

## Ensuring the attainment of more advanced learners of English as an additional language (EAL)

### CPDM 5 Bridging talk and text: formal talk

#### Presenter's overview

##### Aims

- To consider the similarities between formal talk and written text.
- To consider how formal talk supports the development of academic writing.
- To explore a range of learning activities and teaching techniques which bridge talk and text.

##### Key messages

- Talk is an essential component of any strategy to improve writing.
- Formal talk has identifiable structures which resemble those in writing.
- Pupils need to hear good models of formal talk and be able to identify the conventions.
- Pupils need opportunities to speak in a formal register to support the development of their academic writing.

#### Overview of training modules

<b>CPDM 1</b> Senior leader briefing: leading change for more advanced EAL learners	<b>CPDM 2</b> Analysing writing: assessing the needs of more advanced learners
<b>CPDM 3</b> Making sense of literacy targets: learning objectives and activities	<b>CPDM 4</b> Talk as a tool for thinking: exploratory talk
<b>CPDM 5</b> Bridging talk and text: formal talk	<b>CPDM 6</b> Reading as a writer: exploring challenging texts
<b>CPDM 7</b> Reading as a writer: understanding the writer's purpose	<b>CPDM 8</b> Thinking and writing as a writer: the sequence for teaching writing
<b>CPDM 9</b> EMA coordinators: developing a strategic approach	<b>CPDM 10</b> Parents and community: supporting pupils' learning

### Next steps for colleagues

- Make links with subject areas that have already developed robust formal talk strategies.
- Plan activities such as podcasting, which require a more formal register.
- Identify time in department meetings to develop key questions to promote progression in thinking skills.
- Group teachers in coaching pairs or threes to plan and observe talk activities both within and across subject areas.
- Consider the role of additional adults in promoting talk and their training needs.

### Notes

- Trainers' notes, including references from other useful publications, are provided to support presenters in ensuring that aims and key messages are covered.
- The activities provided are intended as examples. Presenters should choose from and adapt as necessary to fit local priorities.

### Resources and further reading

Search using the reference numbers listed below:

[www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies)

- *Ensuring the attainment of more advanced EAL learners – a guided resource* (Ref: 00045-2009DVD-EN)
- *Literacy and Learning* (Ref: 0651-2004)
- *Teaching speaking and listening* (00023-2007)
- *Literacy across the curriculum* (Ref: 0235-2001): Unit 7 The management of group talk (delivered to all schools and local authorities in April 2001).

[www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)

- *Introducing the grammar of talk* (Ref: QCA/04/1291)

Overview		Total time 75 minutes
Timing	Activity	Resources
5min	Introduction and aims of the session.	<b>Slide 1:</b> Title slide <b>Slide 2:</b> Aims
10min	What do we mean by talk?	<b>Slide 3:</b> A continuum of talk <b>Slide 4:</b> The mode continuum <b>Handout 1:</b> The mode continuum <b>Slide 5:</b> What affects the way we speak and write? <b>Slide 6:</b> A teaching and learning sequence
25min	The continuum	<b>Slide 7:</b> Modelling formal talk: the continuum debate <b>Resource 1:</b> Modelling formal talk <b>Video clip:</b> The continuum debate
25min	Promoting formal talk	<b>Slide 8:</b> Formal talk activities <b>Resources 2a and 2b:</b> Dictogloss <b>Resources 3a, 3b and 3c:</b> Socratic talk <b>Resources 4a and 4b:</b> Fattening up questions <b>Resource 5:</b> Opportunities to promote formal talk
10min	Plenary and next steps	<b>Slide 9:</b> Plenary and next steps

**Equipment required:** slide presentation, data projector, screen, laptop, flipchart.

## CPDM 5 Bridging talk and text: formal talk

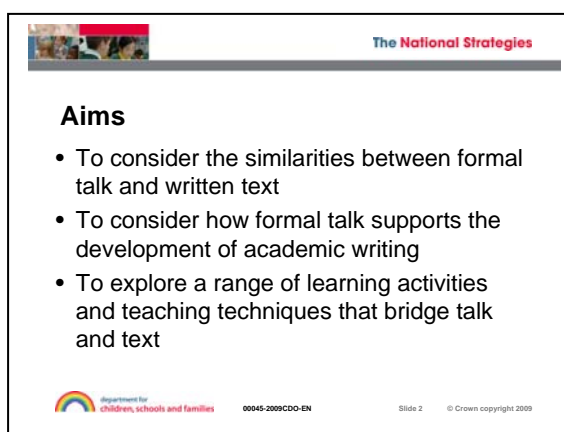
### Presenter's notes

**Audience:** All staff.

#### Introduction (5min)

**Use slide 1** (title slide) to welcome colleagues and say that this session is aimed at considering the role of formal talk in developing writing.

**Show slide 2** and share the aims for the session.

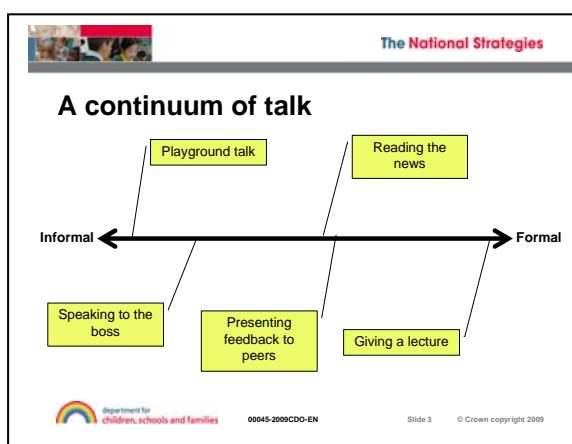


The slide is titled 'The National Strategies' at the top right. Below the title is a horizontal line. The main heading is 'Aims'. There are three bullet points: 'To consider the similarities between formal talk and written text', 'To consider how formal talk supports the development of academic writing', and 'To explore a range of learning activities and teaching techniques that bridge talk and text'. At the bottom left is the logo for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At the bottom center is the reference number '00045-2009CDO-EN'. At the bottom right is 'Slide 2 © Crown copyright 2009'.

Explain to colleagues that while formal talk and presentations can be an end in themselves (and an assessment opportunity), this session will consider the role of formal talk in scaffolding writing.

#### What do we mean by talk? (10min)

**Show slide 3.**



Note to presenter: each click will bring up a different kind of talk.

Tell colleagues that a simple way of visualising this is by placing contexts for informal talk at one end of a continuum and formal talk at the other. *Point out that this is a rather over-simplified model as playground talk can be more formal if children are role-playing and that*

## 5 of 32 The National Strategies | Secondary CPDM 5 – Bridging talk and text

*the talk used in presenting the news varies in formality from one TV or radio station to another.*

Ask colleagues to look at **handout 1** – The mode continuum and consider the differences in language used.

**Show slide 4.**

**The mode continuum**

Text 1 Spoken-like text Situation-embedded Reference words (it, they, etc.)	Text 2 Spoken-like text Situation-embedded Subject-specific words
Text 3 Written-like text Less situation-embedded	Text 4 Written-like text Not situation-embedded Nominalisation

Department for children, schools and families 00045-2009CDO-EN Slide 4 © Crown copyright 2009

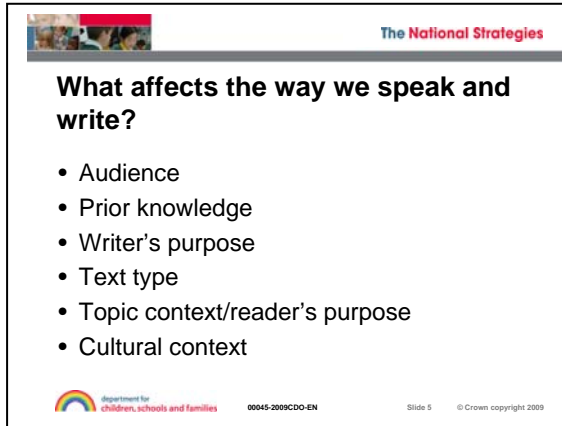
Say that this is a good representation of the shift from a very informal form of exploratory talk to a much more formal register used in written text and that the more formal feedback (text 2) is an important scaffold for the pupil's writing in text 3.

However, in both text 2 and text 3, there is still a shared context (pupils all having carried out the same experiment and a teacher who is familiar with the work), whereas text 4 does not have a shared context and therefore has to:

- 1) be explicit
- 2) use technical terms
- 3) use a more authoritative, informed tone (nominalisation)

in order to establish the context in more generalised terms for the reader.

Show slide 5.



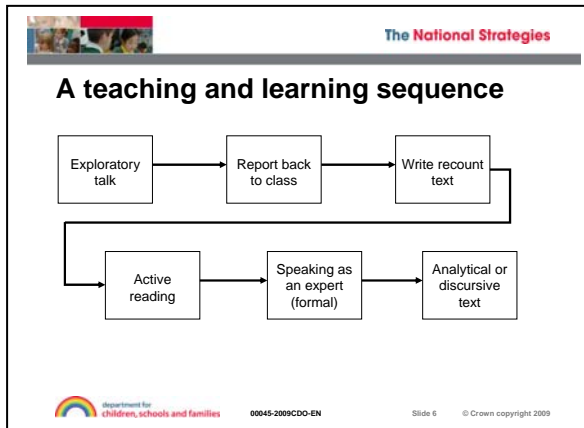
The slide is titled "The National Strategies" in the top right corner. The main heading is "What affects the way we speak and write?". Below this, there is a bulleted list of six factors: Audience, Prior knowledge, Writer's purpose, Text type, Topic context/reader's purpose, and Cultural context. At the bottom left, there is a logo for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At the bottom center, the text "00045-2009CDO-EN" is visible. At the bottom right, it says "Slide 5 © Crown copyright 2009".

Explain that to move towards the formality of text 4 we need to consider the following (click on each as you explain):

- audience (wide and unknown personally to the author)
- prior knowledge (unknown)
- writer's purpose (to inform by outlining general principles backed up by examples)
- text type (information analysis? rather than recount)
- topic context/reader's purpose (not shared)
- cultural context (we expect encyclopaedias to be accurate and authoritative).

To scaffold this shift, we need a slightly different model.

Show slide 6.



Tell colleagues that this works in the following way:

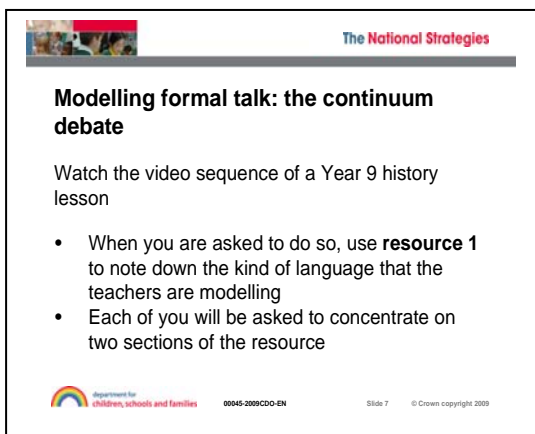
- **exploratory talk** allows pupils to use their own ideas and make connections with prior knowledge and thinking through experimenting or problem-solving
- **report back** formalises the process and allows pupils to come to a provisional conclusion based on their own ideas
- **recount text** (this could be omitted) is almost a written record of the report back and could be notes, bullet points or short paragraphs
- **active reading** introduces new information from 'expert' sources
- **speaking as an expert** allows the pupils to synthesise ideas from reading with their own ideas **and** rehearse the more formal register required
- this is then a scaffold for the **analytical or discursive text**, in terms of ideas, structure and language.

### The continuum (25 minutes)

Ask colleagues to locate **resource 1** and tell them that in the lesson they are about to see on the video clip, the following learning activities have preceded the continuum debate:

- activating prior knowledge and thinking (History mystery box and Rolling the dice)
- discussion of objectives and outcomes
- active reading of source material.

Show slide 7.



The slide is titled 'The National Strategies' at the top right. Below the title is a small image of a group of people. The main heading is 'Modelling formal talk: the continuum debate'. The text below reads: 'Watch the video sequence of a Year 9 history lesson'. There are two bullet points: 'When you are asked to do so, use **resource 1** to note down the kind of language that the teachers are modelling' and 'Each of you will be asked to concentrate on two sections of the resource'. At the bottom left is the logo for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At the bottom center is the code '00045-2009CDO-EN'. At the bottom right is 'Slide 7 © Crown copyright 2009'.


Show the video sequence, pausing just before the modelling of the continuum debate begins. At this point, ask each participant to focus on two of the language functions on **resource 1**. Ensure that all the categories are covered by members of the group.

### Notes

- If asked about the presence of three teachers in the video sequence, explain that this is a model of 'Masterclasses' that the school used as a CPD model to try out new ideas as a team before using them in their own classes.
- Ask for brief feedback (perhaps two examples for each language function) and point out which of these were used by the pupils when they spoke.

### Promoting formal talk in the classroom (25min)

Show slide 8.



The slide is titled 'The National Strategies' at the top right. Below the title is a small image of a group of people. The main heading is 'Formal talk activities'. The text below reads: 'In pairs or threes, you will be trying out one of these three approaches:'. There are three bullet points: 'Dictogloss', 'Socratic talk', and 'Fattening-up' questions. Below the bullet points is the text: 'Record your reflections on **resource 5**'. At the bottom left is the logo for the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At the bottom center is the code '00045-2009CDO-EN'. At the bottom right is 'Slide 8 © Crown copyright 2009'.



## 9 of 32 The National Strategies | Secondary CPDM 5 – Bridging talk and text

Tell colleagues that they are now going to try out one of three different approaches to developing formal talk. Say that you will lead the Dictogloss group using **resources 2a and 2b** and that the others will use **resources 3a–c** (Socratic talk) or **resources 4a and 4b** (Fattening up questions).

**Note:** If the colleagues have experienced the exploratory talk session as part of CPDM4 and have therefore already participated in a Socratic talk activity, you might prefer to concentrate on the other two approaches.

Ask colleagues to use **resource 5** to record the ways in which the activity helps develop formal talk. Allow 15 minutes to try the approaches.

### Leading the Dictogloss activity:

Explain to the Dictogloss group that you will read them a text three times and that they will be given time to construct a text (**not replicate the original text**) in pairs. Point out that for training purposes, the text is not from any school subject area, so that colleagues might not have expert knowledge of the topic.

- Explain that the first time you read the text, no one is to write. The purpose is to listen to the overall meaning of the text.
- Tell the group that the second time you read, they are allowed to make notes, perhaps writing down the topic of each paragraph, maybe some key terms and key ideas.
- The third time you read, tell them to make any further notes they need.

After the third reading, give the group 5 minutes to construct a meaningful text. At this stage they can work in pairs. Repeat that the purpose is not to replicate the original, but to create a meaningful, cohesive text that will contain a number of features of the original.

**Either:** choose one text to scan and show the whole group

**or:** ask one pair to read out their first paragraph.

Change to:

- Discuss the choices made, focusing particularly on:
  - how well the text hangs together (cohesion)
  - the use of subject-specific vocabulary
  - the appropriateness of tone and register (are there any words or phrases that are inappropriate in a text of this type?)
  - how well the sense of the original has been conveyed
- Ask colleagues to fill in the first column of the appropriate section of **resource 5**.

Now bring all the groups back together and ask colleagues to feed back on the ways in which these approaches support the development of formal talk. Draw out the following:

### Dictogloss

Pupils hear formal language used repeatedly in context and work collaboratively to construct a similar text. This enables the pupils to adopt the 'voice' of the writer.

### Socratic talk

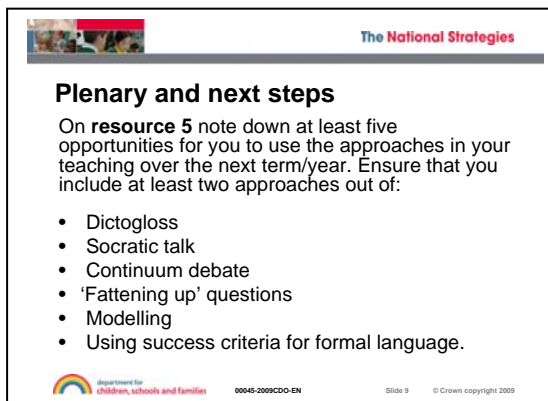
The teacher decides on observation cards in line with the lesson objectives, thus ensuring that the focus is on language and register appropriate to the task. Feedback from the outer group is very specific and enables the class to set targets for improvement.

### 'Fattening up' questions

Explain to colleagues that this is as much about higher-order thinking as it is about language. Say that as the 'fattened' questions require pupils to improve on simple responses, the level of language required will need to match and perhaps be modelled or prompted by the teacher or other pupils.

### Plenary and next steps (10min)

Show slide 9.



The National Strategies

#### Plenary and next steps

On **resource 5** note down at least five opportunities for you to use the approaches in your teaching over the next term/year. Ensure that you include at least two approaches out of:

- Dictogloss
- Socratic talk
- Continuum debate
- 'Fattening up' questions
- Modelling
- Using success criteria for formal language.

Department for Children, Schools and Families 00045-2009CDO-EN Slide 9 © Crown copyright 2009

Tell colleagues that modelling and use of success criteria are slightly different in that they are approaches that should inform all aspects of teaching formal language and register.

Allow 10 minutes for this task. Explain that you will not take feedback, but that **resource 5** should be used as the basis for planning. If appropriate, collect completed copies of **resource 5** to give to the appropriate middle or senior leader. Also remind colleagues of *Ensuring the attainment of more advanced EAL learners – a guided resource* (Ref: 00045-2009DVD-EN) for additional materials, case studies and video footage.

## The mode continuum

## Handout 1

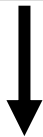
Text 1:

**this...no, it doesn't go...it doesn't move...try that...yes...it does...a bit...that won't...won't work, it's not metal...these are the best...going really fast.**



Text 2:

**We tried a pin...a pencil sharpener...some iron filings and a piece of plastic. The magnet didn't attract the pin.**



Text 3:

**Our experiment was to find out what a magnet attracted. We discovered that a magnet attracts some kinds of metal. It attracted the iron filings, but not the pin.**



Text 4:

**A magnet ...is able to pick up, or attract, a piece of steel or iron because its magnetic field flows into the steel, turning it into a temporary magnet. Magnetic attraction occurs only between ferrous metals.**

Adapted from *Learning to learn in a second language*, Primary English Teaching Association, Australia.



## Modelling formal talk

## Resource 1

Watch the video clip about the continuum debate. As you watch the teachers modelling the activity, note down the language they use to carry out the functions in column 1 of the grid below.

Function	Language used in modelling
Signalling main ideas	
Accepting others' ideas	
Rejecting others' ideas politely	
Building on an idea	
Using evidence to back up an idea	
Summarising	
Comparing	
Contrasting	
Stressing the importance of an idea	
Evaluating ideas	
Using subject-specific vocabulary	
Using inappropriate register/language	
Incorporating others' ideas into an argument	



## Instructions for Dictogloss activity

## Resource 2a

The purpose of Dictogloss is for pupils to hear a text relevant to the topic being covered, but to concentrate on the language used to construct the text as well as its meaning.

There are five stages to the Dictogloss technique:

1. The teacher reads the text aloud at normal speed and the pupils listen without taking notes.
2. The teacher reads the text aloud a second time and the pupils make notes. This stage could be scaffolded by asking pupils to concentrate on certain aspects, for example key words and phrases.
3. The teacher reads the text for the third time and pupils again make notes. If using scaffolding, the teacher might ask the pupils to concentrate on paragraphs, grouping of ideas/topics and further detail.
4. The pupils now spend 10–15 minutes in pairs or small groups constructing a meaningful text. The purpose is not to replicate the original, but to create a meaningful, cohesive text that might contain a number of features of the original.
5. The teacher leads a discussion based on the text written by one of the groups. This discussion might focus on meaning, cohesion, text type, register, key phrases, technical vocabulary or any combination of those.

### Notes:

- Depending upon the length of the text, the number of readings could be reduced to two.
- The text should be no shorter than five sentences, but not so long that the pupils lose interest.





## Dictogloss text

## Resource 2b

### Instructions for presenters.

Remind the group of the objectives: to listen then create a meaningful discursive text similar to, but not exactly the same as, the original.

- Tell the group that they are going to listen to a text three times.
- Say that the first time you read it, they are not allowed to take notes, but should listen for the meaning and the tone of the text.
- The second time you read it, say that they are allowed to take notes – perhaps paragraphs and grouping of ideas.
- The third time you read it, tell them to focus on key words and phrases.
- Then give the group 10 minutes in pairs to create a text similar to the one you read. Remind them that the purpose is not to replicate the text you read, but to create a cohesive, meaningful text of their own that uses some ideas, words and phrases from the original.

### **What is the best way to learn another language?**

In schools around the UK the debate is raging again about the best way for new arrivals to learn English. Should we divert the pupils towards English classes in dedicated language units? Should we let them sink or swim? Or should we use the most appropriate research in the linguistics field to tailor our approach?

Much of the research in this area has drawn upon the way in which infants learn their first language. In the 1950s and 60s, theorists such as Noam Chomsky posited the theory of a universal grammar – an innate set of rules that all humans have – which children then apply to the linguistic input they receive. Any failure to learn (or errors made) were then ascribed to ‘poverty of stimulus’, or poor quality language heard by the child.

Other theorists such as Jerome Bruner were able to show that children learn by selecting and sorting language input to construct meaning. For these researchers, language learning is both constructivist and collaborative and, as Professor Stephen Krashen has stated, a question of language acquisition.

More recent research has shown that for older bilingual children who have more learning strategies at their disposal, both acquisition and more formal learning are important. The message is clear – new arrivals need to be amongst English speakers in mainstream classes and with teachers who can bring to the fore the language of their subject.



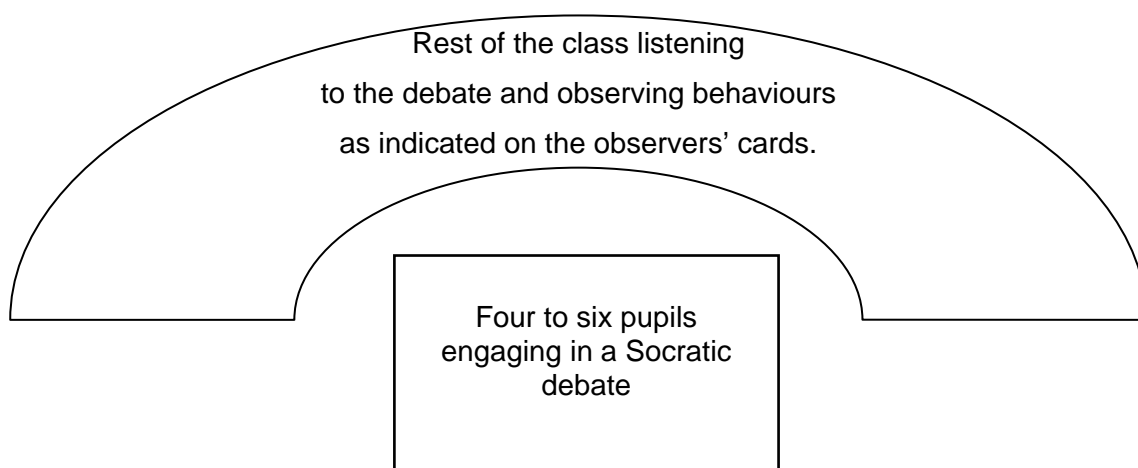
## What is a Socratic debate?

## Resource 3a

In a Socratic debate a group of students will debate a question or an idea arising for the topic they are studying.

While the students are debating, they are observed by an outer group (see **diagram 1**, below), all of whom have been given a specific focus for their observations. For example, if the final outcome is a piece of discursive writing, the outer group might be looking for features such as 'Examples of evidence given to back up an argument' or 'Examples of connectives used to qualify ideas'. If the objective is to improve speaking skills and behaviours, then the features to be observed might be 'Examples of disagreeing without causing offence' or 'Positive body language to encourage others'.

**Diagram 1: Pupil grouping in a Socratic debate.**



It is usually helpful for the pupils to have some form of text, diagrams or series of images from which to draw evidence for the debate.

The topic for debate and observational focuses need to be clearly linked to the lesson objective and outcomes. For example, if the lesson outcome is a discursive essay around a set text in English or a series of sources in history, the Socratic group in the centre will discuss the issues while the outer group observes for all the features of a good balanced discussion such as use of evidence, qualifying ideas and reaching a conclusion.



Examples of Socratic debate observers' cards

Resource 3b

<p>Observe _____ (write in name of one person). Note how s/he:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contributes to the discussion</li> <li>• builds on others' ideas</li> <li>• encourages others to contribute.</li> </ul>	<p>Note down every occasion on which colleagues use evidence from the text to back up their arguments. What language do they use to do this? (e.g. as shown by...)</p>
<p>What language is used in the debate to emphasise the importance of an idea?</p>	<p>What language is used in the debate to build on an idea?</p>
<p>Note down every use of technical or specialist vocabulary.</p>	<p>Note down any examples you find of Point, Evidence, Explanation (PEE).</p>
<p>Note down instances of colleagues changing their opinion by taking into account others' points of view. What expressions do they use to do this?</p>	<p>Note down every time someone uses a quotation from the text. Decide whether or not the quotation they use is appropriate.</p>
<p>Note down every time you hear a connective used to qualify an idea.</p>	<p>Note down any impersonal expression (e.g. 'it is sometimes said that...') used in the debate.</p>
<p>Were there any summaries either during or at the end of the debate? What words/phrases indicated that it was a summary?</p>	<p>How was the topic introduced? What language was used?</p>



## Socratic talk case study

## Resource 3c

Following professional development on Socratic talk at a local authority network meeting, the lead teacher in a programme school planned opportunities to incorporate the strategy into the Year 8 Scheme of learning in English. The aim of the lesson was to organise and present whole texts effectively (AF3) and the outcomes were to produce a coherent formal response leading to a piece of discursive writing, debating the effectiveness of two presentations of the same text.

The starter activity began with the lead practitioner posing the question: 'How do we structure a balanced discussion?' The pupils worked in pairs to identify some key points which they shared with the class. The teacher then exemplified how to structure a speech in writing using a text skeleton. The audience, purpose, format and language of the discursive piece that the pupils were going to be writing later in the lesson were identified through questioning and recorded as a reference point on the whiteboard.

The class shared the reading of a poem on bullying and a group of targeted learners conducted a debate on the power and effectiveness of the text while the rest of the class were provided with a particular assessment target (for example, use of connectives) to listen for and comment on.

Once the debate had concluded, the peer reviewers provided feedback using speaking prompts. A short film of the poem in performance was then shown to the class and the same pupils debated the impact and effectiveness of the film while the rest of the class again assessed their talk using peer review prompts.

The pupils were allocated into ability groups of four; each group had to produce a short formal talk. Learners worked in pairs, within their group of four, producing the opening and closing and the middle two parts of the talk to guarantee cohesion of the whole (this session lasted for approximately 20 minutes).

At the end of the lesson, the groups presented their prepared talks to the class. Their peers assessed each other's contributions by offering carefully planned and thoughtfully constructed questions. They were asked to respond using two positive comments, and one area for improvement under the headings: 'What went well?' and 'A really constructive criticism'.





## 'Fattening up' questions (1)

## Resource 4a

Look at column 1 below. There is a list of common questions which rely on lower-order thinking skills such as remembering or applying a rule.

The teaching strategies listed in column 2 (with examples in column 3) mean that the questions will demand a level of higher thinking such as evaluation or synthesis.

Commonly-asked question	Strategy	Fattened question
Can 7/9 be simplified?	Give the answer and ask why it's correct	Why can 7/9 not be simplified?
Is this a regular verb?	Make it an open question	Why is this a regular verb?
Is this a good prediction?	Focus on how to work the answer out	What makes a good prediction in geography?
What is the area of this rectangle?	Give the answer and ask what the question could be	The area of this rectangle is $12\text{cm}^2$ . What are the possible lengths of the sides?
$4.3 \times 0.06 =$	Focus on common misunderstandings	Which is the correct answer: 25.8, 0.258, 0.252?
Is this a good sentence?	Compare/contrast	Why is sentence A better than sentence B?



## Fattening up questions (2)

## Resource 4b

Using **resource 6** as a guide...

1. 'Fatten up' the question from column 1 and write it down in column 2.
2. In column 3, write down which fattening up strategy you used.
3. In column 4 think of a question that you could include in a current unit of work, using the same strategy.

Common question	Fattened-up question	Strategy used	Fattened-up question from my own subject using this strategy
Which foods are good for us?			
Is this a complex sentence?			
$(3x + 5)(2x - 3)$			
What do we need to make an electrical circuit work?			
What was it like to live in Nazi Germany?			
What is the name of the Jewish holy book?			
What is the best tool for cutting shapes in wood?			
Give an example of an input device for a computer			



**Opportunities to promote the use of formal talk**

**Resource 5**

Teaching approach	How this approach supports the development of formal talk	How could you use this approach in your own teaching?
Continuum activity		
Dictogloss		
Socratic talk		
Fattening up questions		
Modelling		
Language success criteria		



## CPDM 5 – Bridging talk and text

### Acknowledgements

Adapted diagram from Gibbons, P. (1991) Learning to learn in a second language, Primary English Teaching Association, Australia, [www.elit.edu.au](http://www.elit.edu.au). Used with kind permission.

