Improving Speaking and Listening Skills

a practical guide for *Skills for Life* teachers

department for education and skills creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence
Acknowledgements

This publication was developed for Tribal Education Limited and the Department for Education and Skills Skills for Life Strategy Unit by Dr Caroline Hudson (Real Educational Research Ltd).

The publication was critically reviewed by Professor Karen Bryan (University of Surrey), Professor Ronald Carter (University of Nottingham), Karen Davies (Tribal Education Limited), the DfES Skills for Life Strategy Unit, June Lewis (Tribal Education Limited), Janet Byatt (Tribal Education Limited) and Tricia O’Meara (Lincolnshire Probation Area).

See appendix 1 for a list of those who were interviewed as part of the consultation process.

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Section 1

Introduction

Focus
This practical guide is about speaking and listening for first language speakers and Skills for Life (SfL) learners. The guide aims to develop evidence-based practice and reflective practice.

Audience
The document is targeted principally at practitioners who:
- teach
- are teacher educators
- support the learning of SfL learners.

This publication is also relevant to a wider audience, such as:
- those involved in signposting and referring learners to SfL learning
- SfL managers
- policy-makers with an interest in speaking and listening
- researchers with an interest in speaking and listening.

Aims and approach
This document aims to help SfL practitioners to develop:
- their speaking and listening skills.
- the speaking and listening skills of SfL learners.

The document provides SfL practitioners with:
- research findings on speaking and listening relevant to SfL
- speaking and listening approaches and activities to try out
- reflective practice questions and activities
- examples of how to use SfL resources to focus on speaking and listening
- information about the assessment and accreditation of speaking and listening skills
- an overview of speaking and listening materials from outside SfL.

Central to this are:
- reflective practice (see section 2).
- evidence-based practice (see section 3).

The speaking and listening and reflective practice activities are based on research findings, including the comments of real practitioners and real learners.

Development
The document has been developed through:
- consultation and interviews with a wide range of stakeholders in SfL (see appendix 1)
- an analysis of research, policy and practitioner materials on speaking and listening.
Speaking and listening

Note on terminology
In this document, the terms ‘oracy’ and ‘oral communication’ are used as broadly synonymous with speaking and listening; ‘talk’ is used as synonymous with ‘speaking’ and ‘spoken language’.

Setting the context
A research review (Brooks et al., 2001) that was published at the start of the SfL strategy underlined that there has been very little research into oracy and adult basic skills learners. It is fair to say that:
- for SfL learners whose first language is English, there has been a greater focus on reading and writing than on speaking and listening
- there has been more emphasis on speaking and listening in ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) provision than in provision for learners whose first language is English
- there has been a greater focus on research, policy and practice in relation to speaking and listening in school-aged learners than in adult SfL learners.

This document therefore draws on research and practitioner resources which have been developed outside, as well as within, SfL. Many materials from outside SfL are relevant to SfL, particularly when used as part of a questioning, reflective practice approach (see sections 3 and 11).

Why speaking and listening matter
Speaking and listening are important for SfL practitioners and learners for a number of reasons:
- Spoken language is at the heart of much human interaction, at home, at work and in society.
- Speaking and listening skills are important in all contexts in which SfL learning takes place, whether it be family literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) or the offender learner sector.
- Good speaking and listening skills are a key aspect of employability: getting a job, maintaining employment and progressing at work.
- Good oral communication skills are important in other aspects of SfL learners’ wider lives, such as in family and peer relationships or when communicating with the school over children’s education.
- Purposeful use of speaking and listening is central to effective teaching and learning.
- Speaking and listening are important in all types of SfL provision, be it discrete literacy and numeracy provision or embedded learning (see section 5).
- SfL learners need to use and develop their speaking and listening skills to maximise learning gains (Lee, 2004).
- Speaking and listening are important at each stage of the SfL learning journey (see figure 1).
- SfL practitioners need well-developed speaking and listening skills to help maximise SfL learners’ progress.
Section 1 Introduction

Fig. 1: The *Skills for Life* learning journey.

Adapted from the DfES leaflet ‘The Learning Journey’.

Learning programme

1. **Signposting or referral**
   Indicates an aspiration

2. **Screening**
   Indicates a general need

3. **Initial assessment**
   Identifies a learner’s level, allowing selection of the right learning programme

4. **Diagnostic assessment**
   Leads to a detailed personal profile, providing the basis for an individual learning plan (ILP)

5. **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)**
   Based on diagnostic assessment and the curriculum

6. **Learning materials**
   Referenced to the curriculum

7. **Formative assessment**
   Takes place regularly to review progress against the learning plan

8. **Summative assessment**
   Takes place at the end of the learning, giving feedback on learning achievements; may be a qualification, test or a completed ILP
Speaking and listening in the 
Skills for Life Strategy

Overview

Since Brooks et al.’s review (2001), the importance of speaking and listening has been recognised in a number of ways in the SfL Strategy.

National Standards and the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum

Speaking and listening constitute one of the three sections of the National Standards for Adult Literacy (QCA and DfES, 2005) and of the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum (DfES, 2001). The other two sections are reading and writing.

The three sub-sections of speaking and listening (listen and respond, speak to communicate and engage in discussion) covered in the standards and the curriculum are three of the four sub-sections of speaking and listening covered by the primary and secondary strategies for students of school age. The fourth area covered at school level is drama.

This suggests a broadly consistent approach to speaking and listening across all educational sectors.

Progression in speaking and listening

- Maximising learner progression in speaking and listening, as well as in reading, writing and numeracy, is central to effective SfL teaching and learning.
- Table 1, from the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum document (pp. 10f.), outlines the progression between capabilities from Entry 1 to Level 2 in the three sub-sections of speaking and listening.

Practitioners can use this to:
- plan how to enable learners to develop specific aspects of their speaking and listening skills
- assess the development of learners’ skills.

Find out more about progression from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula.

Speaking and listening activities

Activities involving speaking and listening are included in a variety of SfL practitioner resources:
- the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum (DfES, 2001) (see section 5 of this document)
- learner materials for literacy (see section 5)
- learner materials for numeracy (see section 5)
- embedded learning materials (see section 5)
- diagnostic assessment materials (see section 4)
- Access for All (DfES, 2002) (see section 8).
At the following levels, adults can:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry 1</th>
<th>Entry 2</th>
<th>Entry 3</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen and respond</td>
<td>Listen and respond</td>
<td>Listen and respond</td>
<td>Listen and respond</td>
<td>Listen and respond</td>
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<td>to spoken language, including</td>
<td>to spoken language, including</td>
<td>to spoken language, including</td>
<td>to spoken language, including</td>
<td>to spoken language, including</td>
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<tr>
<td>simple narratives, statements,</td>
<td>straightforward information</td>
<td>straightforward information and</td>
<td>information and narratives, and follow straightforward</td>
<td>extended information and narratives, and follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questions and single-step</td>
<td>and narratives, short</td>
<td>narratives and instructions,</td>
<td>instructions of varying lengths, adapting response</td>
<td>detailed explanations and multi-step instructions of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructions.</td>
<td>narratives, explanations and</td>
<td>both face-to-face and on the</td>
<td>to speaker, medium and context.</td>
<td>varying lengths, adapting response to speaker, medium</td>
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<td></td>
<td>instructions.</td>
<td>telephone.</td>
<td></td>
<td>and context.</td>
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<td>Speak to communicate</td>
<td>Speak to communicate</td>
<td>Speak to communicate</td>
<td>Speak to communicate</td>
<td>Speak to communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basic information, feelings</td>
<td>information, feelings and</td>
<td>information, feelings and</td>
<td>information, ideas and opinions, adapting speech and</td>
<td>straightforward and detailed information, ideas and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and opinions on familiar topics.</td>
<td>opinions on familiar topics.</td>
<td>opinions on familiar topics,</td>
<td>content to take account of the listener(s) and medium.</td>
<td>opinions clearly, adapting speech and content to take</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>using appropriate formality,</td>
<td></td>
<td>account of the listener(s), medium, purpose and situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in discussion</td>
<td>Engage in discussion</td>
<td>Engage in discussion</td>
<td>Engage in discussion</td>
<td>Engage in discussion</td>
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<td>with another person in a</td>
<td>with one or more people in a</td>
<td>with one or more people in a</td>
<td>with one or more people in familiar and unfamiliar</td>
<td>with one or more people in a variety of different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>familiar situation about</td>
<td>familiar situation to establish</td>
<td>familiar situation, making</td>
<td>situations, making clear and relevant contributions</td>
<td>situations, making clear and effective contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>familiar topics in simple and</td>
<td>shared understanding about</td>
<td>relevant points and responding</td>
<td>that respond to what others say and produce a shared</td>
<td>that produce outcomes appropriate to purpose and topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>familiar formal exchanges</td>
<td>familiar topics in straightforward familiar exchanges connected with</td>
<td>to what others say and produce a shared understanding about different topics in formal exchanges connected with education, training, work and social roles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connected with education,</td>
<td>education, training, work and</td>
<td>different topics in formal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work and social roles.</td>
<td>social roles.</td>
<td>exchanges connected with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>education, training, work and</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>social roles.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Progression in speaking and listening.
This document gives an example from each of these resources to illustrate how you can use SfL resources to focus on speaking and listening.

**Professional development of Skills for Life practitioners**

- Oral communication skills are included in all routes within the new qualifications framework for teachers in the learning and skills sector. (See section 10.)
- A DfES Social Inclusion and Offenders Unit (SIOU)-commissioned project, led by Tribal Education Limited, focused on staff who were not SfL specialists and who worked in the criminal justice sector. Staff used a reflective practice approach to examine and develop their speaking and listening skills. Work from this project is cited in this document.
- Building on this project, the SfL Strategy Unit has published a support pack on speaking and listening for staff working with offenders (DfES, 2006). (See section 10.)
- Talking Up Numeracy, a DfES-funded Maths4Life project, led by the National Research and Development Centre (NRDC) for adult literacy and numeracy at the Institute of Education, researched how eight numeracy practitioners used a reflective practice approach to examine and develop their use of speaking and listening, to motivate offenders to take up numeracy provision (Hudson et al., 2005; Hudson with others, 2006). Research findings from this project are used in this document.

**Learning difficulties and disabilities**

- Adults with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), including dyslexia, are an important group in SfL.
- Section 8 is about speaking and listening and LDD learners.
- However, this document is not principally targeted at LDD learners. Practitioners working with LDD learners must consider carefully, using *Access for All* for guidance:
  - which activities in this document are appropriate for LDD learners
  - what adaptations practitioners may need to make to activities in order to tailor them to the needs of LDD learners.

**Key**

In this document:

- practitioners’ comments are in red.
- learners’ comments are in blue.
- key research findings are in orange boxes.
- reflective practice questions and activities are in green boxes.
Reflective practice

Overview

- A reflective practice approach is central to this document.
- There is a large research literature associated with reflection.
- Reflective practice is important in two SfL publications about professional development (DfES, 2006; Hudson et al., 2006 – see Find out more, p. 14).

Definition

There are many definitions of reflective practice, but in general it is agreed that reflective practice is about:

- finding the space (time and appropriate context) to analyse professional practice
- explicitly questioning one’s professional beliefs and practices
- finding out about other professional beliefs and practices
- changing professional beliefs and practices where appropriate
- experimenting and learning from any mistakes as part of the process of change
- tolerating a period of discomfort as part of the process of change
- engaging in a process over time.

(Hudson et al. (2006) adapted from Day (1999); Schon (1983, 1987).)

What practitioners say

SfL practitioners have responded positively to reflection.

One thing I haven’t done before [Talking Up Numeracy] is sit down and think about what I actually do. Reflecting has changed the way I actually approach the appointments and people in general. It has made me more aware of how I present myself, how I sit and how I speak and how much I’ve listened as well. It has given me the opportunity to consider what I do and try different things rather than sticking to the same thing.

Engaging in reflective practice

There are many ways of engaging in reflective practice about speaking and listening. Some of these are explored on the next page.
Questioning

Questioning is central to reflective practice. You can ask yourself questions about selected aspects of speaking and listening. Alternatively, if you prefer to work with someone else, you and a colleague you trust can ask each other questions about selected aspects of speaking and listening.

There are examples of reflective questions throughout this document, to which you can add your own.

Practitioner reflective log

What practitioners say

The practitioners in Talking Up Numeracy and in the DfES-funded Tribal Education Limited speaking and listening project found that using a reflective log helped to develop their practice in speaking and listening.

That [the log] is where we formed our learning and discussing what we found and I think those questions [in the reflective log] should be something that other teachers would benefit from asking themselves.

Using a practitioner reflective log

The practitioner reflective log used in this document (see figure 3 and appendix 2) is based on the log referred to by the practitioner just quoted. The log consists of ten aspects of speaking and listening which SfL practitioners identified as important. These aspects of speaking and listening are explored more fully in section 3.

The log is not intended to be prescriptive:
- You can select aspects of speaking and listening which are relevant to your practice and your learners.
- You can add other aspects of speaking and listening which are relevant to your professional context, to the log.

In the completed example (figure 2), the practitioner has focused on three aspects of speaking and listening. Appendix 2 contains a blank log for you to use yourself.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of speaking and listening</th>
<th>What you said/did/thought</th>
<th>What worked well</th>
<th>Learning points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Facilitating discussion</strong></td>
<td>Wanted to reaffirm ground rules about respect for others’ opinions and about no offensive language.&lt;br&gt; Tried pair discussion, followed by small group discussion and then whole class discussion.&lt;br&gt; Made sure I circulated to listen.&lt;br&gt; Made sure I didn’t take over pair discussion!</td>
<td>Combination of ground rules and the structure of pair, small group and whole group worked!&lt;br&gt; The thought I’d put into initial pairings for discussion was important in creating a positive atmosphere.&lt;br&gt; There were good discussions in all the small groups. All followed the rules.&lt;br&gt; Feel I have found the way forward to get all learners contributing their ideas!</td>
<td>I still do too much of the talking. I think I need to allow a much longer wait time, to give learners a really good opportunity to think ideas through that they’re not certain about!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Asking questions</strong> (initial and follow-up)</td>
<td>I tried to build the questions up more logically this session.&lt;br&gt; It was important to discuss what ‘opinion’ and ‘view’ mean early in the session, as part of setting ground rules.&lt;br&gt; I aimed to increase learners’ confidence by starting with some closed questions with true/false responses. Then I built on that by asking open questions, for learners to express their opinions. When learners expressed a view, I asked questions like ‘Why do you think that?’ to encourage them to develop their thinking further.</td>
<td>There was evidence that most of the group are starting to be able to express a logically connected series of points. Could be because of the way I structured the questions. Terry put it well, saying he wants his opinions to be like the walls he builds for his job, ‘Lots of bits but put together so it won’t fall down.’</td>
<td>As above, I still rush in too quickly whenever there’s a pause, even one-to-one.&lt;br&gt; I need to give myself a sentence like, ‘This is a big question. We both need half a minute to think about this.’&lt;br&gt; I’ll try this in the next session especially with quieter learners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Enabling learners to ask questions

For example: What do you say to encourage the learner to ask questions about aspects of teaching and learning s/he doesn’t understand/wants to know more about? How do you enable learners to ask a series of related questions, to develop their understanding of a topic?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of speaking and listening</th>
<th>What you said/did/thought</th>
<th>What worked well</th>
<th>Learning points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enabling learners to ask questions</td>
<td>It's difficult to explain things in terms everyone understands, because there’s a range of ability in this group. I want everyone to understand, but I don’t want to be condescending to Nigel and Chloe who pick things up more quickly than some of the other learners. I used the two of them to explain some points we’d covered in previous sessions, which I wanted to go over with the group. I didn’t want it all to come top-down from me. I thought this was a risk so I had a discussion with them before the class about what to do.</td>
<td>Having a discussion with Nigel and Chloe about how to explain what we’d done before helped make the activity successful. They managed the activity by only letting someone speak if the person was holding Mike’s baseball cap. This created an order that I’d not achieved before! They also used street language in an authentic way that carried some of the lads along. It would have sounded wrong coming from me. It also gave me the opportunity to reinforce what they said with more conventional terminology.</td>
<td>I think I need to work much more on how to draw on learners’ street language when explaining concepts, and how to move from that to more formal terminology without being pejorative about their terminology. Building on the experience with Nigel and Chloe, I will try out working on explanations in pairs, small groups and then the whole group, so I am not doing most of the explaining.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### 4. Explaining

For example: How do you explain an aspect of teaching and learning in terms the learner understands? Use of language? Tone of voice? Pace?

How do you summarise/reinforce what you’ve said?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of speaking and listening</th>
<th>What you said/did/thought</th>
<th>What worked well</th>
<th>Learning points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explaining</td>
<td>It's difficult to explain things in terms everyone understands, because there’s a range of ability in this group. I want everyone to understand, but I don’t want to be condescending to Nigel and Chloe who pick things up more quickly than some of the other learners. I used the two of them to explain some points we’d covered in previous sessions, which I wanted to go over with the group. I didn’t want it all to come top-down from me. I thought this was a risk so I had a discussion with them before the class about what to do.</td>
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<td>What you said/did/thought</td>
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<td><strong>5. Checking understanding</strong></td>
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<td>For example: How do you judge</td>
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<td>whether the learner has</td>
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<tr>
<td>understood what you’ve said?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you say?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you ask the learner to</td>
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<td>paraphrase what you’ve said?</td>
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<td>a diagram of what you’ve said?</td>
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<td>How do you use the learner’s</td>
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<td>non-verbal communication?</td>
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<td>How do you make sure that you</td>
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<td>have understood what the learner has said?</td>
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<td><strong>6. Listening</strong></td>
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<td>For example: How do you make</td>
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<td>the learner has said?</td>
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<td>How do you show the learner</td>
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<td>Use of pauses?</td>
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<td>How do you help learners to</td>
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<td>develop their listening skills?</td>
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<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
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<td>Learning points</td>
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<td>7. Use of non-verbal communication in combination with speaking and listening</td>
<td>For example: How do you use your non-verbal communication, in conjunction with your speaking and listening? Head nods? Eye contact? Gestures? What messages does your non-verbal communication give the learner? Are these the same messages as those that you’re conveying through your speaking and listening?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Links between your thinking, and your speaking and listening</td>
<td>For example: What kinds of things are you saying inside yourself during the session? To what extent is this internal conversation the same as your conversation with the learner?</td>
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<td>9. Use of technical language</td>
<td>For example: Do you use any specialist terminology? If so, which terms do you use? How much do you use specialist terminology? How do you ensure that the learner has understood the terminology you’ve used?</td>
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<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
<td>What you said/did/thought</td>
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<td><strong>10. Giving praise and encouragement</strong></td>
<td>How often do you explicitly encourage and praise SfL learners? What do you say? How do you use your non-verbal communication? Tone of voice? How do learners respond?</td>
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<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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Writing about reflection

You may want to write down your reflections on the aspects of speaking and listening you are focusing on. You could use the following suggestions either instead of a log or as part of it. You could use:

- continuous prose
- notes
- annotated diagrams
- tables
- e-discussions with a colleague
- brainstorming – allows you to record all ideas on a topic, initially without making any judgements about the relative merits of different ideas; key points can then be prioritised, according to identified criteria.
- mind maps – illustrate the connections between, for instance, main points or between main and sub-points.
- flow charts – can be used, for example, to illustrate the progress between different stages of teaching and learning.

Figures 3–5 give examples of a brainstorm, a mind map and a flow chart. They are each about the same situation: a numeracy practitioner is finding it difficult to explain to a learner what angles mean. They illustrate that it is important for practitioners to select the appropriate type of diagram for what they want to focus on:

- The **brainstorm** (figure 3: Get your ideas down!) enables the practitioner to make explicit the types of difficulty in talking about angles.
- The **mind map** (figure 4: Get your ideas connected!) enables the practitioner to think about the different ways of approaching talking about angles and how they are interrelated.
- The **flow chart** (figure 5: Get your ideas taught!) enables the practitioner to plan out the different stages of how he or she will talk through angles, moving from drawing on the learner’s experience, to talking about mathematical concepts.

Other suggestions for reflection

Not everyone finds that writing helps reflection. If you find that writing does not help you to examine issues related to speaking and listening, you may like to consider the following options:

- Use some of the questions in the reflective log as the basis for discussion with a colleague you trust or in team meetings.
- Audio or video record selected sessions. You can then listen to or watch the tapes to examine your use of speaking and listening. The practitioners in Talking Up Numeracy found that transcripts of sessions helped develop their awareness of speaking and listening – even when practitioners found it uncomfortable to be reminded of what they had said in a SfL session.

Find out more

Find out more about reflective practice from:

- *Developing Speaking and Listening Skills: A support pack for staff working with offenders* (DfES, 2006).
Fig. 3: Get your ideas down! – Example of a brainstorm
Fig. 4: Get your ideas connected! – Example of a mind map
**Practitioner thinking:** The learner doesn’t understand about the angles of a triangle. How to talk to him about angles in a way that’s relevant to him? (He’s a window cleaner.)

**Practitioner action:** The practitioner uses the interactive whiteboard to represent two images, one of a ladder at an incline to a wall and one of a ladder extended upwards, parallel to the wall.

**Discussion:** The practitioner asks the learner if he’s ever fallen off a ladder and if so, why. The practitioner then talks through the images with the learner, exploring the stability of the ladder in each image.

**Learner explanation:** The practitioner then asks the learner to explain the difference between the position of the two ladders to clarify what the learner has understood.

**Mathematical terminology and concepts:** The practitioner then returns to triangles and angles, linking the angles of triangles with the ladders.

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**Fig. 5: Get your ideas taught! – Example of a flow chart**
Ten aspects of practitioners’ speaking and listening skills

Overview

- This section takes each of the ten aspects of speaking and listening in the practitioner reflective log (see section 2 figure 2 and appendix 2) in turn, and gives for each aspect:
  - key research findings
  - what practitioners and learners say
  - reflective practice questions and activities.
- Different sections in the reflective log are interrelated. For example, one area of the log, teacher questions, is also an important aspect of another area, discussion.
- Use this section of the document to help:
  - prioritise aspects of your speaking and listening skills for development through a reflective practice approach
  - plan how to develop the speaking and listening skills that you have identified
  - try out new approaches to speaking and listening in your teaching.
  - reflect on what went well and any learning points for further development.
- Remember to complete relevant sections of the practitioner log, or use other suggestions from section 2, such as a mind map or flow chart, as part of your reflective practice.

Discussion

Key research findings

- Talk is an important part of developing learners’ thinking (Pring, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner and Haste, 1987).
- Practitioners should recognise the importance of learner talk, in teaching and learning (Pring, 2007).
- However, practitioners, not learners, tend to do most of the talking in classrooms (Cazden, 1988; Alexander, 2003).
- Teachers can find it difficult to organise discussion so that it benefits student learning (Davis, 1996, 1997; Chamberlin, 2003; Even and Wallach, 2003).
- Alexander’s (2003) international study of primary classrooms highlights that, in comparison with French and Russian teachers, primary teachers in England tended to say much more than their students.
Improving speaking and listening skills

**What practitioners say**

*I was surprised when I let learners do more of the talking in my classroom. I didn’t know that they could think like that!*

---

**Reflective practice questions and activities**

Think about how you use discussion in your practice.

- How much learner talk is there in comparison to practitioner talk?
- Do you give learners opportunities to discuss in pairs, small groups and as a whole group?
- How do you enable learners to talk about things they are not sure about, to explore and develop their thinking?
- How do you ensure that learners respect each other’s contributions to a discussion?

Think of some more questions of your own.

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**Asking questions**

**Key research findings about questioning**

- In teaching and learning, practitioners, not learners, ask most of the questions (Alexander, 2003; Mercer, 2003).
- Most practitioners use more closed questions than open questions (Alexander, 2003; Galton et al., 1999; Galton, 2003) (see clarification, p. 20).
- Most practitioner questions are the first part of a three-part exchange:
  - **Initiation** (practitioner).
  - **Response** (learner).
  - **Feedback** (practitioner, to close the exchange).
  
  This is known as IRF (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1995; Mercer, 2003). On the whole, IRF does not enable learners to explore and develop their thinking (Hardman et al., 2003), because the interaction is practitioner-dominated.
- Alexander (2003) argues that questions should scaffold (i.e. provide a framework for learners to use to develop their understanding) rather than test understanding.
- Practitioners tend not to leave much wait time after asking a question for learners to think through their response. Wait time is usually less than three seconds (Edwards, 2003).
Clarification

Closed questions
- A closed question usually requires a short response.
- There is usually a correct answer (e.g., What date is your birthday?) or a yes/no answer (e.g., Did you shut the door?).
- Sometimes it is appropriate to ask closed questions if, for example, practitioners want to assess learners’ factual knowledge, or to address practicalities quickly.

Open questions
- Open questions have many possible responses.
- Open questions invite learners to explore and develop their thinking and are important in stimulating discussion (e.g., What did you think about last night’s television programme on the natural world? Why?).
- Practitioners may not always be able to predict learners’ responses to open questions. Practitioners may find it helpful to develop strategies to respond positively to responses from learners that they may not have been expecting.

What practitioners say

Practitioners in Talking Up Numeracy explored asking a series of follow-up questions after an initial question.

I did more supplementary questions than I probably would have done before [sc. the pathfinder]. Before I would probably have said ‘Why was it easy?’ but then I probed a bit further. ‘What exactly about it was easy?’ In fact, if I hadn’t kept doing that, we wouldn’t have realised: I had to explain to him what I meant by decimals clearly. There was a muddle in his mind about what decimals are. If I hadn’t pushed it, we wouldn’t have clarified that.

Through asking follow-up questions, this practitioner realised that the learner did not understand about decimals. The practitioner therefore realised that she needed to work on decimals with the learner.

Reflective practice questions and activities

Think about how you use questions in your practice.
- When do you use closed questions?
- When do you use open questions?
- Do you tend to use more closed or open questions? Why?
- Is the type of question you use appropriate to purpose?
- Do you ask a series of related questions to help learners explore their thinking?
- Do you leave sufficient wait time after asking a question for learners to think through their responses?
Enabling learners to ask questions

Key research findings

- Most questions that learners ask are about procedural points (Alexander, 2003). This means that learners tend to ask questions about things like whether they need to put a title and a date at the start of a piece of writing, rather than asking questions which probe the meaning of the topic considered.
- In Talking Up Numeracy, most questions asked by learners tended to be about practicalities such as how long classes would last for and whether attendance was compulsory.
- The practitioners thought that learners did not ask questions for three main reasons:
  - Fear of asking questions.
  - Not knowing what questions to ask, particularly if they had not thought about numeracy for a long time.
  - Asking questions is a way of taking responsibility for learning. Some learners may be unwilling to do this.

What practitioners say

Talking Up Numeracy practitioners tried to make it explicit that learners could ask questions.

Is there anything you want to ask me?

You can ask either now or in the future about anything you are not clear about. (If in a group) If it is not clear to you, it may not be clear to others. You are therefore helping others by pointing it out.
Reflective practice questions and activities

- How often do learners ask questions in your sessions?
- What types of questions do learners ask? Are they questions about practicalities? Are they about learning?
- What do you say to encourage learners to ask questions about aspects of teaching and learning that they don’t understand or that they want to know more about?
- Do you use pair and group discussion to encourage learners to ask questions?
- Do you use question stems (see section 11, page 91) to help learners develop questions?
- How do you enable learners to ask a series of related questions, to develop their understanding of a topic?

Think of some more questions of your own.

Explaining

Key research findings

- Learners can be very aware of the quality of practitioners’ explanations (Hudson et al., 2005). The following comments from learners illustrate this.
- Some SfL practitioners try to explain aspects of SfL by referring to learners’ wider lives. The following comment from a practitioner illustrates this.

What learners say

The language [that the practitioner had just used to explain about numeracy classes] is pretty easy to understand, not too technical, no jargon and it wasn’t too long or too short, but to the point and giving the information that you needed.

She [the practitioner] explains it better, you know what I mean? She’s a top teacher . . . Not like other teachers, she explains things really well and makes it easier to learn things.

What practitioners say

Before the project, I didn’t really think that learners were able to ask questions. Then I realised I had to create the opportunity and environment for them to ask questions.
Reflective practice questions and activities

- How do you explain something that you are teaching in terms that the learner understands?
- How do you ensure that the learner can understand the language you use?
- What tone of voice do you use when you are explaining something?
- How do you make sure that you do not rush an explanation?
- How do you use pauses?
- How do you summarise what you’ve said?
- How do you emphasise particular points in your explanation?
- How do you incorporate, as appropriate, examples from the learner’s everyday life into your explanation?
- How do you use visual aids to reinforce what you have said (e.g. using a diagram of the National Standards when explaining about the National Standards)?
- Do you use any humour to make your explanation more memorable to the learner? If so, how?
- How do you use the learner’s body language to judge whether he or she has engaged with what you have said?

Think of some more questions of your own.

Checking understanding

Key research findings

In the DfES/Tribal Education Limited speaking and listening project, and in Talking Up Numeracy, practitioners tried out a range of speaking and listening strategies to check learners’ understandings. Strategies included the following:

- Asking questions like ‘What did you think I meant when I said . . . ?’ This invited the learner to paraphrase what the practitioner had said.
- Using activities which required learners to talk to each other and/or the practitioner as a core part of completing the activity. The practitioners used what the learners said during the activity, as well as the outcomes of the activity, to judge learners’ understanding.
- Paraphrasing what the learner had said, as a question to the learner, such as ‘What you are saying is that . . . ?’
- Questioning themselves about whether the learner had understood (e.g. ‘What evidence do I have that the learner took in what I said?’) (see What practitioners say, below).
- Asking questions such as, ‘Is there something I’ve said that isn’t clear?’ in instances where the practitioner was reasonably confident that the learner would not simply say ‘Yes’, whether or not he or she understood.
What practitioners say

So with people like [the offender] I am very conscious now of actually thinking inside my head, ‘Right. Did he hear what I said just then, or has he gone off?’

I learned very, very early on from doing [induction] . . . never to assume that they know or don’t know anything.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- How do you judge whether the learner has understood what you’ve said?
- Do you take it at face value if a learner has said he or she has understood something? Why/why not?
- What do you say to check whether a learner has understood what you’ve said?
- How do you use the learner’s non-verbal communication (see page 26) to check that he or she understood?
- How do you use teaching and learning activities to check the learner has understood?
- How do you make sure you have understood what the learner has said?

Think of some more questions of your own.

Listening

Key research findings

- As noted on page 18, teachers tend to do most of the talking. If teachers are talking, they cannot be listening to learners.
- Learners therefore tend to do most of the listening (Cazden, 1988; NCES, 2003; Alexander, 2003).
- Davis (1996, 1997) developed a framework to summarise three types of teacher listening in classrooms:
  - evaluative – hearing students’ answers to decide whether or not they are correct
  - interpretive – trying to make sense of students’ answers by asking for more information
  - hermeneutic – negotiating meaning with students by interacting to discuss meaning; both teacher and students can revise their own knowledge through the interaction.

In Davis’ framework, evaluative listening is the most straightforward type of listening, whereas hermeneutic listening demands the most sophisticated skills. Davis’ framework illustrates that listening is active, involving interaction with learners.
The Talking Up Numeracy practitioners tried out a range of strategies to demonstrate that they were listening to learners. These included:

- paraphrasing learners’ comments
- using affirmative phrases such as ‘I see what you mean’ or ‘I know what you mean’
- asking learners questions about what learners had said, such as ‘What did you mean when you said . . . ?’
- increasing wait time to maximise learners’ opportunities to respond
- returning to comments learners had made in previous sessions to show learners that they had been listened to.
- using their non-verbal communication to show that they were listening attentively.
- taping sessions so that there was concrete evidence of what participants had said. (Hudson, 2007)

The practitioners did not always find it straightforward to know when to stop talking so that they could listen to learners, and when to speak in order to enable learners to explore their thinking. (Hudson, 2007)

What practitioners say

Reading the transcript back from my conversation with Dave [the offender], I realised how much I talked and how little I listened and how much we both talked together, so I was actually quite determined that that wasn’t going to happen again . . . I don’t think it happened today [the practitioner’s session has been observed by the researcher] but I won’t know until I get the transcript.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- How do you make sure that you are not doing the large majority of the talking?
- How do you make sure that you have heard what the learner has said?
- How do you use your non-verbal communication to show the learner that you are listening or have listened to him or her?
- How do you use pauses?
- How do you reflect back to the learner what he or she has said?
- Do you ever refer to what the learner has said in a previous session, to show you have listened to him or her? If so, how? If not, why not?
- If you are teaching a group, how do you demonstrate to each individual that you are listening to him or her?
Non-verbal communication

Clarification
Non-verbal communication includes:
- gestures
- movement
- body position
- nodding
- eye-contact
- facial expression
- the tone, volume and speed of a speaker’s voice.

Key research findings
- It is generally agreed that non-verbal communication plays a significant role in oral interaction (e.g. Mehrabian, 1981; Morris, 1977). How important non-verbal communication is is likely to depend upon the individuals and context (see section 6).
- Cultural differences should not be under-estimated in interpreting non-verbal communication (McCroskey et al., 1995).
- Practitioners in both the DfES/Tribal Education Limited speaking and listening project and Talking Up Numeracy emphasised the importance of non-verbal communication in work with offenders.
- Practitioners highlighted that they tended to rely on non-verbal communication when they perceived that offenders were uncommunicative. Non-verbal communication gave practitioners some insights into offenders even when the offender was saying little.

- Use Davis’ framework to analyse a recent session. Which of Davis’ three types of listening did you engage in most? Why? Which did you engage in least? Why? Would you change anything about your practice in a future, similar session? Why/why not?
- Tape a session or ask a colleague to observe you. What did you discover about your listening skills? Is there anything about your practice you would like to develop in the future? Why?

Think of some more questions of your own.
What practitioners say

Some you can tell from their body language they’re not happy, not comfortable for whatever reason. You don’t know them well enough to know why, so you have to tread very carefully. Then I tend, like I said, I tend – that is a cue to move away from numeracy speak and class speak, to more general, ‘What you’re interested in’, ‘What kinds of jobs?’ ‘Tell me how you do that.’ As soon as their body language is negative, then we’re not talking about maths at all probably. We’re talking about something else. If it’s positive, seeming to meet me halfway, smiling, whatever, responding – then yes.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- How do you use different aspects of your non-verbal communication?
- What messages does your non-verbal communication give the learner?
- Are these the messages you want to give the learner? Why/why not?
- Are these the same messages as those you’re conveying through your speaking and listening? Why/why not?
- How do you ensure you are attentive to learners’ non-verbal communication?

Think of some more questions of your own.

Links between practitioners’ thinking and practitioners’ speaking and listening

Key research findings

- Awareness of one’s own thought processes is often known as metacognition (e.g. Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987; Brown, 1987).
- Through greater awareness, one can plan how to change thought processes and therefore potentially the actions which arise from thoughts (Day, 1999).
- In teaching and learning, where interactions are multiple and often very rapid, practitioners are unlikely to find it straightforward to monitor their thought processes consistently (Hudson et al., 2005).
- In the DfES/Tribal speaking and listening project and in Talking Up Numeracy, practitioners focused on becoming more aware of the connections between what they were thinking and their speaking and listening. Initially, they found this difficult. Over time, some practitioners found that greater awareness of their thinking helped to change their practice in speaking and listening.
- See Vorhaus (2007) for a critique of metacognition.
What practitioners say

I am so much more aware of [the practitioner’s thinking] now. Quite weird, isn’t it? I have almost used a word and then something in my head says, ‘No!’ and a different word comes out, whereas before I might just have used that word.

I ask myself, ‘Am I putting words into [the learner’s] mind sometimes?’

I use my thinking to ask myself if I give offenders enough time to respond to a question. It helps fill wait time!

Reflective practice questions and activities

- How aware are you of your own thinking when you are working with learners? Why do you think this is?
- What kinds of things are you saying inside yourself during a session with learners? Why?
- To what extent is this conversation the same as your conversation with the learner? Why/why not?
- If you are finding a learner challenging, try running a range of options about how to manage the situation through your mind before deciding what to say. What impact (if any) does this have upon the situation? Why?

Think of some more questions of your own.

Specialist terminology

Key research findings

- A range of evidence suggests that SiL learners have to grapple with complex terminology, both as part of learning and also in their wider lives. There is specialist terminology in:
  - the National Standards (e.g. the levels of the National Standards)
  - literacy (e.g. capital letter, full stop, comma, singular etc.)
  - numeracy (e.g. addition, subtraction, ratio etc.). (Hudson, 2006; Davies et al., 2004)
- In Talking Up Numeracy, when learners used terminology it was often to express or reveal confusion (Hudson, 2007).
- The examples below, from numeracy teaching, are also applicable to literacy teaching.
- Practitioners used a number of strategies to try to make mathematical terminology clear to learners, including:
  - paraphrasing mathematical terminology – for example, they used where appropriate ‘times’ instead of ‘multiply’,
‘plus’ instead of ‘add’ and ‘take away’ instead of ‘subtract’; practitioners aimed to introduce the correct mathematical terminology over time

- asking the learner to paraphrase terminology
- using mathematical symbols to find out what mathematical language the learner was aware of
- using aspects of learners’ lives to clarify mathematical terminology
- heightening their own self-awareness about not rushing explanations of terminology
- using visual aids to reinforce oral references to mathematical concepts.

What learners say

Maths teachers talk like psychiatrists. Some psychiatrists talk to you in a load of medical sentences you don’t understand and you get others that talk to you in a way you do understand.

(Pete, offender in the segregation unit of a Category A prison)

I need to brush up on, I get confused with some things – area, perimeter, volume, oh, algebra.

Subtracting and times and stuff I was alright with, but when it came to fractions and metres, I still don’t think I’ve got a clue, and it scares me, because I should have, shouldn’t I?

What practitioners say

You’ve got to have something to sort of peg the maths on to, like you can talk about if they’ve been doing a job, construction stuff. ‘Did you do any of the measuring?’ Or we can talk about making cement. I’d say, ‘Well, that’s the kind of thing we do. That’s ratio. We do it here.’

Reflective practice questions and activities

- Do you use specialist terminology in your teaching?
- If so, which terms do you use?
- How much do you use specialist terminology?
- What strategies do you use to ensure that learners have understood terminology?
- Try out some of the strategies given on page 00. Which worked well? Why? Which didn’t work so well? Why?

Think of some more questions of your own.
Improving speaking and listening skills

Section 3 Ten aspects of practitioners’ speaking and listening skills

Giving encouragement and praise

Key research findings

- In one project based in a secondary school, students were explicitly taught about language which helps create a positive learning environment. Positive phrases were displayed on classroom walls for students to use. There was an incentive scheme to reward the use of positive language (Tyrer, 2000).
- Verbal strategies to encourage and praise learners, used by the Talking Up Numeracy practitioners included the following:
  - ‘You’ve done it for yourself. No one else did it for you.’
  - ‘You should be very proud of yourself because . . .’
  - ‘Don’t be afraid to have a go. It doesn’t matter if you make a mistake.’
  - ‘If you make a mistake, you can learn from it.’
  - ‘You are nearly at Level 2 and it shouldn’t take long to get there.’
  - ‘You listened really well to what I said and you could explain it to me.’
  - ‘That’s been your best session. You took part in the discussion and you had lots of ideas.’

What learners say

[The practitioner] was just really encouraging. She made me feel as if I wanted to better myself and I’ve never felt like that before. I can do and there’s more to life than drugs.

What practitioners say

In my teaching, I’ve always said things like ‘Good!’ and ‘Well done!’ a lot. More recently, I’ve tried to be more specific in my praise. I think it’s helped learners make progress.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- How often do you explicitly encourage and praise SfL learners?
- What do you say?
- How do you use your non-verbal communication?
- How do you use your tone of voice?
- Do you use an incentive system? Why/why not?
- How do learners respond when you praise them?
- How often do you enable SfL learners to encourage and praise each other?
- How do you facilitate peer encouragement and praise?
- Try out the strategies in the research findings above. What impact did they have on learners? Why?
- Think of some more questions of your own.
Recap

Now that you have read section 3, use it in conjunction with the previous section to:

- prioritise aspects of your speaking and listening skills for development through a reflective practice approach
- plan how to develop the speaking and listening skills you have identified
- try out new approaches to speaking and listening in your teaching
- Reflect on what went well, and any learning points for further development.

Remember to complete relevant sections of the practitioner log, or use other suggestions given in section 2, such as a mind map or flow chart, as part of your reflective practice.
Assessing learners’ speaking and listening skills

Overview
This section includes:
- key research findings about assessing learners’ skills
- the assessment of speaking and listening skills in SiL
- how to use Have Your Say, a learner-centred assessment tool.

Key research findings
This section cites the work of two authors.

Davies et al. (2004)
- Davies et al. (2004) researched the literacy levels (reading, writing and speaking and listening) of 455 adult offenders on community supervision who had been referred to three General Offending Behaviour Programmes (GOBPs), and the literacy demands of those programmes.
- GOBPs are cognitive behavioural programmes that many offenders are referred to as part of their sentence.
- The large majority (75%) of offenders assessed probably had speaking and listening skills below Level 2.
- 25% were probably at or above Level 2.
- 35% were probably below Level 1.
- The large majority of offenders were unable to cope with the oral demands of programmes designed to address their offending behaviour.

Sticht
- Sticht has conducted many studies on listening, as illustrated in Sticht (2007). One key finding is that there is a relationship between listening skills and reading skills: learners with poor listening comprehension skills tend to become poor readers; conversely, learners with good listening tend to become good readers.
- Another important finding is that when learners say that they prefer to learn by listening, this does not mean that the listening skills of these individuals are necessarily better than their reading skills.
The assessment of speaking and listening

Diagnostic assessment

- In the DfES SfL diagnostic assessment materials, speaking and listening skills are assessed through the initial interview (see Tutor materials, Literacy pp. 347–355).
- The assessor can use the speaking and listening assessment profiles to help assess learners’ skills (see Tutor materials, Literacy pp. 302–30).
- Find out more about the diagnostic assessment materials at: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/Diagnostic_Materials_main.

Example from the diagnostic assessment materials

- In the example in figure 6, taken from the initial interview (see Tutor materials, Literacy p. 353), the learner is asked to tell the interviewer about the sorts of problem she has experienced with reading, writing, spelling and numeracy. This example demonstrates:
  - that practitioners cannot always predict what learners say
  - the importance of practitioners being able to adapt their use of speaking and listening according to learners’ responses.

Assessment tools

- At present, there is no national SfL speaking and listening skills check for first language speakers.
- At present, there is no national SfL speaking and listening initial assessment tool for first language speakers.
- Speaking and listening are part of the SfL diagnostic assessment for literacy.
- There is an ESOL speaking and listening skills check.
- There is also an ESOL speaking and listening initial assessment tool. However, practitioners should be cautious about the use of ESOL tools with first-language English speakers.
- A speaking and listening initial assessment contextualised to the National Probation Service (NPS) was developed by Davies et al. (2004).
- A speaking and listening skills check, contextualised to the Army, was developed by Tribal Education Limited on behalf of the Army and the DfES SfL Strategy Unit. This tool was evaluated during 2006.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- Try assessing speaking and listening as part of the diagnostic assessment interview. If the learner agrees, you could audio record the interview. You could then use the recording to review the learner’s responses and reflect on your own speaking and listening.
- Were there any unexpected responses from the learner? If so, what were they? How did you tailor your use of speaking and listening to the learner’s responses?
- Think about the ten aspects of speaking and listening covered in section 3. How would you build on your use of speaking and listening in another, similar interview?
After general questions to get to know the learner, the following takes place:

1. Practitioner’s question

Tell me about your earliest experiences of problems with reading, writing or maths.

2. Learner’s response

I can’t take promotion at work because of all the paperwork.

(Tutor manual p. 353)

3. Practitioner’s thinking

This wasn’t the answer I was expecting. I hoped that she would tell me about specific literacy or numeracy problems she has had from an early age. She’s about Entry 3 ‘Listening and responding’ at the moment (shows a reasonable understanding of the questions) but maybe it’s the way I asked the question. I need to ask some specific questions about her current concerns and come back to school experiences afterwards.

4. Practitioner’s follow-up questions

So what sort of paperwork are we talking about?

(answer: report writing)

What is it that you find the most difficult about writing a report?

5. Learner’s response

It’s spelling actually. I can spell everyday words but in care there are loads of medical words and I know that as a manager I would have to write reports and record things for others while they’re waiting.

6. Practitioner’s thinking

That’s a good response; this person is at Level 1 – even Level 2. I’ll see how the rest of the interview goes.
Learner self-assessment of speaking and listening skills

*Have Your Say*

- The tool *Have Your Say* (see figure 7 and appendix 3) is learner-centred.
- *Have Your Say* aims to help learners to reflect on their speaking and listening skills, in terms which are meaningful to them.
- Practitioners can give learners appropriate support in talking through *Have Your Say*.
- *Have Your Say* specifies ten aspects of speaking and listening and five different contexts of learners’ lives.
- Using *Have Your Say* will enable the learner, in collaboration with the SfL practitioner, to self-assess his or her skills in specific aspects of speaking and listening in specific aspects of his or her life, as part of:
  - diagnostic assessment
  - setting learning goals for speaking and listening, in the ILP
  - identifying learning activities to develop skills in identified aspects of speaking and listening
  - formative assessment
  - summative assessment.

**Clarification**

- See the diagram of the SfL learning journey (figure 1, page 3) for clarification of the different stages of SfL assessment and learning.
- Formative assessment is where assessment is used continuously to inform planning for learning.
- While summative assessment often consists of an end-of-programme test, *Have Your Say* can be used as a learner-centred form of summative assessment.

**How to use Have Your Say**

- *Have Your Say* is intended to be used flexibly.
- Learners and practitioners can add or remove aspects of speaking and listening, and contexts, depending on the needs of the learner. For example:
  - Practitioners may decide that it is appropriate only to use a selection of the ten aspects of *Have Your Say*.
  - If the learner has to use his or her speaking and listening skills to communicate with the child’s school, it might be sensible to specify ‘in your child’s school’ as an additional context.
  - If the learner has to give presentations at work, you might want to add ‘Giving presentations’ to the different aspects of speaking and listening.
**Note to the learner**
- Have Your Say is about how easy or difficult you find each of the aspects of speaking and listening listed below, in each of the different areas of your life (at home, at work, with friends).
- If something doesn’t apply to you (for example, if you don’t work), that’s fine. Just put N/A (not applicable).
- Use the key (✓) (very easy), ✔️ (easy), ✗ (difficult), and ✗✗ (very difficult) to decide how easy or difficult you find each aspect of speaking and listening in each area of your life. Just use the ✔️ and ✗ symbols. You don’t need to write out the words.
- Be as honest as possible. It’s OK to say you find an aspect of speaking and listening difficult. You can then work on it with your teacher in your SfL learning programme.
- You can complete Have Your Say on your own if you wish. Or you can talk through Have Your Say with your teacher or with other learners.

**Key:** Very Easy ✓✓ Easy ✔ Difficult ✗ Impossible ✗✗ Not applicable N/A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of speaking and listening</th>
<th>At home</th>
<th>At work</th>
<th>With friends</th>
<th>When you were at school</th>
<th>On the course</th>
<th>Other area of your life: please give details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Speaking to someone you know</strong></td>
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<td>Example: speaking to a relative at home or speaking to someone you have worked with for several years, at work.</td>
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<td><strong>2. Speaking to someone you don’t know</strong></td>
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<td>Example: speaking to a man from the gas company, who has come to do a repair.</td>
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<td><strong>3. Speaking in a group (about six people)</strong></td>
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<td>Example: talking to a group of friends, about a good film you have seen.</td>
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<td><strong>4. Giving information to someone else</strong></td>
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<td>Example: giving directions about how to get somewhere, explaining how to do something.</td>
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### Assessing learners’ speaking and listening skills

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<td>5. Answering questions which need a yes/no answer or which have a single correct answer</td>
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<td>Example: if you are asked, ‘Do you want the window open?’ you might answer, ‘Yes, please.’ If you are asked, ‘When did you move to where you live now?’ you might answer, ‘I moved there two years ago.’</td>
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<td>6. Answering questions where you have to give one or more reasons</td>
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<td>Example: if you are asked, ‘Why did you move house?’ you might answer, ‘Well, we moved house because we had very noisy neighbours. They had teenage children who played loud music all hours of the day and night, and dogs that barked a lot.’</td>
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<td>7. Asking questions which need a yes/no answer or which have a short answer</td>
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<td>Example: you might ask, ‘How old are you?’</td>
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<td>8. Asking questions when you want someone to give one or more reasons in reply</td>
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<td>Example: you might ask, ‘Why do you think we have had a cold winter?’</td>
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<td>9. Listening</td>
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<td>Example: how easy or difficult do you find it to concentrate on what the teacher is saying? On what your friends say? On what colleagues at work say?</td>
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### Aspect of speaking and listening

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#### 10. Using your non-verbal communication to help your speaking and listening

Non-verbal communication includes:
- the look on your face
- your eye-contact
- nodding your head
- the position of your body
- how you move.

Example: how easy or difficult do you find it to look at someone when you are talking together? To have a friendly look on your face? To sit or stand so that you show you are listening to someone?
‘Musts’ to make Have Your Say work
- Use a blank copy each time the learner completes Have Your Say.
- Each time the learner completes Have Your Say, make sure that the date is included.
- Do not let Have Your Say become part of a pile of paper in a folder in a cupboard. Instead, use the different versions of Have Your Say, completed over time, to enable the learner to reflect upon the extent to and ways in which his or her speaking and listening skills have developed.

Have Your Say and the National Standards
- Have Your Say draws on speaking and listening skills in the National Standards for adult literacy.
- At the same time, a certain number of ticks or crosses does not mean that the learner’s speaking and listening skills are at a certain level of the National Standards.
- You can draw on your knowledge of the National Standards and the adult literacy core curriculum:
  - to inform the questions you ask the learner to help him or her complete Have Your Say
  - in conjunction with the learner’s responses in Have Your Say, to inform planning for teaching and learning (see below: Prompt questions and activities).
- Make sure that you present any terminology from the National Standards in ways learners can relate to.

The practitioner’s judgement
- SfL practitioners should judge how much support the learner needs to complete Have Your Say.
- You may need to clarify different aspects of speaking and listening.
- Use the material in this section and in section 3 on practitioners’ speaking and listening skills, to ensure that, for instance, you are stimulating discussion with, rather than talking ‘at’, the learner.
- If the learner gives responses which you haven’t anticipated, be sure to explore these as well.
- It will probably be helpful to ask questions to help the learner think about skills in a particular aspect of speaking and listening, in a specific context, e.g. speaking to a friend, to a colleague at work, or to people in authority such as a traffic warden or benefit officer.
- The learner is likely to need most support in thinking about answering and asking questions (numbers 5–8 in Have Your Say).

Prompt questions and activities
Have Your Say gives an example for learners of each aspect of speaking and listening skills covered. If you wish to, you can change the examples used in Have Your Say to make examples relevant to your learners. Or you can use the following prompt questions and activities when talking through the different aspects of speaking and listening in Have Your Say with the learner.
These prompt questions and activities are starting points. Add ideas of your own that are appropriate for the learners you work with. If you are using prompt questions and activities, remember to give the learner plenty of time to fill in the relevant sections of Have Your Say.

1. **Speaking to someone you know**

Overview
- Help learners to explore, for example, how far they talk about familiar, straightforward topics when they talk to someone they know, or whether their conversation is about areas outside their everyday experience.
- Do they adapt what they say appropriately to the person they are talking to, such as when talking to children?

**Examples of activities**
You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:
- Do you talk to your family about things that have happened during the day? (If so) Tell me about a recent conversation you have had. What did you say? What did other members of your family say? How easy/difficult did you find this? Why?
- Do you talk in your family about events you have heard about in the news? (If so) Tell me about a recent conversation you have had. What did you say? What did other members of your family say? Can you talk about the news in ways your children can understand? How easy/difficult did you find this? Why?
- Do you talk with people you know at work about things that have happened in your family? (If so) Tell me about a recent conversation you have had. What did you say? What did people you work with say? How easy/difficult did you find the conversation? Why?

2. **Speaking to someone you don’t know**

Overview
- Help learners to explore how easy they find it to speak to someone they don’t know.
- Do they tend to talk about familiar, straightforward topics, or is their conversation about areas outside their everyday experience?
- Do learners think that they adapt what they say appropriately to the person they are talking to?

**Examples of activities**
You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:
- When did you last speak to someone in your home that you didn’t know? What was the conversation about? What did you say? What did s/he say? How easy/difficult did you find it to talk to this person? Why?
- When did you last speak to someone at work that you didn’t know? What was the conversation about? What did you say? What did s/he say? How easy/difficult did you find it to talk to this person? Why?
- Have you ever had a conversation with someone over the phone that you don’t know? If so, when? What was it about? How easy/difficult did you find it? Why?
3. **Speaking in a group**

**Overview**
- Help learners to explore how far they are able to join in group discussions about familiar and unfamiliar subjects.

**Examples of activities**
You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:
- When was the last time you had a group discussion in your family? What was it about? What did you say? What did other family members say? Did you all agree? How easy/difficult did you find it to take part in this group discussion? Why?
- When was the last time you were in a group which was talking about something you didn’t know much about? What were the group members talking about? What did you say? What did other people say? How easy/difficult did you find it to contribute to the discussion?
- When was the last time you had a discussion with colleagues at work, about something to do with work? How much did you contribute to the discussion? What did you say? What did other people say? How easy/difficult did you find it? Why?

4. **Giving information to someone else**

**Overview**
- Help learners to explore how they use their speaking and listening skills when they give information to someone else.
- You could explore, for example, how much and in what ways they adapt what they say according to purpose and audience.

**Examples of activities**
You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:
- Have you ever had to give directions to someone about how to get to a place? Tell me what you said. How easy/difficult did you find this? Why?
- When did you last have to explain to someone how to do something? What was it about? To whom were you explaining? How easy/difficult did you find it? Why? Did you leave anything out?
- A television interviewer stops you on the street and asks your views on the rising price of petrol. Tell me what you would say. How easy/difficult do you think you would find it to talk to the interviewer about your views? Why? Would you talk to the interviewer in the same way as you would talk to a friend? Why/why not?

5. **Answering questions which need a yes/no answer or which have a single correct answer**
6. Answering questions where learners have to give one or more reasons

Overview
- Aspect 5 is about answering closed questions (see section 3 page 20).
- Aspect 6 is about answering open questions (see section 3 page 20).
- Practitioners need to judge whether the learner understands the differences between 5 and 6, and whether he or she can use closed and open questions appropriately. Be realistic, but do not underestimate the learner. See figure 8 below.
- If you think that the learner can probably manage the differences between closed and open questions, then go to the activity: Answering a friend and a teacher, on pages 43–44.
- If you think that the distinction between closed and open questions is too difficult for the learner at present, then go to the activity Answering a friend, on page 45.

Fig. 8: Process to follow for talking about answering questions with the learner

Remember!
After you have completed the activity, give the learner time to fill in the section(s) on answering questions in Have Your Say.
Guidance: talking about open and closed questions

Answering closed questions
- Help learners to think about how easy they find it to answer questions which require either a yes/no answer or which have a single correct answer. You could talk about whether this depends on whom they are talking to.
- If appropriate, you could explore when it might be sensible to give detail when answering an apparently closed question (e.g. ‘Is the football ground down this road?’).

Answering open questions
- Help learners to think about how easy they find it to answer questions where they have to give reasons for something in their answers, and why this is.
- Help learners to think about how extended their answers to open questions are. Do they tend to give one reason or do they try to give a number of reasons? Do they tend to explain briefly or do they go into detail? Why?
- Do they try to make sure that their answer is at an appropriate level for the person they are speaking to? If so, how do they judge what an appropriate level is?

Example of an activity: Answering a friend’s and a teacher’s questions
Note: This activity aims to develop awareness of answering closed and open questions.

You will need to allow some time (e.g. 20 minutes) to discuss 5 and 6 thoroughly with the learner.

You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:
- When was the last time a friend asked you some questions?
- What questions did your friend ask?
- What did you say to answer your friend?
- When was the last time a teacher asked you some questions?
- What questions did the teacher ask?
- What did you say to answer the teacher?

As the learner talks, the practitioner could record what s/he says in four columns, as in table 2.
### Assessing learners’ speaking and listening skills

#### Section 4

1. **Examples of the friend’s questions requiring a yes/no answer or one correct answer.**
2. **Examples of the friend’s questions requiring one or more reasons.**
3. **Examples of the teacher’s questions requiring a yes/no answer or one correct answer.**
4. **Examples of the teacher’s questions requiring one or more reasons.**

#### Examples of the learner’s answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friend</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples of the friend’s questions requiring a yes/no answer or one correct answer.</td>
<td>Examples of the friend’s questions requiring one or more reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples of the learner’s answers.</td>
<td>Examples of the learner’s answers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Record of the learner’s responses.**

To enable the learner to think about answering closed and open questions, the practitioner could ask the following:

- What are the similarities between the questions and answers in columns 1 and 3?
- What are the similarities between the questions and answers in columns 2 and 4?
- What are the differences between the questions and answers in columns 1 and 2, about your friend’s questions?
- What are the differences between the questions and answers in columns 3 and 4, about your teacher’s questions?
- How easy do you find it to answer the questions in each column? Why?
- Did you find it easier to give more detail when you were answering your friend’s questions, than when you were answering the teacher’s questions? Why/not?
Differentiated activity. Answering questions

Overview
This differentiated activity is for learners who, in your judgement, will find the differences between closed and open questions too challenging at present (see figure 9). Remember to change Have Your Say so that:

- 5 and 6 are combined under the heading Answering questions
- The following is added to Have Your Say, under the heading Answering questions:

Example: If a friend says to you, ‘Where would you like to go on holiday?’ you might answer, ‘Spain.’ If the friend says, ‘Where?’, you might say, ‘I’d like to go to the south coast.’ If the friend says, ‘Why?’ you might say, ‘It’s the hottest part of the Spanish coastline and it’s got some interesting cities too, like Granada. They’re not too far inland, so you can combine sea and sightseeing.’

Example of a differentiated activity. Answering a friend
You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:

- When did a friend last ask you questions?
- What did the friend ask you?
- What did you answer?
- How easy/ difficult did you find it to answer your friend? Why?
- Do you find it easier to answer a friend’s or a teacher’s questions? Why?

7. Asking questions which need a yes/no answer or which have a single correct answer

8. Asking questions when you want someone to give one or more reasons in reply

Overview

- Aspect 7 is about asking closed questions (see section 3 page 20).
- Aspect 8 is about asking open questions (see section 3 page 20).
- See figure 9, page 46.
- If you think that the learner can probably manage the differences between closed and open questions, go to the activities Going to Spain and Complaining about your flight home, on page 46.
- If you think that the distinction between closed and open questions is too difficult for the learner at present, then go to the activity Going to Spain on page 47. Remember, be realistic, but do not under-estimate the learner.
- You should be able to build on the discussion and activity on Answering questions with the learner.
Section 4 Assessing learners’ speaking and listening skills

Practitioner judgement
Can the learner cope with the differences between asking open and closed questions?

Yes

Activities
Going to Spain (page 46).
Complaining about your flight home (page 46).

No

Alter Have Your Say by combining 7 and 8 into one section headed Asking questions.

Differentiated activity
Going to Spain (page 47).

Remember!
Give the learner time to fill in the section(s) on asking questions in Have Your Say.

Example of activities. Going to Spain and Complaining about your flight home
Note: These activities are about asking closed and open questions (7 and 8).

- You will need to allow some time (e.g. 20 minutes) to discuss aspects 7 and 8 thoroughly with the learner.
- The first activity, about making travel arrangements, is likely to generate mainly closed questions. The second, about complaining about the flight home, is likely to generate mainly open questions.
- **Situation 1. Going to Spain.** You are going on holiday to Spain. What questions would you need to ask to find out about your travel arrangements? For example: What time does the plane leave? What time do I need to be at the airport? What is the luggage allowance?
- **Situation 2. Complaining about your flight home** You have had a long delay on your flight home from your holiday in Spain. No-one was given any information about why the flight was late. No-one was given any vouchers for food or accommodation. You want to make a
complaint about your experience. What questions would it be sensible to ask, when making your complaint? For example: Why was the plane delayed? Why didn’t anyone from the airline explain what had happened? Why wasn’t any food or accommodation provided?

- Record the questions the learner suggests.
- In each case, talk through with the learner how easy/difficult s/he would find it to ask these questions and why.
- Encourage the learner to look at all the questions s/he has suggested and to identify different types of questions.

**Differentiated activity. Going to Spain**

- This activity is for learners who, in your judgement, are not yet ready to manage the distinction between asking closed and open questions.
- If this is the case, remember to change Have Your Say so that 7 and 8 are combined under the heading Asking questions.
- In Asking questions, you can use the examples given in 7 and 8 of Have Your Say.

**Situation: Going to Spain** (as in situation 1 on page 46). You are going on holiday to Spain. What questions would you need to ask to find out about your travel arrangements? For example: What time does the plane leave? What time do I need to be at the airport? What is the luggage allowance? How easy/difficult would you find it to ask these questions? Why?

### 9. Listening

**Overview**

- Help learners to consider their strengths and weaknesses as listeners.

**Examples of activities**

You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:

- What kind of thing do you find difficult to listen to? Why?
- Where do you find it easiest to listen? Why?
- Is there a particular time of day when you find it easiest to listen to something? Why?
- Do you find it easier to listen to one person talking or to a group? Why?
- Add your own questions.

### 10. Non-verbal communication

**Overview**

- Help learners think of how far they are aware of and use non-verbal communication, when they speak and when they listen.
- See Have Your Say (page 38) for suggestions of how to talk through what non-verbal communication is with learners. You can extend this if appropriate.
Examples of activities

You could, for example, ask one or more of the following:

- Think of an occasion when you felt happy. What was the occasion? What was your non-verbal communication like?
- Think of an occasion when you felt sad. What was the occasion? What was your non-verbal communication like?
- Think of an occasion when you felt angry. What was the occasion? What was your non-verbal communication like?
- Think of an occasion when you felt frustrated. What was the occasion? What was your non-verbal communication like?
- When you are talking to someone, do you ever fold your arms? Why do you think you do this? What message might this give to someone?
- When you feel negative, how easy do you find it to control your non-verbal communication? Why do you think this is?
- If you want the person you are talking to to agree with you, how might you use your non-verbal communication? Why?

Add your own questions.

After learners have completed Have Your Say

- Ask learners to look at the patterns of ticks and crosses.
- Ask learners to talk about what they think the ticks and crosses say about their speaking and listening skills.
- Ask learners to identify where their strengths are, and which areas they would like to develop further.
- Ask questions to help learners to identify which aspects of their speaking and listening are most important in their lives and could most benefit from development.
- Agree priorities for development during the SfL learning programme.
- Remember to review Have Your Say as part of formative and summative assessment (see page 35).
Section 5 Using SfL resources in teaching and learning

Overview

As noted in section 1, there are a number of SfL resources that you can use to focus on speaking and listening in teaching and learning. This section covers:

- activities in the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum document
- the SfL learner materials
- the SfL embedded learning materials
- the SfL numeracy materials
- forthcoming Maths4Life numeracy publications.

This section gives examples of how SfL practitioners can use these resources. Practitioners can then:

- try out these examples
- use these examples as the basis for trying out further activities from the SfL resources specified above.

Activities in the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum

- The Adult Literacy Core Curriculum document contains sample activities for speaking and listening (SL), for each sub-section (listen and respond (SLr), speak to communicate (SLc) and engage in discussion (SLd)) at each level of the National Standards, from Entry 1 to Level 2. Practitioners will find these activities on the right-hand page of the document (pages 23–53).
- Find out more about the adult literacy core curriculum from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula.

Figures 10 and 11 give two examples of how practitioners can use sample activities in the core curriculum to develop practice in speaking and listening. The first activity is at Entry 3, the second at Level 1. Each includes the following:

- the core curriculum reference
- the sample activity as in the core curriculum document.
- a practitioner’s thoughts about and planning for the activity
- sample questions to use with learners.
1. Speak to communicate
SLc/E3 2 (Curriculum page 34)
Use formal language and register when appropriate.

2. Sample activity from the core
curriculum (page 35)
Discuss as a group what formal and informal mean and how language varies between informal and more formal settings.

In pairs, identify situations in their own lives where more formal language is needed. Pool examples and discuss as a group the sort of language that could be used in those situations.

3. Practitioner’s planning
I’ll start things off by using an inappropriate greeting and then ask learners why it was inappropriate.

4. Hi babes! Are you all cool with everything?

5. Practitioner’s sample discussion questions
- What do you think of the way I greeted you today?
- (If learners say they were surprised)
  Why were you surprised? (For example: inappropriate language/too informal.)
- In what kinds of situations would you expect to use or hear informal language? Why?
- What situations have you been in when you’ve had to speak to people in a formal way?
- What makes one way of speaking informal and one formal?
- In pairs, think of three situations when you would use informal language and three when you would use formal language. Write them down on the sticky notes and then we’ll share our ideas.

Fig. 10: Entry 3 activity.
1. Listen and respond
SLlr/L1.6. (page 42)
Respond to questions on a range of topics.

2. Sample activity (page 43)
Rehearse answering questions in the context of an interview. Discuss dos and don’ts in interview simulations (interviewee and interviewer).

3. Practitioner’s thinking and planning
I’ll get learners into groups of three for role-play. I’ll ask one to be the interviewer (with a set of closed questions and directions on using non-verbal communication to show increasing disinterest), one to be the interviewee and one to be an observer.

We’ll discuss how it went and repeat it, but this time with the interviewee answering open questions.

4. Practitioners’ sample questions for discussion
- What did you notice about the responses given by the interviewee? (Single answer statements.)
- Did she answer appropriately? Why? (Yes, in the circumstances.)
- Do you think the interviewer knows enough about this person to offer her a job? Give reasons. (No. Didn’t ask probing questions/didn’t get to know what she was really like.)
- What would make this a better interview for all concerned? Why? (Interviewer needs to ask more probing questions.)

Fig. 11: Level 1 activity.
### Reflective practice questions and activities

- Try out the examples in figures 10 and 11.
- Use the examples in figures 12 and 13 to plan how to integrate other speaking and listening activities in the adult literacy core curriculum into your practice.
- If you wish, you can use table 3 to develop your planning. Alternatively, you could use the other suggestions from section 2, such as a flow chart or mind map, to record your thinking and planning.
- Table 3 uses the Entry 3 example on page 50.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum page and reference</th>
<th>Sample curriculum activity</th>
<th>Practitioner thinking and planning</th>
<th>Sample discussion questions to ask</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page 34 S1c E3 2</td>
<td>Discuss as a group what formal and informal mean and how language varies between informal and more formal settings. In pairs, identify situations in their own lives where more formal language is needed. Pool examples and discuss as a group the sort of language that could be used in those situations. (page 35)</td>
<td>I’ll start things off by using an inappropriate greeting and then ask learners why it was inappropriate. I must include some questions to get them thinking.</td>
<td>What do you think of the way I greeted you today? (If learners say they were surprised) Why were you surprised? (For example: inappropriate language/too informal.) In what kinds of situations would you expect to use or hear informal language? Why? What situations have you been in when you’ve had to speak to people in a formal way? What makes one way of speaking informal and one formal? In pairs think of three situations when you would use informal language and three when you would use formal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your own example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your own example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Using core curriculum speaking and listening activities.
Skills for Life literacy learner materials

- There are SfL literacy learner materials from Pre-Entry to Level 2, and additional materials for ESOL.
- In the SfL materials, speaking and listening is taught as a discrete area of literacy, using appropriately contextualised situations. Speaking and listening is also integrated into reading and writing activities.
- Audio clips are available for each level of the National Standards.
- At the beginning of a unit, learners are given an overview of the skills they will be developing. At the end of a unit, learners reflect on the extent to and ways in which their skills have developed.
- Find out more about the learner literacy materials and practitioner guidance from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningMaterialsLiteracy.
- The example in figure 12 is taken from the teacher reference file, Literacy, Entry 3 Unit 1.

Practitioner thinking and planning

How can I help my learners to ask for information confidently and clearly?

I’ll facilitate a discussion. I’ll try to get learners to identify the reasons why asking for information can be difficult.

I’ll start from learners’ experience, e.g. When was the last time anyone had to ask for information? How easy/difficult did you find it? Why? Did you find out everything you needed to? How/why not?

The materials suggest ways in which speaking and listening skills can be developed.
Improve speaking and listening skills

Section 5 Using SfL resources in teaching and learning

Reference to the literacy learner materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to the literacy learner materials</th>
<th>Your thinking and planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Entry 3 Unit 1</td>
<td>How can I help my learners to ask for information confidently and clearly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’ll facilitate a discussion. I’ll try to get learners to identify the reasons why asking for information can be difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’ll start from learners’ experience, e.g. When was the last time anyone had to ask for information? How easy/difficult did you find it? Why? Did you find out everything you needed to? How/why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(If not covered) Can anyone tell us about a situation when they had to ask for information and felt uncomfortable doing it – thought they might or say the wrong thing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your own example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your own example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Using the literacy learner materials to develop speaking and listening.

Embedded learning materials

Embedded teaching and learning combines the development of literacy, language (ESOL) and numeracy with vocational and other skills. The skills acquired provide learners with the confidence, competence and motivation necessary for them to progress, gain qualifications and to succeed in life and at work. (DfES and NRDC definition.)
Find out more about the embedded learning materials that have been developed from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/embeddedlearning.

The example in figure 13 is taken from the Early Years Birth to 7 embedded materials (Module 3, Communicating in the early years). This module highlights the importance of effective oral communication skills. It gives part of the introduction to the section, a teaching focus page and an extract from the teacher notes.

**Practitioner thinking**

How much do I listen to my learners? Do I allow sufficient wait time for learners to think through a response? How can I increase wait time?

What messages does my non-verbal communication give?

What strategies can I use with learners, to help them improve their listening skills?

---

**Fig. 13: Speaking and listening and the embedded learning materials.**
Section 5 Using SfL resources in teaching and learning

Improving speaking and listening skills

Reflective practice questions and activities

- Try out the example in figure 13. Use it to plan how to develop speaking and listening, in conjunction with the SfL embedded learning materials.
- Use table 5 to help your planning. Or you could use suggestions from section 2, such as a flow chart or mind map, to record your thinking and planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to the embedded learning materials</th>
<th>Your thinking and planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Years Birth to 7 Module 3 Communicating in the Early Years</td>
<td>How much do I listen to my learners?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do I allow sufficient wait time for learners to think through a response?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can I increase wait time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What messages does my non-verbal communication give?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What strategies can I use with learners, to help them improve their listening skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your own example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your own example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Using the embedded learning materials to develop speaking and listening.

Numeracy

Overview

- Speaking and listening is not a distinct strand of the Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum.
- However, as outlined in section 1, speaking and listening activities are integral to maximising learning in numeracy.
Improving speaking and listening skills

Section 5 Using SfL resources in teaching and learning

There is plenty of opportunity to build speaking and listening activities into your use of the Skills for Life numeracy learner materials to help maximise learning gains.

Find out more about the SfL numeracy learner materials from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningMaterialsNumeracy.

At the start of the units in the numeracy learner materials, there is opportunity for discussion. The example in figure 14 (Unit 2 E2 MSS1) gives questions that the teacher can use to facilitate a discussion about the skills needed for fundraising.

The teacher notes at all the levels of the National Standards contain many other suggestions of ways to encourage learners to discuss or review their learning and explore the language of numeracy. For example, learners are invited to:

- think about other words that show direction, e.g. above, in front and to the side (Unit 4 E1)
- explain the difference between ‘exact’ and ‘approximate’ and talk about vocabulary, e.g. roughly, about and almost (Unit 1 E2)
- discuss in a group why unlimited alcohol intake may affect a person’s health (Unit 4 E3)
- discuss the importance of budgeting (Unit 2 E3)
- develop their understanding of terminology used, e.g. interest, amount paid and balance (Unit 2 L1)
- discuss the scenario in a group (Unit 2 L2)
- use these questions to assess their learning in the unit (Unit 5 L2).

Key research findings

- Research findings show that there are often issues with the use of speaking and listening in numeracy and mathematics classrooms.
- There is a lot of evidence that there is not enough purposeful talk in numeracy and mathematics classrooms across sectors (e.g. Lee, 2004; Swan, 2005).
- For example, one mathematics researcher found that, in one observed session, the practitioner spoke 2000 words, whilst the learners only spoke a total of 30 words.
- At school level, the Teaching Mathematics in Seven Countries international study (NCES, 2003) revealed that, whilst there were many brief opportunities for students to talk while working, there were few sustained opportunities to do so.
- Some research evidence on numeracy and speaking and listening was cited in section 2.

Skills for Life numeracy learner materials

- There is plenty of opportunity to build speaking and listening activities into your use of the SfL numeracy learner materials to help maximise learning gains.
- Find out more about the SfL numeracy learner materials from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningMaterialsNumeracy.
- At the start of the units in the numeracy learner materials, there is opportunity for discussion. The example in figure 14 (Unit 2 E2 MSS1) gives questions that the teacher can use to facilitate a discussion about the skills needed for fundraising.
1. The aim of using this context is to provide opportunities for learners to practise:
- dividing into halves and quarters (N2/E2.1, N2/E2.2)
- using coins (MSS1/E2.1)
- Paying and getting the right change (SS1/E2.2).

2. Discussion can enable adult learners to draw on their experiences, in order to make sense of the context in the learner materials. At the beginning of every unit, there are stimulus questions which teachers can use.

3. Specified stimulus questions

Is there a community centre near where you live?

What sorts of activities take place in a community centre?

Have you ever been involved in fundraising?

4. Practitioner thinking and planning

I think I’ll build on the questions specified in the materials because I want to make the activity real to the learners’ experience. I’ll ask the first two specified stimulus questions. Then I’ll divide learners into pairs. I’ll ask them to discuss which of the activities suggested by the whole group involve mathematical skills. Each pair can use a sticky note for each activity and on the sticky note they can identify what specific mathematical skills are needed for each activity. Then we’ll put up all the sticky notes on the wall, and the learners can walk round and compare their own suggestions with those of other pairs. We’ll talk the similarities and differences through. This will lead into fundraising.

Fig. 14: Speaking and listening and the numeracy learner materials.
Reference to the numeracy learning materials | Your thinking and planning
---|---
Unit 2 E2 MSS1 | I think I’ll build on the questions specified in the materials because I want to make the activity real to the learners’ experience. I’ll ask the first two specified stimulus questions. Then I’ll divide learners into pairs. I’ll ask them to discuss which of the activities suggested by the whole group involve mathematical skills. Each pair can use a sticky note for each activity and on the sticky note they can identify what specific mathematical skills are needed for each activity. Then we’ll put up all the sticky notes on the wall, and the learners can walk round and compare their own suggestions with those of other pairs. We’ll talk the similarities and differences through. This will lead into discussion of fundraising.

Add your own example

Add your own example

Table 6: Using the numeracy learner materials to develop speaking and listening skills.
Maths4Life

- The DfES funded Maths4Life project, led by the NRDC (see below), is extending the work of the DfES Standards Unit.
- On behalf of the DfES Standards Unit, Malcolm Swan developed approaches to active learning in mathematics at Level 2 and beyond (Swan, 2005).
- Central to these active approaches is the role of learner talk in making explicit mathematical misconceptions.
- Maths4Life is focusing on active approaches in the teaching and learning of numeracy at Entry Level and Level 1.
- Maths4Life is developing a suite of up to 20 exemplar sessions.
- The exemplar sessions are scheduled for publication in 2007.

Find out more

- Download a leaflet about Maths4Life’s work on active learning in numeracy and mathematics (Maths4Life, 2006) from the Maths4Life web site at www.maths4life.org. The leaflet is called Towards More Active Learning Approaches.

Skills for Life resources

- A list of all SfL publications can be downloaded from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/publications.
- SfL resources can also be ordered through Prolog on 0845 602 2260 or dfes@prolog.uk.com.
SECTION 6

Speaking and listening and context

Overview
- The context in which interactions occur influences both practitioners’ and learners’ use of speaking and listening.
- Practitioners often have to make very rapid judgements about how to use their speaking and listening skills when managing interactions with learners.
- This section focuses on developing practitioners’ awareness about how to assess relevant aspects of context when deciding how to use their speaking and listening skills with learners.

Section structure
First, this section considers the aspects of context which can influence speaking and listening, followed by reflective practice questions and activities.
- Two examples enable practitioners to explore different aspects of context in more detail in two sectors in which SfL learning takes place: the criminal justice sector and FLLN. Then there is an exploration of the potential influence that practitioner and learner emotions can have upon speaking and listening.

Reflective practice questions and activities are included. both for the two sectors examined in detail, and for practitioners in sectors outside the criminal justice system and FLLN.

Aspects of context potentially influencing speaking and listening
Table 7 on the following page exemplifies different aspects of context which can influence choices practitioners and learners make about use of speaking and listening skills.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of context which can influence speaking and listening</th>
<th>Relevant detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sector-related                                              | For example, the criminal justice sector, the National Health Service (NHS), other workplaces, further education (FE) colleges, adult and community (ACL) and FLLN.  
*Add your own examples.* |
| Environment-related                                         | For example, the physical surroundings (whether the session is in a room primarily used for education, whether the surroundings are crowded or spacious, the degree of privacy, the seating arrangements); the time of day and day of the week.  
*Add your own examples.* |
| Learning-related                                             | For example, whether the session is about assessment, developing an ILP or teaching and learning; whether the session is group or one to one and whether ICT is available.  
*Add your own examples.* |
| Learner-related                                              | For example personality, emotions, confidence, previous learning history, family and peer relationships, (in the case of offenders) length of sentence and whether the sentence is in the community or custody.  
*Add your own examples.* |

Table 7: Aspects of context.
Table 7: Aspects of context (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of context which can influence speaking and listening</th>
<th>Relevant detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Practitioner-related                                       | For example, the degree of experience in teaching or in supporting learning; understanding of the extent to and ways in which the affective underpins teaching and learning; the practitioner’s emotions and confidence in his or her own teaching skills.  

*Add your own examples.* |
| Relationship between the learner and the practitioner        | For example, previous experience of working together and the degree of trust between teacher and learner.  

*Add your own examples.* |
| Other.                                                      | Please specify. |

**Reflective practice questions and activities**

- Think about your practice in relation to table 7 and further examples to each item in the ‘Relevant detail’ column.
- Add any further aspects of context that are relevant to your practice.
- Reflect on a recent session:
  - Using table 7, in conjunction with the ten aspects of speaking and listening in the practitioner reflective log (section 3), identify which aspects of the context influenced the interaction between the learner and yourself.
  - How did each aspect of context influence the interaction between the learner and yourself?
  - Having reflected, is there anything about your use of speaking and listening which you would change in another, similar situation? If so, what? Why?
- Alternatively, you could use other suggestions in section 2, such as a flow chart or mind map, to record your thinking and planning.
Example 1: The criminal justice sector

Overview
Offenders are a key S/l priority group. Speaking and listening skills are important in work with offenders, in a range of ways.

Key research findings

- As outlined in section 4 (page 32), Davies et al.’s (2004) research found that, of 455 adult offenders:
  - 25% were probably at or above Level 2 in speaking and listening
  - 75% were probably below Level 2
  - 35% were probably below Level 1.
- Offenders find the terminology of the criminal justice system complex, both in oral and in written form (Davies et al., 2004; Hudson et al., 2005).
- Offenders need good speaking and listening skills to be able to manage the oral language demands of the criminal justice system such as:
  - being arrested
  - being in court
  - liaising with representatives of the criminal justice system, as part of their sentence
  - participating in offending behaviour programmes.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- Think about your practice in working with offenders and complete table 8.
- Identify other areas of the criminal justice system where offenders need good speaking and listening skills. Use your suggestions to complete the table.
- How will you develop your practice?
- You could also use other suggestions from section 2, such as a flow chart or mind map, to record your thinking and planning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of the criminal justice system</th>
<th>Importance of speaking and listening</th>
<th>Practitioner thinking and planning: how to develop offenders’ speaking and listening skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| When an offender on community supervision meets with his/her offender manager, as part of the sentence. | The offender needs to:  
- understand the processes of the criminal justice system  
- be able to listen to what the offender manager says  
- ask questions to clarify what s/he is unclear about  
- remember what has been agreed. | First, I’ll develop my understanding of the technical language of the criminal justice system.  
Then I’ll set up a meeting with the offender manager to get him/her to talk through the broad areas of what s/he’ll be covering with the offender (respecting confidentiality, etc). I’ll probe to find out what speaking and listening skills the offender needs in order to benefit from working with the offender manager.  
I’ll enable the offender to talk through relevant aspects of his/her work with the offender manager (respecting confidentiality, etc). I’ll probe to encourage the offender to identify what s/he finds difficult in relation to speaking and listening.  
On the basis of this, we’ll prioritise speaking and listening skills to build into the ILP. |

Add your own example

Add your own example

**Table 8: Speaking and listening in the criminal justice system**
Example 2: Family literacy, language and numeracy

Overview

- FLLN is often very motivational for adults who want to help improve their children’s LLN skills.

Key research findings

- A lot of research evidence highlights the important role of teachers, parents and carers in developing young children’s oracy skills (e.g. Bernstein, 1971; Dockrell et al., 2002; Rosemary and Roskos, 2002).
- As noted in section 4, research (e.g. Sticht, 2007; Ginsborg and Locke, 2002) links the development of oracy and reading skills – problems in young children's development of oracy skills have been connected with later problems with reading and writing, and vice-versa in the case of children with good listening skills.
- These research findings mean that it is very important for FLLN practitioners to have good speaking and listening skills, so that:
  - the development of young children’s skills can be maximised
  - practitioners can develop parents’ and carers’ speaking and listening skills so that they in turn can develop the skills of children for whom they are responsible.

The importance of speaking and listening in FLLN

Some of the ways in which speaking and listening is important in the context of FLLN are:

- telling stories to young children
- teaching young children nursery rhymes
- teaching young children to count by, for example, counting the stairs they go up on the way to bed
- enabling parents and carers to take their children out and to talk through what they see; for example, on a nature walk, the adult could ask the child to bring him/her the biggest leaf the child can find, or to bring a big, shiny leaf
- enabling parents and carers to interact effectively with their child's school by developing an understanding of the culture and language of the school
- enabling parents and carers to give praise to their child.

Reflective practice questions and activities

Think about your practice in FLLN:

- Using the list above as a starting point, identify the aspects of FLLN in which speaking and listening skills are important.
- Use your reflections to complete table 9.
- You could also use other suggestions from section 2, such as a flow chart or mind map, to record your thinking and planning.
Section 6  Speaking and listening and context

Table 9: Speaking and listening in FLLN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of FLLN</th>
<th>Importance of speaking and listening</th>
<th>Practitioner thinking and planning: how to develop speaking and listening skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telling children a story</td>
<td>Reading the story to the child in a way which brings the story alive. Talking about the story with the child.</td>
<td>I'll model the activity to parents and carers. Then I'll ask parents and carers to try out telling a story and talking about the story with their child. We'll discuss how it went: what went well and what they could build on next time. Then I'll ask them to try it out at home, before the next FLLN session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add your example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Find out more


Building on examples 1 and 2

If you work in one or more SfL sector(s) beyond the criminal justice sector and FLLN, use the preceding examples as a model:

- Specify the sector.
- Analyse the ways in which speaking and listening is important in your sector.
- Plan how to develop speaking and listening skills.

Complete table 10, or you could use other suggestions from section 2, such as a flow chart or mind map, to record your thinking and planning.
## Table 10: Your Skills for Life sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SfL sector:</th>
<th>The importance of the specified aspect of speaking and listening in your sector</th>
<th>Practitioner thinking and planning: how to develop your practice in this aspect of speaking and listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specification of speaking and listening in your SfL sector:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specification of speaking and listening in your SfL sector:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Speaking and listening and underlying emotions

Underlying both practitioners’ and learners’ use of speaking and listening are emotions. Learners and practitioners may be aware of some of their emotions, but may be unconscious of others.

Where feasible, it is probably helpful to acknowledge both your own and your learners’ emotions. You can then plan how to manage any negative emotions so that you maximise the learning which takes place.

You can also decide how to build upon positive emotions, such as the learner’s growing confidence, in teaching and learning.

**Note:** It is important to recognise that using speaking and listening to interpret emotions is complex. For example, the relationships between non-verbal communication and emotions are far from straightforward. In some instances, but not in all, folded arms might mean that someone is feeling defensive. In some instances, speaking with pauses might mean that the speaker lacks confidence. However, in others, there might be pauses because the speaker is thinking about what s/he wants to say. Practitioners must interpret speaking and listening and emotions cautiously and avoid simplistic stereotyping.

Table 11:
- gives examples of emotions potentially experienced by practitioner and learner.
- gives reasons for the practitioner’s and learner’s emotions.
- suggests how emotions may be reflected in different aspects of speaking and listening.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Possible underlying explanation for the practitioner’s emotion</th>
<th>Practitioner’s speaking and listening</th>
<th>Possible underlying explanation for the learner’s emotion</th>
<th>Learner’s speaking and listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>Is very committed to SfL. Has engaged well with the learner and is very pleased with the progress the learner has made.</td>
<td>Enthusiastic tone of voice. Smiles a lot. Uses humour. Laughs. Asks questions to maximise the learner’s contributions to the session. Talks less than the learner.</td>
<td>Recognises that s/he has made progress against the goals in his/her ILP and therefore feels s/he has learnt a lot. Recognises the positive impact of SfL learning upon the rest of his/her life.</td>
<td>Positive non-verbal communication, e.g. smiles a lot and looks relaxed. Laughs. Makes positive contributions. Makes extended contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Feels has a range of teaching and learning strategies to draw upon. Is experienced. Feels can engage with learner.</td>
<td>Invites learner to make extended contributions. The practitioner can acknowledge that s/he doesn’t know everything.</td>
<td>Recognises that s/he has made progress against the goals in his/her ILP and therefore feels s/he has learnt a lot. Recognises the positive impact of SfL learning upon the rest of his/her life.</td>
<td>Positive non-verbal communication, e.g. smiles a lot and looks relaxed. Makes positive contributions. Says when doesn’t understand something and asks for clarification. Interacts well in pair, small group and whole group discussions. Makes extended contributions and listens to others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Emotions and speaking and listening.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Possible underlying explanation for the practitioner’s emotion</th>
<th>Practitioner’s speaking and listening</th>
<th>Possible underlying explanation for the learner’s emotion</th>
<th>Learner’s speaking and listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fear/ lack of confidence | Fearful of dealing with challenging learners.  
Fearful of physical presence of some learners.  
May feel s/he doesn’t have enough confidence to manage the learner’s attitudes/behaviour. | Talks too much, too quickly.  
 Doesn’t give learners much opportunity to speak.  
 Non-verbal communication: arms folded, lips pursed and closed body language. | May be very fearful of engaging in learning.  
 Fear of failure. | Lack of eye contact.  
 Monosyllabic.  
 Quiet tone of voice when does speak. |
| Boredom             | Has taught this unit many times previously and wants more variety.  
 Has not engaged with the learner. | Wandering eye contact.  
 Folded arms.  
 Monotonous tone of voice.  
 Use of negative phrasing such as, ‘We’ve got to do this,’ or ‘It’s as bad for you as it is for me.’ | May have found learning dull in the past. May not realise SfL learning can be relevant to his/her life. | Eyes may wander.  
 May be fidgety.  
 Sighs.  
 Asks if s/he has to attend the session.  
 Asks how long to go until the end of the session.  
 Is explicit that s/he is bored and that the material is not enjoyable. |
| Add your own example | | | | |
Reflective practice questions and activities

- Using table 11, think about a recent session with a learner you find challenging to work with.
  - What do you think the learner was feeling during the session?
  - In what ways do you think that these feelings were reflected in the learner’s use of speaking and listening during the session?
  - What were your emotions before, during and after the session?
  - In what ways did your emotions influence your use of speaking and listening?
  - Having reflected on the potential influences of emotions upon speaking and listening, how could you build on your use of speaking and listening in a future session with this learner?

- Now think about a learner you enjoy working with and complete table 11 using the questions below:
  - What do you think the learner was feeling during the session?
  - In what ways do you think these feelings were reflected in the learner’s use of speaking and listening during the session?
  - What were your emotions before, during and after the session?
  - In what ways did your emotions influence your use of speaking and listening?
  - How could you build on your use of speaking and listening, in a future session with this learner?
Accreditation

Overview

- This section provides information for practitioners about qualifications that include speaking and listening and that are relevant to SfL learners.

Skills for Life

- Speaking and listening is not accredited as part of the National Tests at Level 1 and 2.
- Speaking and listening is accredited as part of the Entry Level certificate in adult literacy.
- Learners can complete either:
  - portfolios (internally assessed) and short tasks (externally set, internally marked and externally verified); or
  - assignments (externally set, internally marked and externally verified).
- Because many SfL learners have spiky profiles, achievement is recorded on the Entry level certificate in speaking and listening, reading and writing, at Entry 1, 2 and 3.
- Achievement is assessed by using the national standards and speaking and listening section of the core curriculum.
- Achievement is assessed in the three sub-sections of speaking and listening: listen and respond, speak to communicate and engage in discussion.
- See page 5 for information about progression between capabilities from Entry 1 to Level 2, as specified in the national standards and the core curriculum.
- There has to be evidence that learners have achieved all curriculum capabilities at Entry 1, 2 or 3 as appropriate.
- Find out more about awarding bodies which accredit Entry Level adult literacy from www.qca.org.uk/6448.html.

Key Skills

Overview

- Speaking and listening is assessed as part of Key Skills Communication, at Levels 1 and 2.

Key Skills Communication Level 1 (QCA, 2004a)

- Speaking and listening task. Learners have to take part in a one-to-one or group discussion.
- Evidence. Learners must give evidence that they can:
  - provide information that is relevant to the subject and purpose of the discussion
  - communicate clearly in a way that suits the situation and respond appropriately to others.
Key Skills Communication Level 2 (QCA, 2004b)

- **Speaking and listening tasks.** Learners have to take part in a group discussion and give a talk.
- **Evidence for the group discussion.** Learners must give evidence that they can:
  - make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits (their) purpose and situation
  - respond appropriately to others
  - help to move the discussion forward.
- **Evidence for the talk.** Learners must give evidence that they can:
  - speak clearly in a way that suits (their) subject, purpose and situation
  - keep to the subject and structure (their) talk so listeners follow what (they) are saying
  - use appropriate ways to support (their) main points.

Find out more

- Find out more about the Key Skills specifications for Communication at Level 1 and 2 from www.qca.org.uk/6507.html.
- Find out about awarding bodies that accredit Key Skills from www.qca.org.uk/6448.html.

GCSE English

Teacher assessment of students’ speaking and listening skills counts for 20% of the total grade for GCSE English. Speaking and listening activities assessed are: individual extended contribution, group discussion and interaction, and drama. The student’s best work in each aspect of speaking and listening is selected to contribute to the final GCSE speaking and listening mark.

Assessment of speaking and listening skills must encompass the following strands:
- explain, describe, narrate
- explore, analyse, imagine
- discuss, argue, persuade.

Find out more about the assessment of speaking and listening in GCSE English by downloading awarding bodies’ specifications:

English Speaking Board

The English Speaking Board (ESB) provides a range of qualifications in speaking and listening which are relevant to first language speakers. ESB vocational qualifications are:
- from Level 1 to Level 3
suitable for learners on vocational programmes or in employment who need to evidence oral communication skills
suitable for learners on Key Skills programmes
suitable for learners wanting to demonstrate achievement in oral communication.

ESB oral communication skills qualifications are:
- from Pre-Entry 2 to Entry Level 3
- suitable for learners who want to progress to and/or within Entry level
- suitable for some LDD learners
- suitable for candidates in specialist units in FE colleges, who may go on to a mainstream vocational course.

Find out more about the ESB and speaking and listening from www.esbuk.org.
Learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), including dyslexia

Overview
This section:
- gives brief information about relevant legislation
- shows practitioners how to use Access for All (DfES, 2002) to support the development of speaking and listening skills in LDD learners
- discusses issues in recognising LDD
- shows practitioners how the SfL training programme Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts can be used to develop the speaking and listening skills of dyslexic learners
- gives a case study of a speech and language therapy (SLT) project.

The DDA and SENDA
The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 brings education under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. This means that education providers have a duty not to treat learners with LDD less favourably than other learners, and to provide ‘reasonable adjustments’ for LDD learners, where appropriate.

Find out more about the DDA and SENDA from www.skill.org.uk, the website of Skill, the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities.

Access for All
Access for All supports literacy and numeracy practitioners in making the core curricula accessible to all learners, including those with LDD. It gives guidance on what specific groups of LDD learners, such as those with autistic spectrum disorders or mental health difficulties, may find problematic in the literacy and numeracy curricula. There is considerable focus on speaking and listening.

The relevant section of the core curricula must be used alongside Access for All. It covers descriptors from the core curricula which are considered to cause particular difficulty for LDD adults and which may require alternative teaching approaches.

Find out more about Access for All from www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula.

The example in figure 15 shows practitioners how to use Access for All to develop the speaking and listening skills of LDD learners. It demonstrates that some LDD learners can find it difficult to identify relevant points. Practitioners’ questions can help LDD learners focus on the key points.
Recognising learning disabilities and difficulties

Many learners with LDD may not have had their needs recognised. Other learners’ needs may have been recognised but not formally diagnosed, or they may have been attributed to other causes such as lack of motivation or behaviour problems.

Conditions such as autistic spectrum disorder or dyslexia can be very complex. It may be necessary for practitioners to refer learners for more specialist assessment and possible treatment, or to seek advice on how to engage learners effectively. FE colleges may have access to SLT, or practitioners can access SLT through the adult services at the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) or acute hospital.

Adults and young people with dyslexia or other LDD may be aware of their problems. LDD and dyslexic learners may have a history of school and employment failure. These learners may avoid situations where their difficulties are exposed or may attempt to deflect attention from their difficulties, for instance, by being hostile or by creating a diversion. Practitioners need to be aware of the emotional aspects of learning disabilities.

Learners with LDD can have spiky profiles. For example, a dyslexic learner may appear verbally able in general conversation, but then have great difficulty with spelling or copying.

Resources

- www.bdadyslexia.org.uk – for information on dyslexia for learners, parents and teachers
- www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/asds – for information on autistic spectrum disorders
- www.ican.org.uk/home/training – for information on children and young people with communication difficulties.
1. Speak to communicate
SLc/E3.3 (see Access for All page 70)

Express clearly statements of fact and give short explanations, accounts and descriptions.

6. Practitioner’s questions

What happened to Bill Preston?
Why did it happen?
How do you know?
How could it have been avoided?
Are there any questions you would like to have asked Gary about this accident?
What should Bill’s employer do after reading this accident report?

5. Practitioner thinking

They’ve missed the main point of it (negligence/inadequate health and safety at work) and gone off at a tangent – I need to ask more specific questions.

2. Areas of difficulty which may be experienced by particular learners
(‘Access for All’ page 70)

Some dyslexic learners and those with learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and mental health difficulties can have difficulties both judging the level of detail required and sticking to the point. They may also have difficulty organising ideas.

3. The practitioner reads through statement made by Gary reporting an accident on a building site

‘Bill Preston was on the scaffold laying bricks. I was just bringing up some more mix and he stepped back, lost his balance and just fell off the back. There was nothing to stop him. He looked OK – we couldn’t see any blood or anything – but we were worried about his back so we told him to lie there while we got a first-aider.’

4. Learner 1

Doing first aid at work?

4. Learner 2

He shouldn’t have brought up more mix and then he wouldn’t have fallen.

4. Learner 3

I hurt my back once when I slipped on some oil.

Fig. 15: Access for All and speaking and listening.
Section 8 Learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), including dyslexia

Improvingspeakingandlisteningskills

Section 8

Improvingspeakingandlisteningskills

Learningdifficultiesanddisabilities (LDD), including dyslexia

Curriculum

reference

Particular groups which may experience difficulties

Practitioner thinking and planning

- SLC E.3
  - Express clearly statements of fact and give short explanations, accounts and descriptions
  - Some dyslexic learners and learners with autistic spectrum disorders, learning difficulties and mental health difficulties (page 70).
  - I’ll read through the example of Gary’s report on an accident on a building site. I’ll see how they respond to a question about what the passage is about. I’ll need to listen hard to their responses. I may need to re-read the passage and/or adapt my questioning style to help them understand the main points.

- Add your own example

- Add your own example

Table 12: Using Access for All.

Dyslexia

Access for All

The needs of dyslexic learners are addressed in Access for All.

Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts

An SfL training programme, Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts, has been designed to support SfL practitioners, Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and other support staff who have not
previously been trained to work with dyslexic adult learners. It includes video teaching snapshots and focuses on four contexts:
- FE and adult and community learning (ACL)
- workplace
- criminal justice
- embedded learning.

Find out more about the dyslexia training programme from www.cfbt.com/dyslexia.

The example in figure 16 is taken from the speaking and listening module of Strand 1. The example includes tips for the teacher on helping learners to listen more effectively.

### Strategies for listening (2)

**Understanding when the practitioner is talking**

The practitioner needs to:
- be aware of potential difficulties and vary listening tasks in the classroom accordingly
- give written back-up
- make it standard practice for students to lend each other notes
- repeat when it is noticeable that concentration has been lost.
- use visual or practical aids to support the listening – mind maps (see Section 2 of this document), pictures, keywords, video clips, demonstrations; note: it may be useful for some learners for the teacher to create a mind map on the whiteboard as an explanation or description, or to give a mind map as a summary.

### Notes for teachers when giving instructions to dyslexic learner:

- Stress the key word.
- Avoid background noise.
- Keep instructions in sequence.
- Give instructions in chunks and not too much information at a time.
- Be aware of the speed of your speech – slow down.
- Engage the learner and check understanding throughout (ask learner to repeat what has been said/put into own words).
- Use pictures or diagrams to help understanding.
- Limit instructions to the most essential ones.
- Suggest the use of recording facility on mobile phone/Dictaphone.
- Be aware that copying from a whiteboard can be very difficult for some dyslexic people.

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**Learning for Living**

Learning for Living was an SfL-funded pathfinder project which ran from 2003 to 2006. It was conducted by a consortium headed by the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), and developed a suite of guidance materials, including eight DVDs, for staff working with learners with learning difficulties or disabilities from Pre-Entry to Level 2, in a number of contexts.

Copies of the publications can be obtained free from: DfES Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham, NG15 0DJ. Electronic versions of the publications are available at:
www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus. Each of the guidance documents has a unique DfES reference, as follows:

- Access to family programmes (Ref: ATFP)
- ESOL Access for All (Ref: EAFA)
- It’s not as simple as you think (Ref: CVAD)
- Making it happen (Ref: MIH)
- Person centred approaches and adults with learning difficulties (Ref: PAALD)
- Skills for working (Ref: SFW).

**Case study: A speech and language therapy project**

A speech and language therapy (SLT) project helped to meet the needs of some young people in the youth justice system. The project:

- set up SLT services in two young offender institutions (YOIs)
- collected information on the speech, language and communication needs of the young people
- in collaboration with relevant staff, evaluated the SLT services in the two institutions.

This SLT project was led by the University of Surrey, conducted in partnership with the Prison Service and funded by the Helen Hamlyn Foundation.

**Jamie**

Bryan (2007) contains case studies of young people in custody who benefited from SLT. Jamie was one of these individuals.

Jamie, an 18-year-old with a history of violence, was referred to the SLT services by forensic psychology. The SLT assessment showed that Jamie’s difficulties included:

- a number of problems using spoken language
- limited social skills
- some memory and comprehension difficulties
- low self-esteem about his academic ability.

The speech and language therapist set goals with Jamie to develop understanding about:

- non-verbal communication
- his own non-verbal communication
- how communication changes in different situations.

With the speech and language therapist, Jamie worked on his language and social skills over twelve sessions. Jamie met the SLT goals above. Improvements in SLT were reflected in Jamie’s day-to-day conduct. Jamie was aggressive and confrontational in fewer situations and his capacity to interpret interaction accurately improved. For example, Jamie’s ability to recognise when someone was joking with him increased. Because Jamie was less aggressive, he was perceived by others more positively. This helped improve Jamie’s self-esteem. Information about Jamie’s SLT assessment and therapy was circulated to relevant staff and included in his discharge information.
1. Staff used a skills checking tool to refer offenders with a possible speech and language difficulty to the therapist.

2. The therapist conducted a more detailed assessment of SLT needs.

3. An SLT intervention was designed, using the results of the assessment.

4. The young person attended an agreed number of sessions with the therapist to work towards SLT goals. The therapist also worked with education and wider prison staff so that the young person’s therapy could be reinforced outside sessions with the therapist.

5. When the young person was released from prison, details of the assessment and therapy were included as part of the discharge report.

Fig. 17: Stages of SLT.
Find out more

Find out more about this SLT project in:


See also:


Remember

- Section 1 highlighted that this document is not primarily for SfL practitioners working with LDD learners.
- Use the suggestions in this section to reflect on the extent to and ways in which you can build upon other sections of this document in your work with LDD learners.
- Get support in managing a learner with specific learning difficulties or disabilities. Refer learners for more detailed assessment if necessary.
Spoken and written language

Overview
This section:
- outlines aspects of work on spoken and written language
- gives extracts from three conversations
- suggests learner activities on spoken language.

Work on spoken and written language
Professor Ron Carter (2003) argues that:
- spoken and written language are different
- spoken communication has conventions which are as valid as those of formal writing; these conventions have been called the ‘grammar of talk’ (QCA, 2004c)
- learners should be taught the conventions of spoken language; this is in part to help maximise the extent to which learners use talk appropriately in different contexts.

At school level, Professor Carter’s research has been developed into teacher guidance and practical classroom strategies to increase students’ awareness of:
- the extent to which spoken language differs from written language, and in what ways
- how to use spoken language appropriately in different contexts (QCA, 2004c).

Terminology to describe talk
Table 13 is adapted from Carter (2003: pp. 10–12) and outlines some conventions of spoken grammar.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heads</td>
<td>Heads occur at the beginning of clauses. Heads help orientate listeners by establishing a topic.</td>
<td><em>The white house on the corner, is that where she lives?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tails</td>
<td>Tails occur at the end of clauses, usually reinforcing an antecedent pronoun.</td>
<td><em>She’s a very good swimmer, Jenny is.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellipsis</td>
<td>Where subjects and/or verbs are omitted, because the speaker assumes the listener knows what is meant.</td>
<td><em>Sounds good to me. (it/that).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse markers</td>
<td>Where words or phrases denote moving from one topic or stage of a conversation to another. They act as ‘spoken punctuation’.</td>
<td><em>Anyway, give Jean a ring and see what she says.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible positioning of words and phrases</td>
<td>Using word order more flexibly than in written language.</td>
<td><em>I was worried I was going to lose it and I did almost.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vague language</td>
<td>Can help soften what is said. Can help the speaker to sound less assertive.</td>
<td><em>Thing, stuff, or something, or anything, whatever, sort of and kind of.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deixis</td>
<td>Words and phrases pointing to particular features of the immediate situation. Assumes a shared knowledge between speaker and listener. Deixis is more common in spoken than in written language.</td>
<td><em>This, that, these, here and there.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal expressions</td>
<td>Help to soften what is said and to communicate more indirectly.</td>
<td><em>I don’t know, I think, perhaps, possibly and probably.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chains of clauses</td>
<td>Speakers often do not have time to construct patterns of main and sub clauses. Clauses are therefore often added incrementally to each other.</td>
<td><em>I was driving along talking to Jill and we like stopped at some traffic lights and then – bang – there was this almighty crash and we got pushed forwards.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: The conventions of spoken grammar.

Reflective practice questions and activities

- What do you think? Is it important that SfL practitioners are aware of the conventions of spoken language? Why/why not?
- Is it important that SfL learners are taught about the differences between spoken and written language? Why/why not?
- Should SfL learners be taught terminology to describe spoken language? Why/why not?
Learner activities

Based on Professor Carter’s work

- Use the three conversations on the following pages to encourage learners to reflect on the differences between spoken and written language. Use the technical terms given in table 13 if appropriate.
- Ask learners to act out the conversations, thinking carefully about use of tone, pace and non-verbal communication. Ask learners to discuss the reasons for, and likely impact of, their choices about tone, pace and non-verbal communication.
- Ask learners to:
  - audio record some of their conversations, either inside or outside the StL session
  - discuss how much and in what ways their examples of spoken conversation differ from formal writing.
- If appropriate, encourage learners to use technical terms to describe their spoken language.

Further activities

The following activities are not directly based on Professor Carter’s work on spoken language, but they may be helpful in increasing learners’ awareness that they have choices about how to use their speaking and listening skills.

- Ask learners to discuss how well the gym instructor and the garage owner deal with a client who is complaining and to give reasons for their answers.
- Ask learners to discuss how, in the family conversation, the discussion is moved forwards.
- Ask learners to:
  - re-work the second part of the three conversations to change the outcome; learners could work in pairs/small groups
  - act out these re-worked conversations
  - discuss any differences between different pairs'/ groups of learners’ conversations, in terms of content and use of verbal and non-verbal communication.

Conversation 1: In the gym

It is 7 a.m. Sarah, a gym member, is unhappy about a running machine that is making a very irritating squeaking sound. She goes to talk to an instructor, Dave, who is sitting on a rowing machine but not instructing anybody or doing anything.

Sarah: Excuse me.
Dave: Yeh?
Sarah: I said, ‘Excuse me.’
Dave: Sorry?
Sarah: There’s a problem with that (points in the direction of the running machines).
Dave: Er, what?
Sarah That (points again).
Dave Oh, what is it?
Sarah Not running smoothly and no music.
Dave No music.
Sarah Yeah, I mean the music system just sort of crackles and the running machine squeaks.
Dave Squeaks?
Sarah Yeah. It’s extremely irritating! I come in here to relax . . .
Dave OK, OK . . . what machine?
Sarah Just told you . . .
Dave All right, all right. I mean, might need oiling, it might. I’m busy now. I’ll see to it later.
Sarah Sort that running machine now!
Dave I’m sorting this now (points at the rowing machine).
Sarah I’m the client. Sort it now or I’ll report you to your line manager.
Dave (Says nothing but gets up and slouches towards the running machine.)

**Conversation 2: In the garage**

A car driver has taken his car into the garage after a faulty repair. He talks to the owner of the garage.

Driver Are you the, er . . . owner?
Owner Yeah, that’s right, I am.
Driver Right, umm . . . y’know, um . . . my car, it’s not properly fixed.
Owner Properly fixed. How d’you mean?
Driver They’ve messed it up, your mechanics.
Owner Right. So what . . .
Driver Well, didn’t fit it tightly enough.
Owner What, the fan belt?
Driver Yeah. I mean, engine could have blown.
Owner Hang on. Wasn’t part of the job, that wasn’t. Not our problem.
Driver Not what the insurance says.
Owner You what?
Driver You heard. I just want this sorted. So when?
Owner OK. This is crazy. Wasn’t on the job sheet. Probably the receptionist missed it, something like that.
Driver That’s your problem. Don’t make it mine. I need it now.
Owner Let’s see, let’s, er . . . OK, after lunch today. OK?
Driver Better be ready.
Conversation 3. The family
The White family is at the dinner table at the end of a meal. The four family members are discussing where to go on holiday.

Mum So, like, any ideas?
Dad Umm.
Mum Come on, someone.
Daughter Can't think, I can't. I'm tired.
Dad How about abroad?
Son Went there last year. Ughhh!
Dad Not 'the' Broads. 'Abroad'. Listen.
Son Oh, like Spain an' that?
Daughter Fab. Can we really? Cool.
Mum Mm, kind of expensive, that, isn't it, what with everything else?
Dad Got some overtime coming up, so perhaps.
Son Go on, do it!
Mum Maybe Wales this year.
Son Yuk. Sheep and rain.
Daughter Done that. Er, like, what would it cost though going abroad?
Mum Well, suppose our cousin in Birmingham, Ethel, did get a good deal.
Son Just get a package. Dead cheap.
Dad Would be great, Spain would. Get the map out here.
Daughter What?
Son Big map, over there.
Dad Yeah, I mean, let's sort it now.

Find out more
Find out more about Professor Carter’s work on spoken and written language in:

SECTION 10

Additional help from *Skills for Life*

**Overview**

- Section 5 outlined those *SfL* teaching and learning resources that include speaking and listening. This section covers further *SfL* resources which are relevant to speaking and listening.

**The professional development of the *Skills for Life* workforce**

**New qualifications framework**

There is a new qualifications framework for teachers in the learning and skills sector. Professional standards define the skills, knowledge and attributes required to teach or train within this sector, and ‘application documents’ describe how these professional standards apply to teachers of English (literacy and ESOL). The continuing professional development (CPD) route within the framework enables teachers to improve their skills in a range of subjects, and includes a focus on approaches to embedding literacy in other programmes. The minimum core outlines the skills, knowledge and understanding required by all teachers in the learning and skills sector to enable them to teach inclusively. All qualification routes refer explicitly to speaking and listening skills. More information can be found on the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) web site: www.lluk.org.

**Skills for Life professional development materials**

The *SfL* Strategy Unit has published professional development materials in speaking and listening for staff working with offenders (DfES, 2006), developed by Tribal Education Limited. There are six modules:

- Introduction
- Questioning and checking understanding
- Non-verbal communication
- Active listening
- Managing group discussions
- Using technical language.

Modules provide:

- relevant background information
- reflective practice activities
- references to follow-up areas of interest.

Although targeted primarily at staff working with offenders, the modules contain much relevant material for staff working with other *SfL* learners. Order these materials from Prolog, ref: S&L/PACK01.
Skills for Life: Make it your business

The Employer Toolkit, *Skills for Life: Make it your business*, helps employers identify and address staff literacy and numeracy needs in order to make the workforce more productive. It includes speaking and listening in:

- a list of top ten workplace speaking and listening skills (p. 46)
- an organisation skills checklist (p. 47)
- a job and task analysis (pp. 49f.)
- a personal skills checklist for skills needed at work (p. 54).

Find out more about the Employer Toolkit from: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/employer_toolkit.

Find out more

- A list of all StfL publications can be downloaded from: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/publications.
- StfL resources can be ordered through Prolog on 0845 602 2260 or through dfes@prolog.uk.com.
SECTION 11 Resources and approaches from outside *Skills for Life*

**Overview**

- A great many resources for speaking and listening have been developed outside *SfL*. Those that have already been mentioned in this document are not listed in this section.
- Those practitioners who wish to find out more about resources outside *SfL* could:
  - follow up references in texts cited in this section and in the rest of the document
  - use an Internet search engine.
- Practitioners can reflect on how much and in what ways they can incorporate resources in this section into their practice.

**General research**

Find out more about research on a number of aspects of speaking and listening relevant to *SfL* from:

- Hudson, C. (ed.) (2007) *The Sound and the Silence: Key perspectives on speaking and listening and Skills for Life* (London, DfES) – while this collection is published within *SfL*, much of the research it discusses has been conducted outside *SfL*.

**Speaking**

**Structuring discussion**

Find out more about research on the benefits of pair discussion, before small group and/or whole class discussion from Edwards, T. (2003) *Purposes and characteristics of whole-class dialogue*, in QCA *New Perspectives on Spoken English in the Classroom* (London, QCA) (www.qca.org.uk/6111.html).

Find out more about issues in structuring effective group discussion from EPPI Centre (2005) ‘A systematic review of the use of small-group discussions in science teaching with students aged 11–18 and their effects on students’ understanding in science or attitude to science’ (eppi.ioe.ac.uk/EPPIWeb). (Although this article is about secondary school science teaching, aspects of it are valuable in informing reflection on speaking and listening in *SfL*.)
**Dialogic teaching**

Robin Alexander has developed an approach called ‘dialogic teaching’. As the name suggests, dialogue is central to dialogic teaching – both between teacher and learners, and between learners.

Find out more about dialogic teaching from:
- [www.robinalexander.org.uk](http://www.robinalexander.org.uk)

**Using sentence stems to develop questioning skills**

Find out more about research on using generic sentence stems (i.e. where learners have the beginning of a sentence/question, and they have to complete the sentence/question) to develop learners’ questioning skills from, for example, King, A., ‘Facilitating elaborative learning through guided student generated questioning’, *Educational Psychologist* 27 (1992) pp. 89–118.

**Practical strategies for speaking**

Find out more about practical strategies to use when focusing on speaking from, for example, Hull Education Action Zone’s (EAZ’s) web site: [www.eazhull.org.uk/nlc/active_listening.html](http://www.eazhull.org.uk/nlc/active_listening.html).

**Listening**

Some web sites focus on listening skills. Hull Education Action Zone’s (EAZ) site ([www.eazhull.org.uk/nlc/active_listening.html](http://www.eazhull.org.uk/nlc/active_listening.html)) has information on, for example:
- theories about listening
- tips for listening.

**Using the radio to develop speaking and listening skills**

- The radio is used in speaking and listening activities with some SfL learners.
- Some prisons have a radio service. For example, at Huntercombe YOI in Oxfordshire, the prison broadcasts a book at bedtime for young people to listen to.
- Explore the growing possibilities of podcasting. Use radio web sites to download programmes to use with learners. Alternatively, you could tape-record radio programmes to use with learners.
**Drama**

As noted in section 1, drama is one of the four aspects of speaking and listening assessed at school level. It can be a very good way of developing SfL learners’ speaking and listening skills.

NIACE and a range of partners conducted a project which aimed to use drama to develop the oracy skills of young offenders. The final project report is available at www.niace.org.uk/research/YALP/Documents/drama-final-report.pdf.

**Catching confidence**

NIACE has published a practitioner resource pack, *Catching Confidence*, and a research report (Eldred et al., 2004) on the nature and role of confidence in learning. The publications link confidence and speaking and listening.

Find out more about NIACE’s work on confidence:

- The practitioner resource *Catching Confidence. The nature and role of confidence – ways of developing and recording changes in the learning context* is available through NIACE: (tel. (0116) 204 4200/1 e-mail enquiries@niace.org.uk).

**Key Skills Support Programme**

The Key Skills Support Programme (KSSP) has developed a range of publications that include a focus on oral communication. The following publication gives clear guidance to practitioners on how to support learners in developing communication skills:


The following publications give clear, practical guidance and activities for learners:

- KSSP (2005a) Key skills in hospitality and catering. Team talks (London, KSSP)
- KSSP (2005b) Key skills in hospitality and catering. Customer complaints (London, KSSP)
- KSSP (2005c) Identifying customer needs (London, KSSP)
- KSSP (2004c) Key skills in care. Meetings (London, KSSP)
- KSSP (2004d) Key skills in care. Talking with clients (London, KSSP)
- KSSP (2004f) Key skills in wood occupations. Site meetings (London, KSSP)

Find out more about the KSSP from www.keyskillssupport.net.
Theoretical models

Theoretical models can help you reflect on your speaking and listening. The model in figure 18 was developed by Money and Thurman (1994).

**Fig. 18: Means, reasons and opportunities.**

Find out more about how to develop this model at www.speechmag.com/archives/dellasue.html.

Professional development materials

A range of professional development materials have been developed on speaking and listening at school level; with care on the part of the practitioner, these can be adapted for use at adult SfL. They include:


Find out more from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) web site: www.qca.org.uk.

DfES publications can be ordered through Prolog on 0845 602 2260 or dfes@prolog.uk.com.
References


EPPI Centre (2005) ‘A systematic review of the use of small-group discussions in science teaching with students aged 11–18 and their effects on students’ understanding in science or attitude to science’ epip.ioe.ac.uk/EPPIWeb.


KSSP (2005a) Key skills in hospitality and catering. Team talks (London, KSSP).


KSSP (2005c) Identifying customer needs (London, KSSP).


APPENDIX 1  Individuals and organisations in the consultation process

The following individuals were interviewed as part of the consultation process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of individual</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judi Apiafi</td>
<td>Nottinghamshire Probation Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison Brierley</td>
<td>Move On</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viv Brown</td>
<td>University of Sunderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Karen Bryan</td>
<td>University of Surrey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Ron Carter</td>
<td>University of Nottingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helen Casey</td>
<td>NRDC, Institute of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Diana Coben</td>
<td>King’s College London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Jan Eldred</td>
<td>NIACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oonagh Gormley</td>
<td>NRDC Maths4Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trish Gurney</td>
<td>New College Nottingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Hollands</td>
<td>Tribal Education Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christina Houlit</td>
<td>Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Ursula Howard</td>
<td>NRDC, Institute of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Chris Jude</td>
<td>Consultant, Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liz Lawson</td>
<td>DfES SIOU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tina Lawton</td>
<td>Tribal Education Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy Leach</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Lewis</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June Lewis</td>
<td>Tribal Education Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Mason</td>
<td>HM Young Offender Institution Werrington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethia McNeil</td>
<td>NIACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Mearing</td>
<td>Family Learning/ DfES SIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne O’Grady</td>
<td>University of Nottingham IRLTHE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tricia O’Meara</td>
<td>Lincolnshire Probation Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Rossetti</td>
<td>Key Skills Support Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Rouse</td>
<td>Hertfordshire County Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Tom Sticht</td>
<td>International consultant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Chris Taylor</td>
<td>NIACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Malcolm Swan</td>
<td>University of Nottingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Chris Taylor</td>
<td>NIACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Welch</td>
<td>Home Office/ Tribal Education and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa Weston</td>
<td>Cambridgeshire Regional College</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Practitioner reflective log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of speaking and listening</th>
<th>What you said/did/thought</th>
<th>What worked well</th>
<th>Learning points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Facilitating discussion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: How much learner talk is there in comparison to practitioner talk? Do you give learners opportunity to discuss in pairs, small groups and as a whole group? How do you enable learners to talk about things they are not sure about, to explore and develop their thinking? How do you ensure that learners respect each other's contributions to a discussion?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Asking questions (initial and follow-up)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: What closed questions do you ask learners? What open questions do you ask? Is the type of question you use appropriate to purpose? Do you ask a series of related questions, to help learners explore their thinking? Do you leave sufficient wait time after asking a question for learners to think through a response?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Enabling learners to ask questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: What do you say to encourage the learner to ask questions about aspects of teaching and learning s/he doesn’t understand/wants to know more about? How do you enable learners to ask a series of related questions, to develop their understanding of a topic?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
<td>What you said/did/thought</td>
<td>What worked well</td>
<td>Learning points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Explaining</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: How do you explain an aspect of teaching and learning in terms the learner understands? Use of language? Tone of voice? Pace? How do you summarise/reinforce what you’ve said?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Checking understanding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: How do you judge whether the learner has understood what you’ve said? What do you say? Do you ask the learner to paraphrase what you’ve said? Why/why not? Do you ask the learner to write about what you’ve said? Why/why not? Do you ask the learner to draw a diagram of what you’ve said? Why/why not? How do you use the learner’s non-verbal communication? How do you make sure that you’ve understood what the learner has said?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Listening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: How do you make sure that you have heard what the learner has said? How do you show the learner that you are listening/ have listening to him/her? Use of language? Use of pauses? How do you help learners to develop their listening skills?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
<td>What you said/did/thought</td>
<td>What worked well</td>
<td>Learning points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. Use of non-verbal communication in combination with speaking and listening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: How do you use your non-verbal communication, in conjunction with your speaking and listening? Head nods? Eye contact? Gestures? What messages does your non-verbal communication give the learner? Are these the same messages as those that you're conveying through your speaking and listening?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8. Links between your thinking, and your speaking and listening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: What kinds of things are you saying inside yourself during the session? To what extent is this internal conversation the same as your conversation with the learner?</td>
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<td><strong>9. Use of technical language</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: Do you use any specialist terminology? If so, which terms do you use? How much do you use specialist terminology? How do you ensure that the learner has understood the terminology you’ve used?</td>
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<td><strong>10. The language of encouragement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For example: How do you use your speaking and listening to encourage SfL learners? What do you say? How do you use your non-verbal communication? Tone of voice?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What you said/did/thought</td>
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<td>What worked well</td>
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<td>Learning points</td>
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<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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</table>

This table is designed to help you critically reflect on your speaking and listening skills. Each row represents a different aspect of speaking and listening, and the columns allow you to document what you did or said, what worked well, and any learning points or other observations.
APPENDIX 3 Learner log: Have Your Say

Note to the learner
- Have Your Say is about how easy or difficult you find each of the aspects of speaking and listening listed below, in each of the different areas of your life (at home, at work, with friends).
- If something doesn’t apply to you (for example, if you don’t work), that’s fine. Just put N/A (not applicable).
- Use the key (✓✓ very easy), ✓ (easy), x (difficult), and xx (very difficult) to decide how easy or difficult you find each aspect of speaking and listening in each area of your life. Just use the ✓ and x symbols. You don’t need to write out the words.
- Be as honest as possible. It’s OK to say you find an aspect of speaking and listening difficult. You can then work on it with your teacher in your S/L learning programme.
- You can complete Have Your Say on your own if you wish. Or you can talk through Have Your Say with your teacher or with other learners.

Key: Very Easy ✓✓ Easy ✓ Difficult x Impossible xx Not applicable N/A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of speaking and listening</th>
<th>At home</th>
<th>At work</th>
<th>With friends</th>
<th>When you were at school</th>
<th>On the course</th>
<th>Other area of your life (please specify)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Speaking to someone you know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: speaking to a relative at home or speaking to someone you’ve worked with for several years, at work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Speaking to someone you don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: speaking to a man from the gas company, who has come to do a repair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Speaking in a group (about six people)</td>
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<td>Example: talking to a group of friends, about a good film you have seen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
<td>At home</td>
<td>At work</td>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>When you were at school</td>
<td>On the course</td>
<td>Other area of your life (please specify)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Giving information to someone else</td>
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<td>Example: giving directions about how to get somewhere, explaining how to do something.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Answering questions which need a yes/no answer or which have a single correct answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: if you are asked, ‘Do you want the window open?’ you might answer, ‘Yes, please.’ If you are asked, ‘When did you move to where you live now?’ you might answer, ‘I moved there two years ago.’</td>
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<td>6. Answering questions where you have to give one or more reasons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: if you are asked, ‘Why did you move house?’ you might answer, ‘Well, we moved house because we had very noisy neighbours. They had teenage children who played loud music all hours of the day and night, and dogs that barked a lot.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Asking questions which need a yes/no answer or which have a single correct answer</td>
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<td>Example: you might ask, ‘How old are you?’</td>
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<td>8. Asking questions when you want someone to give one or more reasons in reply</td>
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<td>Example: you might ask, ‘Why do you think we have had a cold winter?’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspect of speaking and listening</td>
<td>At home</td>
<td>At work</td>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>When you were at school</td>
<td>Other area of your life (please specify)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Listening</td>
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</table>

To improve your non-verbal communication to help you concentrate on what the teacher is saying.

Example: How easy or difficult do you find it to look at someone when you are talking together? To have a friendly look on your face? To sit or stand so that you show you are listening to someone?