# 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     25,000 words

## Commitment from Project Schools

**bloodshot**
*adj. red and sore;
how your eyes look when you haven't had nearly enough sleep
mrswordsmith.com*

**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.

**auspicious**
*adj. hopeful or encouraging;
like getting a sign that everything is going to turn out well
mrswordsmith.com*

**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.

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|---|---|---|
| **Autumn Term** (after ½ term) | **Session 1:  Powerful Words**<br>• **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.**<br>• **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**<br>• **Practical strategies for using Mrs Wordsmith resources**<br>• **Mapping words into the curriculum**<br>• **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)**<br>• **The case for oracy**<br>• **Introduction of the Oracy Framework**<br>• **Embedding oracy into every lesson:  strategies for effectively structuring and promoting high quality pupil-pupil talk** | **Face to Face 1 day OR Online pre-recorded plus online 'live' twilight** |
| | **Session 3b: Q & A session – Oracy** | |
| **Summer Term** (before ½ term) | **Session 4:  Project 'Surgery'**<br>• **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**<br>• **The journey so far – changes since Autumn 2020**<br>• **How might Powerful Words look in KS1?**<br>• **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.**



**feud**
noun a quarrel or argument that is never settled, like people fighting about the same thing for years
mrswordsmith.com

**ravenous**
adj. hungry or starving, when you feel like you could eat an entire roast dinner in one bite
mrswordsmith.com

**stunned**
adj. amazed, dazed, or stupefied, like being so surprised you instantly freeze
mrswordsmith.com

**peer**
verb to peek or stare, like looking over your shoulder to see what's going on
mrswordsmith.com

**insatiable**
adj. greedy or impossible to satisfy; so hungry you never fill up
mrswordsmith.com

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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.**