Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with others• Listening and responding• Confidence in speaking• Audience awareness

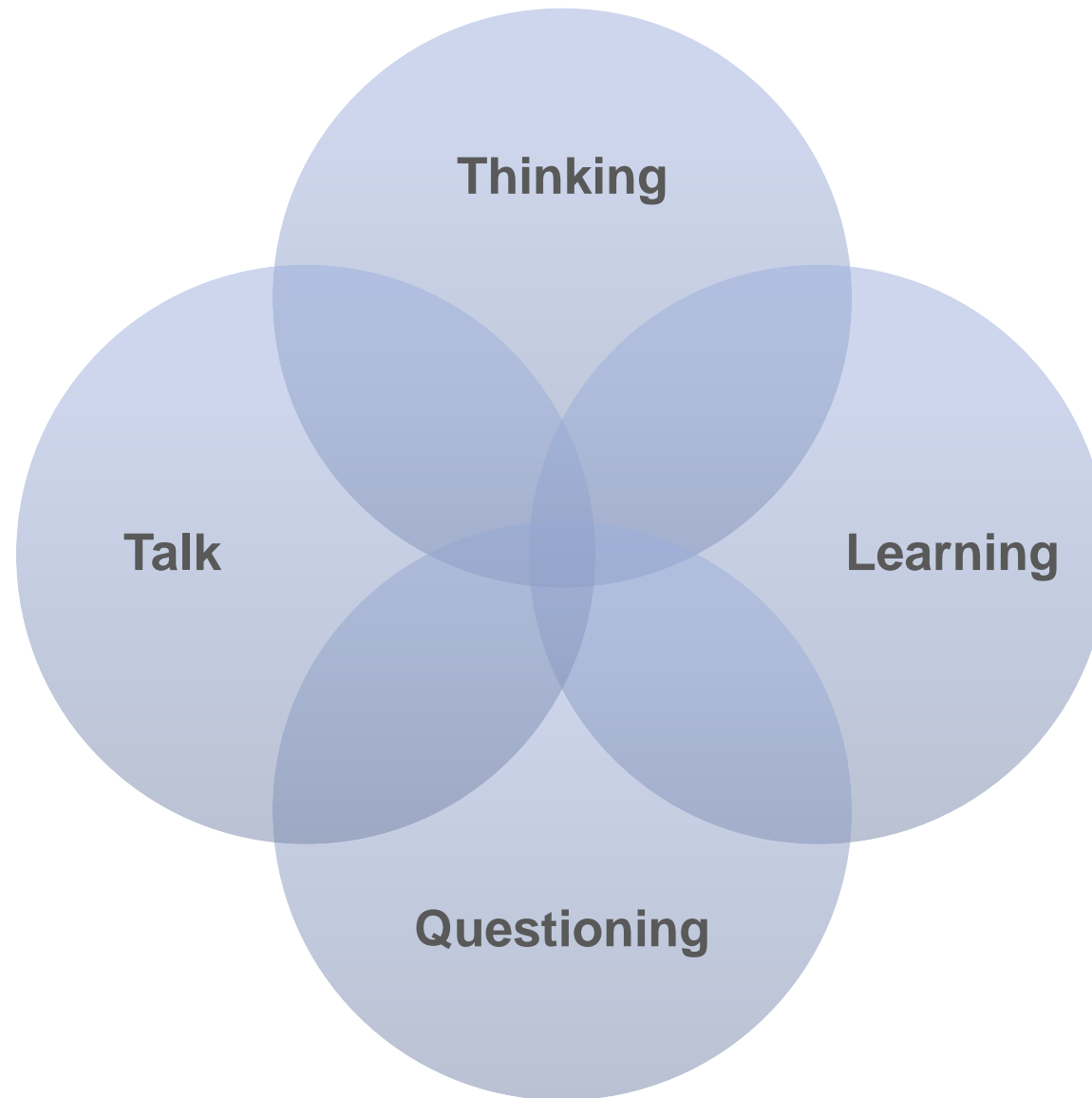
Adapted from *School 21*

Further skills

- ▶ Cognitive skills – concentration, memory, processing and re-organising information
- ▶ Metacognitive skills – evaluating ideas. Setting goals and targets, offering and responding to feedback, adapting viewpoints
- ▶ Research skills – finding and selecting information and resources
- ▶ Knowledge acquisition – developing understanding
- ▶ Emotional and social skills – co-operation, empathy, tolerance
- ▶ Vocabulary acquisition
- ▶ Presenting skills – vocal and physical
- ▶ Confidence
- ▶ A growth mindset



Maximising learning through language



A dialogic classroom

- ▶ A classroom rich in talk
- ▶ Questions are planned
- ▶ Peer conversations are modelled and scaffolded
- ▶ The teacher skilfully uses talk to develop thinking



The Cambridge learner

Confident

Engaged

Responsible

Innovative

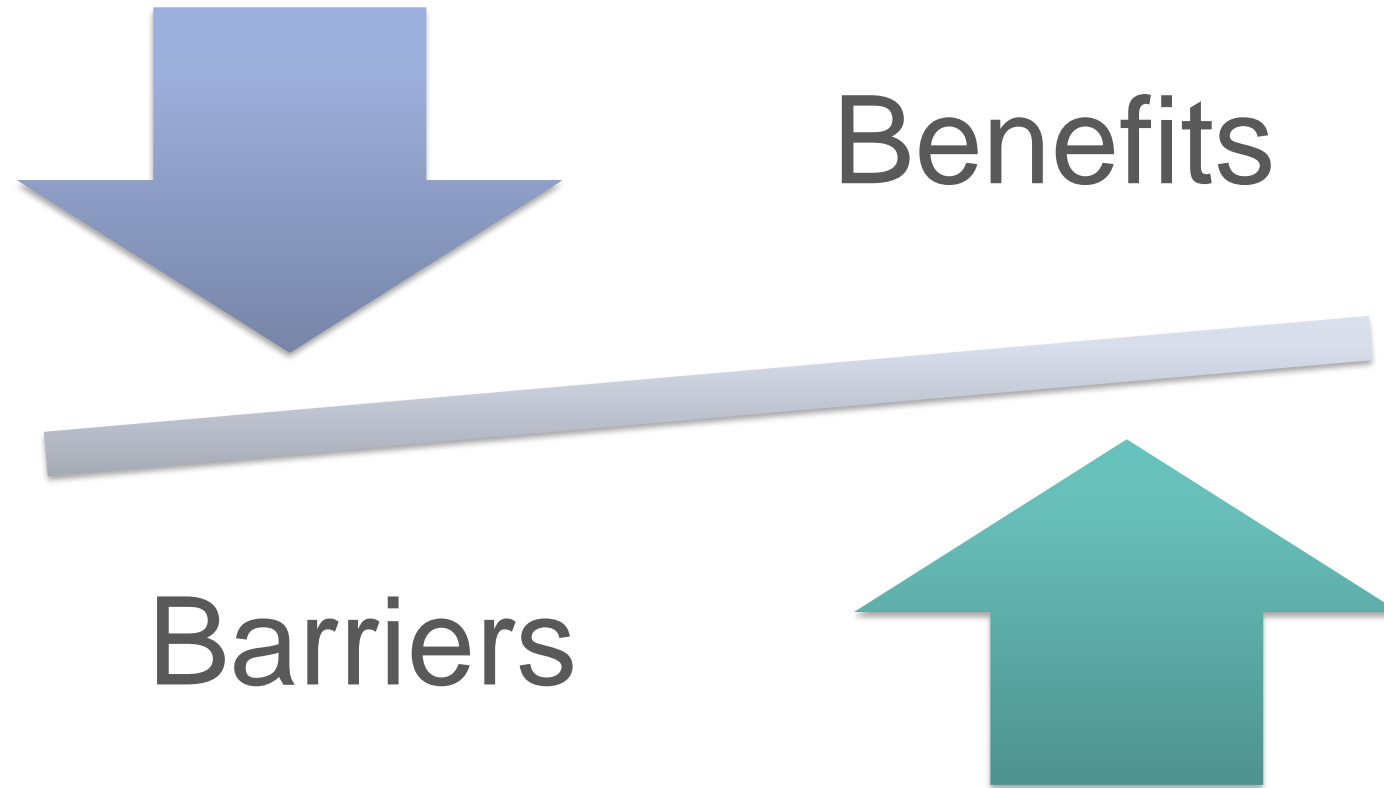
Reflective



Environment



Benefits and barriers



Barriers

Why are many teachers reluctant to use speaking & listening activities?

- ▶ Classroom management
- ▶ Students discomfort
- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Time pressures
- ▶ Assessment



How can you create the right environment?



Think about:

1. Physical environment
2. Guidelines and expectations – habits and routines
3. Teacher
 - a) Planning lessons
 - b) Planning questions
 - c) Planning learning outcomes

Habits and routines

- ▶ How can we develop our learners' language skills through specific habits and routines?
- ▶ Should spoken language and active listening be incorporated into every lesson?



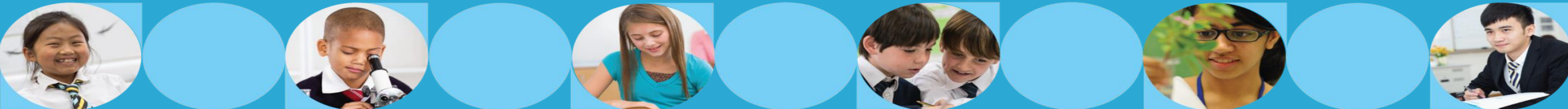
Reflection

To create an effect environment for listening, what changes would **you** need to make to your:

- ▶ Classroom
- ▶ Planning
- ▶ Use of language?



Practical classroom ideas



Developing the language of learners

- ▶ Work in pairs
- ▶ Person A sit with your back to the screen, person B sit facing the screen
- ▶ An image of a landscape will appear
- ▶ Person B has 3 minutes to describe the landscape to Person A, using as much description and being as detailed as possible
- ▶ Person A looks at the image and offers feedback to Person B on how well they could picture the landscape. What was missing?



Visible thinking routines

See: what can you see? Describe the picture

Think: what do you think is happening in the picture?

Wonder: what bigger questions does this picture make you ask?

Project Zero, Harvard University



Bringing learning intentions to life

Snapshot

‘Marriage is a sacred bond’

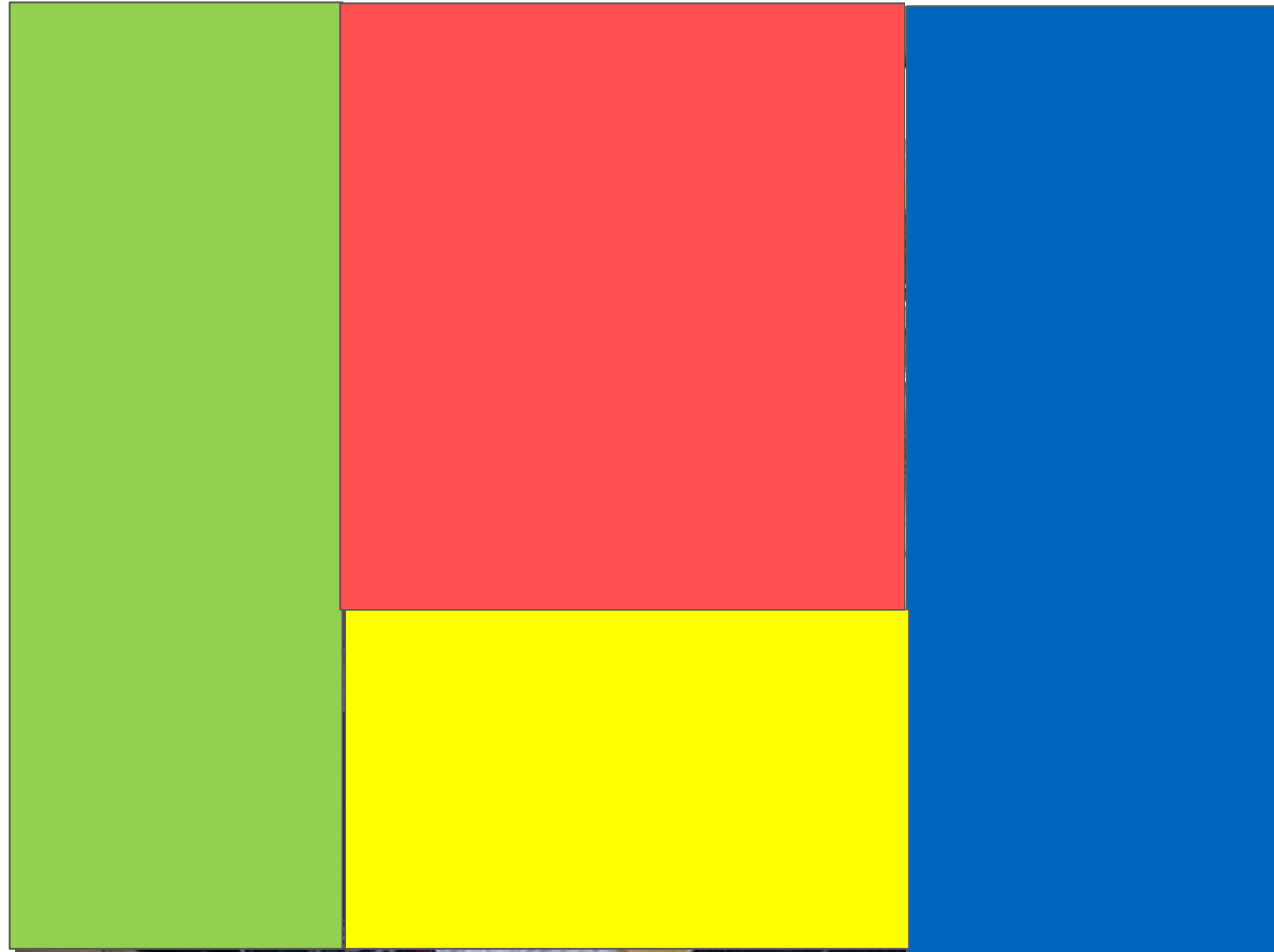
‘Shaadi no longer means marriage, it means wedding... a desire to compete, boast and beat others at it.’



Slow reveal - what do you think is happening in this picture?

What do you think is happening in this picture?

What questions does this picture make you ask?



Assessing learners' understanding through talk

What are the advantages of using speaking and listening for formative assessment?

- ▶ A presentation instead of an essay
- ▶ Role play
- ▶ Group discussion
- ▶ Audio recording
- ▶ Video recording



Resources and further reading

Listening Skills

Hear What People Are Really Saying

Start Here

Active listening is a technique that enables you to fully concentrate on what others are saying, and to understand their complete message. It can make you more effective at work, increase your ability to influence and negotiate, and prevent misunderstandings.

- 1 Pay Attention**
Here's how to do it: Look at the speaker, be aware of their body language, and ignore distractions.
- 2 Show That You're Listening**
Nod, smile and say "yes" or "uh-huh" from time to time, to encourage the speaker to continue.
- 3 Provide Feedback**
Reflect the speaker's words back to them, and ask questions to check that you understand correctly.
- 4 Defer Judgment**
Allow the speaker to finish their point before you offer a counter argument. It's a discussion, not a race!
- 5 Respond Appropriately**
Be open, honest and respectful of the speaker's opinion – even if you don't agree with it. If you understand one another's positions, you can work toward a shared goal.

Make sure that you really hear what the other person is saying. Stay focused, and avoid falling back into old habits.

Becoming an active listener can increase your productivity, improve your relationships, and help you to avoid conflict.

To learn more about Listening Skills, read the article at www.mindtools.com/listen

MindTools © Mind Tools Ltd. 2019

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

- WE GIVE PROOF OF LISTENING
- WE RESPECT OTHERS' IDEAS
- WE BUILD, CHALLENGE, SUMMARISE, CLARIFY, AND PROBE EACH OTHER'S IDEAS
- WE ARE PREPARED TO CHANGE OUR MIND
- WE INVITE OTHERS INTO OUR DISCUSSION
- WE TRY TO REACH A SHARED AGREEMENT

Cambridge Assessment International Education

Back to top | What is language awareness? | Benefits | Theory | Misconceptions | Language awareness in practice | Checklist | Next steps | Glossary

Getting started with Language Awareness

Cambridge International Education Teaching and Learning Team



Learning to Listen

By Paul Ellis | 17.01.19 | In General, N



Talking about oracy: how teachers can develop their students' speaking skills

By Helen Rees-Bidder | 07.11.18 | In General, Teaching strategies | Comments 0

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Approaches to learning and teaching

First Language English

a toolkit for international teachers

Helen Rees-Bidder

Cambridge Assessment International Education

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Approaches to learning and teaching

English as a Second Language

a toolkit for international teachers

Margaret Cooze

Cambridge Assessment International Education

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Approaches to learning and teaching

Modern Foreign Languages

a toolkit for international teachers

Paul Ellis and Lauren Harris

Cambridge Assessment International Education



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Thank you
Any questions?

