

Powerful Words Project 2020-21





"The limits of my language are the limits of my world" Ludwig Wittgerstein

'REDUCE WORD POVERTY' 'DEVELOP LITERACY' 'IMPROVE LIFE CHANCES'

The **Powerful Words Project** will improve KS2 teaching practice by equipping teachers with **evidence-informed approaches** and resources **for developing vocabulary.** We will see:

- Positive change in pupils' vocabulary, reading, writing and oracy
- KS2 teachers increase their knowledge, strategies and confidence to explicitly teach vocabulary, create a rich language environment, and provide children with opportunities to hear and confidently experiment with new words

Why do we need the Powerful Words Project?

We need to
understand the
meaning of a
minimum of 90% of
Words in a passage
in order to
comprehend it, & then
to begin to learn the
other 10% of the words



30 million word gap

By the age of 3, children from disadvantaged background are estimated to have heard 30 million fewer words than their advantaged peers

By the end of KS2, disadvantaged pupils are estimated to have less than half of the 25,000 words that their advantaged peers possess





12,000 words

Commitment from Project Schools

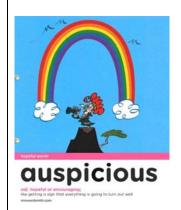


ACTIVITY (in each KS2 class):

- 15 minutes/day of a teacher reading aloud from a good quality (tier 2-rich) text (from Spring Term)
- 15 minutes/day of Explicit Vocabulary Instruction (EVI) (from Spring term)
- 40 minutes/week of oracy activity (from Summer term)

TRAINING AND CASCADING:

A School Lead will attend each CPD session. Part of the role of these Leads will be to cascade their learning to the rest of their staff.



CPD cost: £260/School Lead

Resource costs: Mrs Wordsmith resources £120/class (fewer copies of each can be purchased)

- 2 x Mrs Wordsmith Word a Day wordstands (Part 1 and Part 2)
- 8 x Mrs Wordsmith storyteller dictionaries per KS2 class.

You can see the resources if you go to https://uk.mrswordsmith.com and/or we can arrange a zoom meeting to show the resources in more detail.

Three CPD staff books are recommended; 'Closing the Vocabulary Gap' by Alex Quigley, 'Word Power' by Kelly Ashley, and 'Transform Teaching and learning through Talk: The Oracy Imperative' by Amy Gaunt and Alice Stott

If you are interested in joining Powerful Words 2020–21 and/or would like more information, please contact Alison Chandler on achandler@tmet.org.uk

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PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Led by Kelly Ashley (https://kellyashleyconsultancy.wordpress.com/) and School Leads from the original Powerful Words SSIF project who have trained their colleagues and successfully implemented Powerful Words in their schools.

Autumn Term (after ½ term)	 Session 1: Powerful Words What is the vocabulary gap? Why do we need to close it? What does research tell us about how to close the gap? Developing a word-rich culture. Project expectations and how to successfully implement the project in your school. 	Online 'live' ½ day (split into two parts with a break in the middle)
Spring Term (before ½ term)	Session 2a: Practical strategies for planning & teaching vocabulary • Practical strategies for using Mrs Wordsmith resources • Mapping words into the curriculum • Making words 'stick'	Online pre- recorded
	Session 2b: Q & A session - Mrs Wordsmith & teaching vocabulary	Online 'live' twilight
Spring Term (after ½ term)	Session 3a: Oracy (based on the work of Voice21) • The case for oracy • Introduction of the Oracy Framework • Embedding oracy into every lesson: strategies for effectively structuring and promoting high quality pupil-pupil talk Session 3b: Q & A session – Oracy	Face to Face 1 day OR Online pre- recorded plus online 'live' twilight
Summer Term (before ½ term)	Session 4: Project 'Surgery' • An opportunity to share what is working well and learn possible solutions to challenges to project implementation across KS2.	Face to Face twilight
Summer Term (after ½ term)	Session 5: Project reflection & Looking ahead • The journey so far – changes since Autumn 2020 • How might Powerful Words look in KS1? • Sustaining positive change in the post–project period	Face to Face ½ day

School Leads will be given 'bitesize' cascade PowerPoints after each CPD input to 'cascade' their learning to colleagues without the need to prepare resources themselves.







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Outcomes and Impact

After an academic year of our original SSIF Powerful Words project with 22 schools, we found that:

READING

- 79% of all KS2 disadvantaged pupils met or exceeded expected levels of progress in reading using the New Group Reading Test
 (a nationally standardised test administered by GL Assessment) –
 9% higher than our target (based on GL's national data set where 70% of pupils make average progress in reading age), and with a gap of only 2.78% between their advantaged peers
- School Leads reported that children showed increased confidence when attempting SATS reading tests

VOCABULARY

- At the end of term 3, over 3000 pupils were tested on a sample of 18 words that they had been explicitly taught to them using resources and strategies in the project.
- The sample of words included feud, tenacious, ambush, dreary, affluent, insatiable, nauseating and imposing. The mean score for all disadvantaged pupils was 15/18, only one point lower than their advantaged peers who had a mean score of 16/18.
- The term 3 survey of 105 KS2 teachers, 88% reported that they felt confident that their disadvantaged pupils have a rich, receptive vocabulary, compared to a term 1 baseline of only 20%
- By term 3, 98% of these 105 KS2 teachers felt confident in using evidence informed approaches to support teaching of explicit vocabulary instruction, compared to only 40% of teachers in our baseline survey

WRITING

- Y3, 4 & 5 sample group writing age showed accelerated progress between terms 1-3 (No More Marking comparative judgement results)
- 2 of our project schools had their Yr6 writing portfolios externally moderated and in both instances, pupils' vocabulary was specifically singled out as an area of strength
- In our term 3 survey of 105 KS2 teachers, 87% reported they felt confident that their disadvantaged pupils were using rich and expressive vocabulary in their writing, compared to only 17% of teachers in our term 1 baseline survey. (based on GL's national data set where 70% of pupils make average progress in reading age), and with a gap of only 2.78% between their advantaged peers
- One school received an Ofsted inspection and the project was specifically singled out for praise:
 "The school has fully embraced a vocabulary initiative [...] Staff have been trained and it is being implemented consistently across KS2. Impact is evident in improved writing in books and pupils' willingness to try out new words."

School Leads from the previous two Powerful Words Projects (2018-20 & 2019-20) will share examples of writing improvement and how the project supported positive change in their school during the programme.