



ORACY FRAMEWORK

**A FOUNDATIONAL GUIDE TO THE
TONGUE FU TALKING™ FRAMEWORK**

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INTRODUCTION



WHAT IS ORACY?

Oracy is the disciplined art of speaking and listening—where thinking, language, expression, and collaboration come together to shape understanding and communication. It includes both verbal and non-verbal elements and spans a variety of interactions, from formal presentations to collaborative discussions.



WHY ORACY MATTERS

Oracy is increasingly recognised in educational research as a cornerstone of effective learning and long-term success. High-quality classroom talk not only enhances academic attainment but also supports cognitive, social, and emotional development (Mercer et al., 2019; Alexander, 2020).

thinking processes such as hypothesising, justifying, and evaluating. Vygotsky (1978) emphasised the role of social interaction in learning, noting that language is central to the development of reasoning. More recent studies (Resnick et al., 2015) show that dialogic classrooms promote both verbal and non-verbal reasoning skills.

empathy, and collaboration. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2017) notes that oral language interventions have a positive impact on social interaction and emotional wellbeing, particularly when pupils are taught to articulate their thoughts, reflect on others' views, and participate in purposeful dialogue.

1. Oracy underpins learning across the curriculum

Talk is not simply a way of sharing what we know—it is a means by which understanding is constructed. Mercer and Dawes (2014) found that structured, dialogic talk enables pupils to build on each other's ideas, make reasoning explicit, and deepen conceptual understanding, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and science.

2. Oracy supports cognitive development

Through speaking and listening, pupils engage in high-level

3. Oracy strengthens literacy

Oral language competence is a strong predictor of reading comprehension and writing ability (Snow, 2010; Millard & Menzies, 2016). When children have a broad vocabulary and can structure their thoughts in speech, they are better equipped to do the same in writing. In this way, oracy supports the broader goals of the English curriculum and literacy across subjects.

4. Oracy fosters social and emotional development

Learning to speak clearly and listen respectfully cultivates confidence,

5. Oracy enhances pupils' long-term life chances

Communication skills are consistently ranked by employers as among the most valuable attributes for the workplace (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Moreover, the ability to speak with clarity and confidence increases civic engagement and democratic participation (Voice 21, 2021), enabling young people to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Despite this evidence, few schools have a structured approach to oracy development.



WHAT IS TONGUE FU TALKING™ ?

Tongue Fu Talking™, developed by Chris Quigley Education, is a structured framework for teaching and developing the art of speaking and listening. It draws its name from kung fu—not because it involves fighting, but because of what kung fu really means: a disciplined pursuit of mastery through dedicated practice. In the same way that martial artists refine their movements, control, and focus, Tongue Fu Talking™ helps students master the subtle, powerful discipline of spoken communication.

At its heart, Tongue Fu Talking™ recognises that oracy is a skill that can—and should—be taught explicitly. It comprises two distinct but complementary modes of talk:

- **Explorer Mode** – for developing ideas, deepening understanding, and thinking aloud with others. This mode focuses on dialogue, reasoning, and collaborative sense-making.

- **Presenter Mode** – for expressing ideas clearly and confidently to inform, persuade, or inspire. This mode focuses on speech that is crafted, structured, and shared with an audience.

Each mode is cultivated through **four key Disciplines**, inspired by the holistic nature of martial arts training:

1. **The Stance** (Physical) – body language, posture, and presence when speaking and listening.
2. **The Flow** (Linguistic) – the clarity, fluency, and precision of language use.
3. **The Mind** (Cognitive) – the thinking behind the talk: reasoning, planning, adapting, and questioning.
4. **The Bond** (Social and Emotional) – the connection talk creates with others through empathy, responsiveness, and respect.

Within each Discipline are a set of **practices**—concrete, teachable behaviours that help

students understand and refine the subtleties of talk. These practices provide clear models and progression points to build confidence and competence.

In keeping with the martial arts analogy, Tongue Fu Talking™ uses a belt system to represent stages of mastery. Students begin at White Belt, where foundational habits are introduced, and progress through Green and Brown, towards Black Belt, where they demonstrate confidence, skill, and adaptability in both Explorer and Presenter modes.

The framework is supported by a suite of **assessment materials**, enabling teachers and pupils to understand what progress looks like within and between belts.

Additional resources for teachers and school leaders support effective implementation across the curriculum—ensuring that oracy becomes a deliberate, high-quality part of every child's education.



THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ORACY FRAMEWORK

Many schools recognise the importance of oracy, but without a structured approach, speaking tasks remain one-off experiences rather than a progressive skill set. Tongue Fu Talking™ provides a clear framework for developing oracy systematically across all year groups and subjects.

Key Features of the Framework

- Oracy is developed progressively – All students build the Practices within the Disciplines of The Stance, The Flow, The Mind, and The Bond, ensuring balanced development rather than focusing only on confidence or performance.

- It teaches the ‘how’, not just the ‘what’ – Instead of just doing a debate or presentation, students are taught the techniques that make their talk clear, structured, and effective.
- It connects oracy to learning, not just performance – Oracy is not just for public speaking; it also strengthens exploratory talk, helping students think, reason, and refine ideas across all subjects.
- It ensures all four disciplines work together – A strong speaker must think critically, express ideas precisely, listen actively, and adapt to different contexts—not just perform well in front of an audience.

- It helps teachers use oracy purposefully – Instead of feeling like an extra task, Tongue Fu Talking™ helps teachers integrate oracy into authentic curriculum learning, making discussions and speaking tasks more meaningful and productive.

Final Thought

Oracy is not just about talking more—it’s about talking better. Tongue Fu Talking™ ensures that oracy isn’t left to chance, but intentionally built, practised, and refined, just like reading and writing.

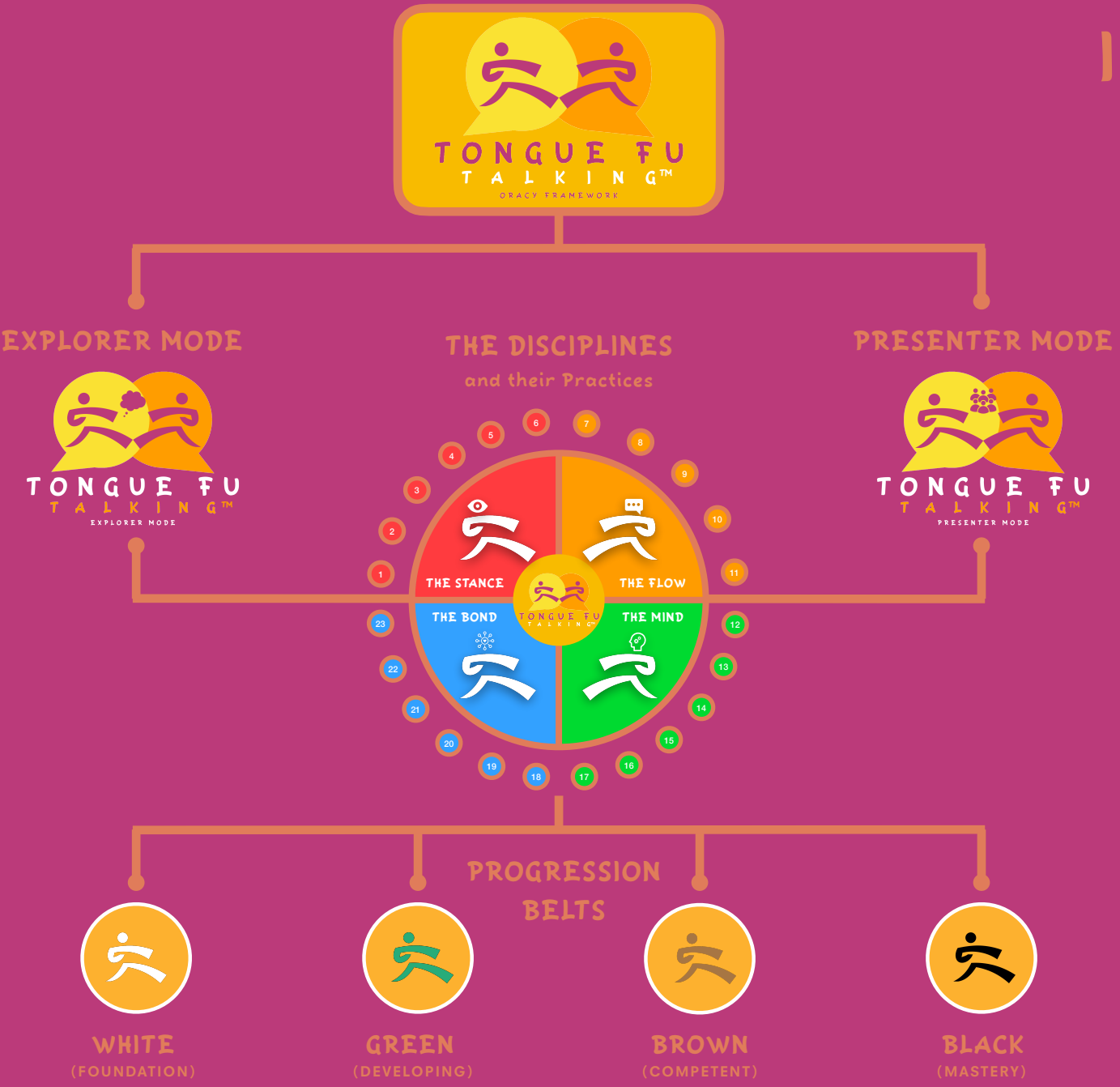


Other Resources

This resource is The Tongue Fu Talking™ Oracy Framework. Two other Resources are coming soon: Teaching Resources and Leaders' Resources.



INFOGRAPHIC



Two Modes of Talk

Explorer Mode for learning
 Presenter Mode for communication

The Disciplines

Four disciplines help develop both modes of talk:

- **The Stance** for body language
- **The Flow** for language choices
- **The Mind** for thinking and reasoning
- **The Bond** for social connection

23 Practices provide teachable skills to master each discipline

Progression Belts

Move from foundation to Mastery through the Tongue Fu Talking™ Belt system.

Assessment materials help to focus on the steps to mastery



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THE TONGUE FU TALKING™ ORACY FRAMEWORK



SECTION 1: MODES OF TALK



TONGUE FU TALKING™: TWO MODES OF TALK

Tongue Fu Talking™ empowers students to communicate effectively through two distinct modes: **Explorer Mode** and **Presenter Mode**. Each mode serves a unique purpose, equipping students with the skills to think critically, reason clearly, and articulate ideas with confidence.

Together, Explorer Mode and Presenter Mode foster both deep thinking and expressive confidence, ensuring students become articulate, thoughtful, and adaptable communicators in any context.

Explorer Mode – The Way of Thoughtful Discovery

Explorer Mode focuses on learning through talk. It supports students in developing ideas collaboratively, questioning assumptions, and refining their understanding through discussion. In this mode, students:

- Build on each other's ideas to deepen reasoning. Use evidence and logical connections to support viewpoints.
- Ask probing questions to challenge and clarify thinking.
- Adapt their views based on new information.
- Engage in structured discussions that encourage exploratory thinking.

This mode is essential for developing curiosity, critical thinking, and meaningful dialogue.

Presenter Mode – The Way of Speaking with Confidence, Substance, and Style

Presenter Mode equips students to express ideas effectively for an audience. It focuses on clarity, engagement, and purposeful communication. In this mode, students:

- Structure their ideas logically for impact. Use voice, gesture, and expression to engage listeners.
- Adjust tone and style for different audiences and purposes.
- Develop confidence in articulating complex ideas.
- Practise persuasive and informative speech techniques.

This mode is essential for ensuring students can communicate with clarity, credibility, and influence, making their voices heard in any setting.



EXPLORER MODE: THE WAY OF THOUGHTFUL DISCOVERY



Explorer Mode uses spoken communication as a learning tool. When students articulate their ideas, challenge each other constructively, and co-construct knowledge through dialogue, they deepen their understanding and develop critical thinking skills. For example, exploratory talk encourages students to share their thoughts openly, leading to collaborative problem-solving.

Research by Mercer and Dawes (2014) highlights how structured discussions can significantly enhance reasoning and academic performance, particularly in subjects like science and mathematics. Similarly, Alexander (2008) found that purposeful, *dialogic teaching* improves engagement and promotes a deeper understanding of complex ideas.

BENEFITS



COMPREHENSION

Speaking aloud helps students organise and test their understanding.



CRITICAL THINKING

Articulating and defending ideas sharpens reasoning.



COLLABORATION

Group discussions foster teamwork and interpersonal skills.



PRESENTER MODE:

THE WAY OF SPEAKING WITH CONFIDENCE, SUBSTANCE, AND STYLE



While talk can be a tool for learning, students must also be taught how to use it effectively. Presenter Mode focuses on developing the skills needed for clear, confident communication. This includes expanding vocabulary, constructing sentences, listening actively, and understanding non-verbal cues like tone and body language.

For younger children, early language development is particularly important. Hart and Risley's (1995) landmark study demonstrated that a rich language environment predicts vocabulary growth and later academic success. As students grow, explicit teaching of oracy skills becomes vital. The Voice 21 report (2021) highlights how deliberate practice in speaking and listening boosts confidence, social skills, and academic outcomes.

BENEFITS



EXPRESSION

Students articulate their ideas more clearly.



ACTIVE LISTENING

Developing receptive skills helps students engage with others' ideas.



CONFIDENCE

Structured speaking opportunities build self-esteem and prepare students for the future.



EXPLORER AND PRESENTER MODES:

KEY DIFFERENCES

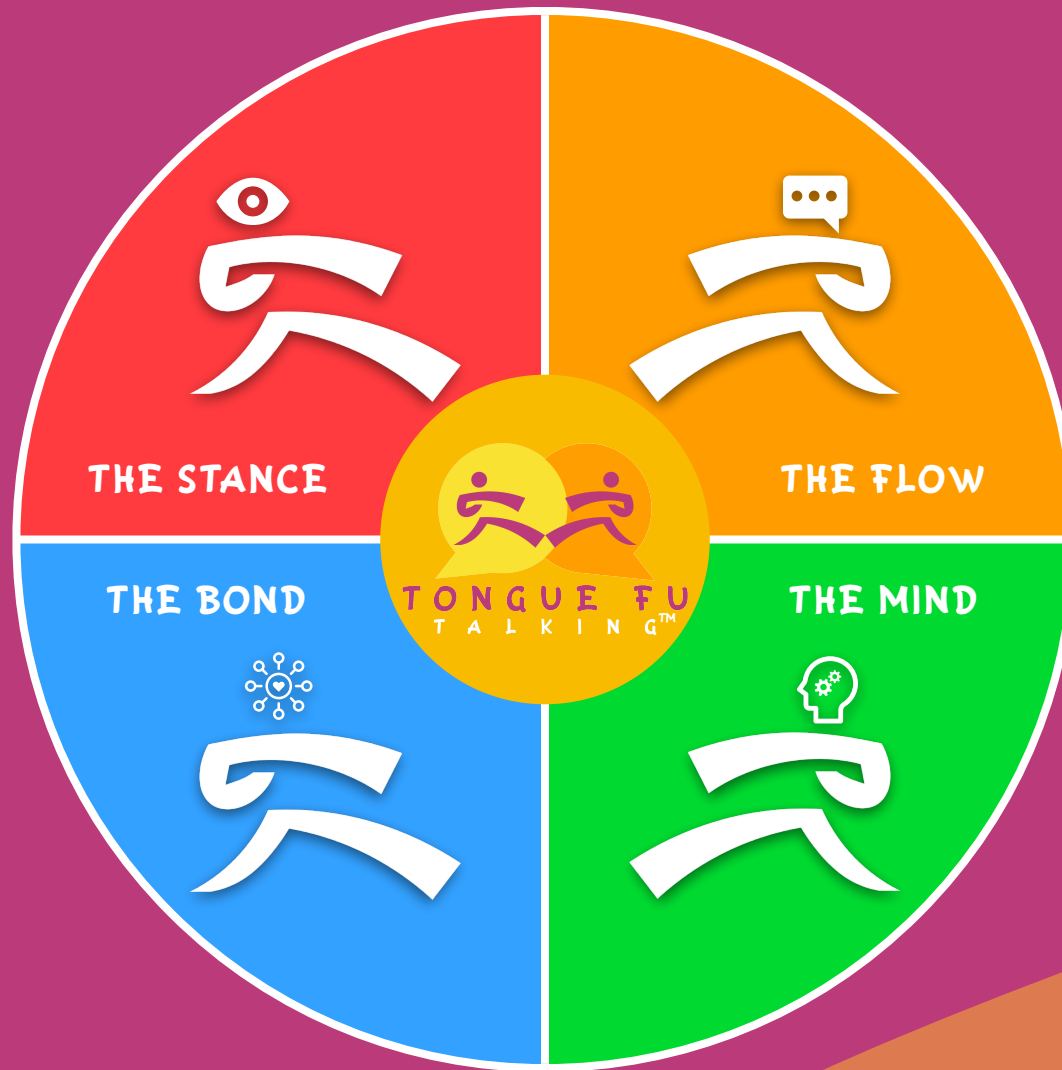
Aspect	Explorer Mode	Presenter Mode
Focus	Using talk as a tool to construct and deepen knowledge.	Developing skills to communicate effectively and adaptively.
Purpose	To explore, clarify, and develop understanding through dialogue.	To build and refine communication skills, such as structuring arguments and using appropriate register.
Examples of Activities	Collaborative problem-solving, concept mapping, group discussions with open-ended questions.	Sentence-stem practice, role-playing formal vs informal registers, structured debates.
Key Features	Facilitates critical thinking, reasoning, and the co-construction of ideas.	Focuses on explicit teaching of communication techniques, such as turn-taking, reasoning aloud, and adapting language.
Teacher Role	Facilitate discussion, prompt reasoning with guiding questions, and provide background knowledge.	Model and teach communication strategies, provide sentence starters, and monitor respectful dialogue.
Outcome	Improved understanding of concepts and collaborative reasoning.	Improved oracy techniques, including clarity, structure, and the ability to engage with an audience.

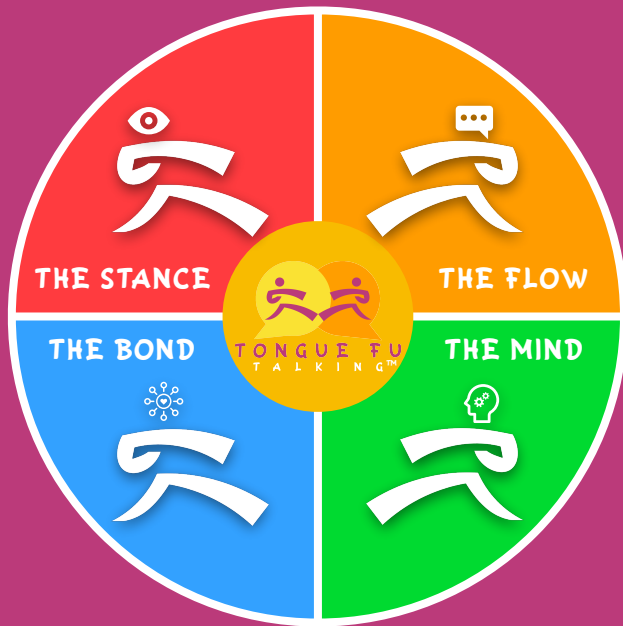


SECTION 2: THE DISCIPLINES



THE DISCIPLINES





To support pupils in developing both Explorer and Presenter talk, the Tongue Fu Talking™ Framework is built around four key disciplines: Stance, Flow, Mind, and Bond. Each discipline focuses on a different element of communication, ensuring pupils learn how to use their body, language, thinking, and social awareness to speak and listen effectively.

The Stance (Physical) – This discipline focuses on the speaker’s posture, presence, and control of movement. It develops body language, facial expression, and vocal delivery to enhance confidence and engagement.

The Flow (Linguistic) – This discipline refines how speech is structured and delivered. It encompasses clarity, coherence, pace, and rhythm, ensuring that ideas are expressed fluently and persuasively while adapting to different audiences and contexts.

The Mind (Cognitive) – This discipline develops reasoning, critical thinking, and metacognitive awareness. It encourages students to think through their speech, structure arguments, and refine their responses in both discussion and debate.

The Bond (Social & Emotional) – This discipline nurtures the relational aspects of communication, including active listening, empathy, and adapting speech to build rapport. It fosters respectful dialogue, collaboration, and an awareness of audience needs.



THE DISCIPLINES IN EACH MODE OF TALKING

DISCIPLINE	EXPLORER MODE	PRESENTER MODE
 <p>THE STANCE</p>	Relaxed posture that shows openness to others' ideas. Turns to face speakers. Uses facial expressions and gestures to support discussion.	Confident posture. Controlled gestures. Uses eye contact and facial expression to engage the audience.
 <p>THE FLOW</p>	Uses sentence starters, prompts, and exploratory phrases (e.g. I think..., What if..., Could it be...?). Builds on others' ideas and uses reasoning words.	Speaks in well-structured sentences. Uses vocabulary carefully for clarity, persuasion, or effect. Uses rhetorical devices where appropriate.
 <p>THE MIND</p>	Thinks aloud. Responds to others' points. Revises ideas. Asks questions and makes connections.	Plans and structures ideas in advance. Stays focused on message and purpose. Chooses language and tone to suit audience and intent.
 <p>THE BOND</p>	Listens actively and respectfully. Builds rapport through turn-taking and collaborative language (e.g. I agree, Can you explain more?).	Considers the audience's needs and interests. Uses voice, gesture, and language to hold attention and create impact.



SECTION 3: THE PRACTICES



THE PRACTICES



THE STANCE

Pacing

Tone

Pronunciation

Projection

Gestures & Posture

Eyes & Face



THE FLOW

Vocabulary

Register

Grammatical
Awareness

Sentence Structure

Rhetorical Flair



THE MIND

Content & Purpose

Metacognition

Reasoning With
Justification

Summarising

Structure

Focus



THE BOND

Managing Interactions

Turn Taking & Active
Listening

Audience Awareness

Self-Assurance &
Resilience

Liveliness &
Engagement

Encouragement &
Collaboration



PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT THE DISCIPLINES

Each Discipline in Tongue Fu Talking™ is brought to life through a set of **practices**—clear, specific behaviours that students can learn, rehearse, and refine. These practices are the building blocks of confident communication and provide the practical means to develop both Explorer and Presenter talk.

The Stance practices focus on how speech is physically delivered. Students learn to control pace, tone, projection, and pronunciation to ensure clarity and impact. They use gestures and posture to reinforce meaning, and express confidence and connection through eye contact and facial expression.

The Flow practices develop students' ability to use language fluently and purposefully. They learn to vary sentence structures, select precise vocabulary, and maintain coherence in their speech. Students practise using conjunctions, transitions, and exploratory or persuasive

phrases depending on the mode of talk. Rhetorical devices such as repetition, contrast, and imagery are introduced to enhance expression and impact, particularly in Presenter Mode.

The Mind practices support the thinking that shapes speech. Students learn to align their ideas with a clear purpose, structure their speech logically, and summarise key points. They develop skills in reasoning and justifying their ideas, while also practising metacognitive control—monitoring and adjusting their talk in real time. Focused contributions and purposeful use of time are also part of this discipline.

The Bond practices develop the social and emotional dimension of talk. Students are taught how to manage interactions, take turns respectfully, and respond to others with sensitivity. They adapt their speech to suit different audiences, speak with resilience and self-

assurance, and bring energy and warmth to their delivery. They also learn to build inclusive dialogue through encouragement, collaboration, and shared focus.

Together, these practices provide students with a practical toolkit for high-quality talk. Through modelling, structured activities, sentence stems, and games, teachers can guide students in mastering the skills that underpin confident, thoughtful, and purposeful speaking and listening.





PRACTICES TO MASTER THE STANCE



THE PRACTICES OF THE STANCE

Effective communication goes beyond simply conveying ideas; it is an embodied performance where the how of delivery shapes understanding as much as the what. In the Tongue Fu Talking™

- **Pacing** – Controlling the speed and rhythm of speech to aid comprehension and maintain engagement. Strategic pauses create emphasis, while variations in pace can

- **Engaging Gestures & Posture** – Enhancing verbal communication through intentional body language. Open gestures invite participation, while posture conveys confidence



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interrelated practices, each contributing to a well-rounded and effective speaking style:

accents. Effective pronunciation ensures that listeners grasp the message without unnecessary strain.

- **Projection** – Adjusting vocal strength to suit different settings, ensuring audibility without shouting. Proper projection relies on breath control and resonance rather than sheer volume.

you'll find clear explanations of each practice, why it matters, and practical activities to help introduce it to your students.



What is Pacing?

Pacing is more than just speaking speed; it is the rhythmic control of speech that allows a speaker to hold attention, clarify ideas, and create emphasis. Mastering

Why It Matters

- **Enhances Clarity**
Prevents speech from being rushed or monotonous.



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speech effectively for maximum engagement.



What is Tone?

Tone refers to the emotional quality of speech, shaped by pitch, volume, and emphasis. It conveys mood, intent, and attitude, helping listeners interpret

Why It Matters

- **Shapes Meaning**

The same words can have completely different meanings depending on tone (e.g. "That's great" can be sincere or



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add depth and clarity to communication.

A strong speaker modifies tone strategically to influence their audience.



PRONUNCIATION

What is Pronunciation?

Pronunciation refers to how individual sounds and words are articulated to ensure clarity and understanding. However, clarity *does not* mean

Why It Matters

- **Ensures Understanding**
Poor pronunciation can obscure meaning and hinder comprehension.



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The goal is clear speech, not accent reduction—regional and cultural accents enrich language rather than detract from it.



PROJECTION

What is Projection?

Projection is about owning the space—ensuring a speaker’s voice carries clearly without strain. It is not about shouting, but rather about breath control.

Why It Matters

- **Ensures Audibility**
Listeners must hear clearly, especially in large spaces.



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GESTURES AND POSTURE

What are Gestures and Posture?

Gestures refer to purposeful movements of the hands and arms that support, clarify, or emphasise spoken ideas. When used effectively, gestures can help to

Why They Matter

- **Reinforces Meaning**
Gestures emphasise key points and make speech easier to follow.



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or slouched posture can suggest uncertainty or disengagement. Posture also affects vocal quality and projection, making it a key aspect of both presence and performance.



EXPRESSIVE EYES AND FACE

What are Facial Expressions and Eye Contact?

Facial expressions and eye contact are critical non-verbal communication tools that help convey emotion, intent, and

Why They Matter

- **Builds Connection**
Good eye contact creates engagement with an audience.



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PRACTICES OF THE FLOW

Introduction

Mastering spoken language requires more than just the ability to articulate words; it involves the ability to structure ideas, adapt language, and engage an

- **Precise Vocabulary**

Choosing words with accuracy and intent.

- **Grammatical Awareness**

Understanding the structure of

Each of these practices plays a vital role in developing strong and purposeful oral communication. On the following pages, you'll find clear explanations of each practice, why it matters, and practical

activities to help you practice



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- **Rhetorical Flair**

Using linguistic techniques to persuade, engage, and enhance meaning.



PRECISE VOCABULARY

What is Precise Vocabulary?

Precise vocabulary refers to the ability to choose words that accurately convey meaning, enhance clarity, and engage listeners. A strong vocabulary enables

Why It Matters

- **Enhances clarity**
Reduces ambiguity in spoken communication.



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presentations.



GRAMMATICAL AWARENESS

What is Grammar Awareness?

Grammar awareness refers to the ability to understand and apply grammatical structures effectively in spoken communication. It involves using correct

Why It Matters

- **Ensures clarity and coherence**
Prevents confusion and misunderstanding in spoken language.



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SENTENCE STRUCTURE

What is Sentence Structure?

Sentence structure refers to the way words, phrases, and clauses are arranged to build sentences that are clear, logical, and purposeful. It's about

Why It Matters

- **Improves clarity and flow**
A well-structured sentence helps listeners follow the speaker's train of thought without confusion.



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- **Strengthens expressive and persuasive power**
Thoughtful sentence construction allows speakers to emphasise key points, contrast ideas, or build dramatic effect.



ADAPTING REGISTER

What is Adapting Register?

Adapting register refers to the ability to modify language, tone, and formality depending on the audience and context. Skilled communicators adjust their

Why It Matters

- **Ensures appropriateness**
Helps speakers match their language to different settings.



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keeps listeners engaged.

- **Strengthens expressive and persuasive power**
Thoughtful sentence construction allows speakers to emphasise key points, contrast ideas, or build dramatic effect.



RHETORICAL FLAIR

What is Rhetorical Flair?

Rhetorical flair refers to the use of persuasive and engaging language techniques to capture attention and strengthen arguments. Developing

Why It Matters

- **Enhances engagement**
Makes speech more memorable and impactful.



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PRACTICES OF THE MIND

Introduction

Spoken language is not only a performance of speech but also a reflection of thought. In the Tongue Fu Talking™ framework, Mastering the Mind

- **Content & Purpose**
Developing clarity of what to say and why.
- **Metacognition**
Applying thinking strategies such as

Each of these practices strengthens cognitive control during talk, enabling students to become deliberate, strategic speakers who think before, during and after speaking. This guide outlines each



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- **Task and Time Focus**
Staying on-topic and managing contributions purposefully.



CONTENT AND PURPOSE

What Is Content and Purpose?

Content & Purpose refers to the ability to decide what to say and why it needs to be said. It involves selecting relevant information, prioritising ideas, and

Why It Matters

- **Drives clarity**
Helps speakers avoid rambling or irrelevant details.



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METACOGNITION

What Is Metacognition?

Metacognition in oracy involves using thinking strategies to guide talk. In the Tongue Fu Talking™ framework, this includes:

Why It Matters

- **Promotes self-awareness**
Students become more mindful of how they think and talk.
- **Improves talk quality** – Strategies lead



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Reflecting – Reviewing one's contribution or adapting approach.



REASONING WITH JUSTIFICATION

What Are Reasoning and Justifying?

Reasoning involves using logic to connect ideas, make inferences, identify patterns, and draw conclusions. It helps students build a coherent line of thought

Why They Matter

- **Encourages logical thinking**
Students learn to structure thoughts clearly and explore consequences.



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SUMMARISING

What is Summarising?

Summarising involves identifying and expressing the most important points of a discussion, presentation, or idea. It requires listening carefully, distilling key

Why It Matters

- **Develops listening skills**
Students learn to process and retain key points from others.



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- **Promotes Empathy**
Helps others feel they are being heard and understood.



STRUCTURE

What is Structure?

Structure refers to the internal organisation of spoken contributions. It includes how speakers introduce their ideas, sequence points logically, use

Why It Matters

- **Improves coherence**
Helps listeners follow the speaker's train of thought.



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TASK AND TIME FOCUS

What is Task and Time Focus?

This practice is about staying on topic, managing the amount of time used, and aligning contributions with the purpose of the activity. It includes recognising

Why It Matters

- **Encourages discipline**
Students learn to manage their attention and contributions.



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PRACTICES OF THE BOND

Introduction

Spoken communication is not only about delivering ideas – it’s about building relationships, reading social cues, and responding to others with empathy and

- **Managing Interactions**

Navigating conversations with confidence and adaptability.

- **Turn-Taking and Active Listening**

Fostering inclusive and constructive dialogue.

Together, these practices nurture students’ ability to form respectful connections, contribute to shared thinking, and handle the emotional demands of talk in a range of contexts.

This is the foundation for building a



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adaptability. It comprises six complementary practices:

captivate.

- **Encouraging Collaboration**

Fostering inclusive and constructive dialogue.



MANAGING INTERACTIONS

What Is Managing Interactions?

Managing Interactions is the ability to respond flexibly and thoughtfully in real-time conversation. It includes recognising when to speak, how to adjust

Why It Matters

- **Builds conversational agility**
Students learn to adapt to what others say and think on their feet.



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TURN TAKING AND ACTIVE LISTENING

What Is Turn Taking and Active Listening?

This practice involves recognising when to speak and when to listen, sharing space fairly, and giving full attention to others. It also means responding to what

Why It Matters

- **Promotes mutual respect**
Students learn to listen actively and wait their turn, showing consideration for others.



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Builds sensitivity to verbal and non-verbal cues in conversation.



AUDIENCE AWARENESS

What Is Audience Awareness?

Audience awareness is the ability to adapt your talk depending on who you're speaking to. It includes adjusting your language, tone, pace, examples and

Why It Matters

- **Improves clarity**
Students adjust explanations and word choices so others can understand.



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Encourages students to consider how their words might be received by others.



SELF-ASSURANCE AND RESILIENCE

What Is Self Assurance and Resilience?

This practice is about managing emotions during talk — feeling confident to speak, recovering from mistakes, staying composed under pressure, and

Why It Matters

- **Builds confidence**
Students develop the courage to speak in a range of settings.



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external reassurance to speak clearly and purposefully.



LIVELINESS AND ENGAGEMENT

What Is Liveliness and Engagement?

This practice involves using voice, facial expression, gestures and energy to bring ideas to life. It's about speaking with presence and enthusiasm to engage

Why It Matters

- **Captures attention**
Expressive talk keeps listeners interested and focused.



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and body language deliberately.



ENCOURAGING COLLABORATION

What Is Encouraging Collaboration?

Encouraging collaboration involves actively shaping the group dynamic by drawing others in, acknowledging diverse contributions, and moving ideas

Why It Matters

- **Fosters intellectual generosity**
Students learn to support others while still prioritising high-quality thinking



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PROGRESSION



THE TONGUE FU TALKING™ BELT SYSTEM



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A PROGRESSIVE FRAMEWORK

The **Tongue Fu Talking™ Belt System** provides a clear, structured progression for oracy, ensuring that students develop their speaking and listening skills in a logical and disciplined way. Mirroring

This transition builds metacognitive awareness as students start monitoring and adjusting their contributions.

By Brown Belt, learners engage in

The progression ensures gradual cognitive load increase, allowing students to build skills without becoming overwhelmed. It also fosters metacognitive growth, encouraging self-



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The Green Belt introduces greater control and structure, requiring students to explain ideas with reasoning, sustain conversations, and summarise key points.

exploratory talk (deep reasoning and collaborative thinking) and presentational talk (confidence, clarity, and audience awareness).

confidence.




THE FOCUS FOR EACH BELT

Belt	Focus	Description	Example
 White	Awareness and control	Learners become conscious of how body language, language choices, reasoning, and social cues shape communication. They begin to	Maintaining an open stance, using simple sentence stems, recognising basic reasoning patterns, and showing awareness of conversational



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 Black	Mastery and influence	Learners synthesise all four disciplines seamlessly, using communication as a tool for influence, leadership, and deep learning.	Commanding presence through stance, demonstrating linguistic agility, engaging in high-level reasoning, and using emotional intelligence to foster collaboration and resolve conflict.
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AGE RANGES FOR EACH BELT

The Tongue Fu Talking™ Belt System is a progressive framework designed to develop oracy skills from EYFS to KS3, ensuring all students, regardless of their starting point, can make meaningful

For schools without an established oracy framework, older students may benefit from White Belt activities to strengthen foundational skills. As the framework becomes embedded, the belts will

By following the Tongue Fu Talking™ framework, schools can create a culture where oracy is explicitly taught, progressively developed, and valued as an essential skill for success.



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

develop at different rates. The system is designed to be inclusive, allowing every learner to access appropriate challenges and support.



INCLUSIVITY IN PROGRESSION

In Tongue Fu Talking™, progression is about developing a balanced skill set across The Stance, The Flow, The Mind, and The Bond, but this does not mean all students will demonstrate these skills in

open and steady posture or using hand gestures to show engagement. With Green Belt development, they may learn alternative ways to demonstrate attentiveness, such as looking at a

At Brown Belt, they might rehearse and deliver short, structured points in a low-pressure environment. By Black Belt, they have developed the ability to manage nerves, adjust their delivery, and



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Example 1: A student on the autism spectrum and The Stance

A student on the autism spectrum may struggle with direct eye contact, which is traditionally associated with strong presence in communication. At White Belt, they may begin by practising an

discussions but anxious about speaking in front of a class might begin at White Belt by practising structured turn-taking within a trusted group. At Green Belt, they may gradually engage in larger group interactions using sentence scaffolds.





**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

ASSESSMENT



ASSESSMENT IN TONGUE FU TALKING™

The Tongue Fu Talking™ Belt System provides a structured approach to developing oracy across all age ranges. Assessment should focus on progression, ensuring students gain

When to Use

- **Daily and Weekly** (Assessment for Learning) – The belt resources can be used during regular classroom activities to guide practice,

How to Use

Avoid treating the belts as a tick-list of competencies. Oracy skills develop gradually, becoming more natural over time. Progression should be based on



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

- **Student self-assessment grids** – These allow students to reflect on their own speaking development and consider areas for improvement.
- **Examples**– These provide real-life scenarios, helping students compare their own skills against clear, concrete examples.



THE WHITE BELT: DESCRIPTOR

The White Belt stage represents the foundation of effective dialogue and communication. At this level, learners are beginning to participate in structured interactions, gaining confidence in

At this stage, learners are taking their first steps in becoming confident communicators. They are learning to engage with others, maintain simple conversations, and listen actively. While



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

words like "big" and "small" to describe things and connect their ideas using simple conjunctions such as "and" or "because." Their speech remains on topic, but they do not yet modify their language based on audience or context.



THE WHITE BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Stance Discipline	Description
Pacing	I speak in short, clear sentences and stop after each idea so people can follow me.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Engaging Gestures and Posture	I move my hands a little to help show what I mean, and I stand up straight when I talk.
Expressive Eyes and Face	I look at my friend's face when I talk to them and smile or nod to show I am listening.



THE WHITE BELT: EXAMPLES



The Stance Discipline	Examples
Pacing	Example 1: When telling a short story, I pause after each sentence: "I went to the park. pause I played on the swings. pauselt was fun."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Engaging Gestures and Posture	Example 1: When I say "big," I stretch out my arms to show size.
Expressive Eyes and Face	Example 1: When talking about something fun, I smile.



THE WHITE BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Flow Discipline	Description
Precise Vocabulary	I use words like big and small to describe things, e.g., "The dog is big."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	I use the same way of speaking with everyone, e.g., "Hey, Miss!"
Rhetorical Flair	I use everyday words to share my ideas, e.g., "That is fun."



THE WHITE BELT: EXAMPLES



The Flow Discipline	Examples
Precise Vocabulary	Example 1: I say "The dog is big." Example 2: I say "The cake is yummy."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	Example 2: I say "Yeah" to my friends, but "Yes" to my teacher..
Rhetorical Flair	Example 1: I say "The dog is nice." Example 2: I say "The food is tasty."



THE WHITE BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Mind Discipline	Description
Content and Purpose	I stay on topic by talking about one idea at a time, e.g., "I am talking about my pet."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	I give a short version of what I just said, e.g., "The story was about a cat who got lost and found its way home."
Task Time and Focus	I stay focused on the discussion and listen to others when they speak.



THE WHITE BELT: EXAMPLES



The Mind Discipline	Examples
Content and Purpose	<p>Example 1: I talk about my favourite food without switching topics.</p> <p>Example 2: I answer a question about my weekend by only saying what I did.</p>



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	<p>Example 1: I retell a short story in one sentence.</p> <p>Example 2: I give a simple summary after a friend tells me a long story.</p>
Task Time and Focus	<p>Example 1: I wait for my turn before speaking in a group.</p> <p>Example 2: I listen to my friend without interrupting.</p>



THE WHITE BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Bond Discipline	Description
Managing Interactions	I join a conversation by answering when someone asks me a question, e.g., "Yes, I have a dog."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Liveliness and Engagement	I smile and use a happy voice when telling a fun story, e.g., "And then... BOOM! The rocket took off!"
Encouraging Collaboration	I talk to my friends and take turns in a group, e.g., "You go first, then I'll have a turn."



THE WHITE BELT: EXAMPLES



The Bond Discipline	Examples
Managing Interactions	<p>Example 1: I respond when someone talks to me, e.g., "Yes, I have a dog!"</p> <p>Example 2: I join a group discussion by adding one idea, e.g., "I like that idea!"</p>



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Liveliness and Engagement	<p>Example 1: I use a happy voice when telling a story.</p> <p>Example 2: I move my hands to show what I mean.</p>
Encouraging Collaboration	<p>Example 1: I take turns when working in a group.</p> <p>Example 2: I ask a friend what they think.</p>



THE GREEN BELT: DESCRIPTOR

At the Green Belt stage, learners are developing fluency in communication and beginning to adapt their speech to different contexts. They can express themselves in full sentences and

Cognitively, they start making connections between ideas, predicting what might happen in conversations, and seeking clues from their audience's reactions. Their reasoning is becoming



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

their sentences in ways that make their speech more engaging and begin to notice how language changes depending on their audience.



THE GREEN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Stance Discipline	Description
Pacing	I speak at a steady speed so people can understand me easily.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Engaging Gestures and Posture	I use my hands to explain things, like pointing to show where something is or opening my hands to show an idea.
Expressive Eyes and Face	I look at my friends or group when I talk, and I make my face match what I say, like smiling when it's happy.



THE GREEN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Stance Discipline	Examples
Pacing	<p>Example 1: When reading aloud, I pause at full stops and commas to make my speech sound natural.</p> <p>Example 2: In a group discussion, I wait a second before speaking to make sure I'm not interrupting.</p>



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Engaging Gestures and Posture	<p>Example 1: When explaining an idea, I use open hands instead of crossing my arms.</p> <p>Example 2: When giving directions, I point in the right direction to help my friend understand.</p>
Expressive Eyes and Face	<p>Example 1: When asking a question, I raise my eyebrows to show I am curious.</p> <p>Example 2: When my friend tells me good news, I widen my eyes and smile to show I'm happy for them.</p>



THE GREEN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Flow Discipline	Description
Precise Vocabulary	I use more specific words like huge or tiny to give clearer meaning, e.g., "The castle was huge."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	I change my words depending on who I'm speaking to, e.g., "Hey" to my friend, but "Hello" to my teacher.
Rhetorical Flair	I add interest by repeating words or using very, e.g., "That is very, very fun!"



THE GREEN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Flow Discipline	Examples
Precise Vocabulary	Example 1: I say "The elephant is enormous." Example 2: I say "The cake is delicious and chocolatey."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	Example 1: I say "Hello, Miss" to my teacher and "Hey" to my friend. Example 2: I say "Good morning" to an adult and "Morning!" to a classmate.
Rhetorical Flair	Example 1: I say "The dog is really, really nice!" Example 2: I say "The food is super tasty and amazing."



THE GREEN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Mind Discipline	Description
Content and Purpose	I explain my purpose by making my point clear, e.g., "I am telling you about my pet to show why I like her."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	I summarise by keeping only the most important details, e.g., "The story shows how being brave can help you solve problems."
Task Time and Focus	I take turns in discussions and stay on topic instead of talking about something different.



THE GREEN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Mind Discipline	Examples
Content and Purpose	Example 1: I tell a story and explain why it is funny or exciting. Example 2: I describe my favourite food and explain why I like it.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	Example 1: I explain a story's main idea in one sentence. Example 2: I list the three most important points from a lesson.
Task Time and Focus	Example 1: I stay focused on the discussion by not talking about unrelated things. Example 2: I help my group stay on topic by reminding them of the task.



THE GREEN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Bond Discipline	Description
Managing Interactions	I help conversations flow by responding to what others say, e.g., "I have a dog too! What's your dog's name?"



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Liveliness and Engagement	I use different tones to make my speech interesting, e.g., speaking softly for suspense: "And then... he slowly opened the door."
Encouraging Collaboration	I ask others what they think, e.g., "What do you think we should do next?"



THE GREEN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Bond Discipline	Examples
Managing Interactions	<p>Example 1: I ask follow-up questions to keep a conversation going, e.g., "What's your dog's name?"</p> <p>Example 2: I link my response to what someone else said, e.g., "That reminds me of when..."</p>



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Liveliness and Engagement	<p>Example 1: I change my voice to match my message, e.g., whispering for suspense.</p> <p>Example 2: I use gestures and expressions to make my speaking more engaging.</p>
Encouraging Collaboration	<p>Example 1: I invite quieter people to share their ideas.</p> <p>Example 2: I make sure everyone has spoken before moving on.</p>



THE BROWN BELT: DESCRIPTOR

Brown Belt learners demonstrate a strong level of competence in communication. They adjust their pacing, tone, and volume deliberately, using these elements to enhance their message.

Their reasoning moves beyond simple explanations, incorporating caveats and conditions to create more nuanced arguments. Their ability to summarise key points ensures that their message



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

different audiences and begin using rhetorical techniques such as repetition or contrast to emphasise their message. collaboration.



THE BROWN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Stance Discipline	Description
Pacing	I control my speed when I talk, slowing down for important ideas and keeping a natural flow between sentences.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Engaging Gestures and Posture	I use a variety of gestures naturally, such as expanding my hands to show size or miming an action to reinforce my message.
Expressive Eyes and Face	I connect with my audience using eye contact and expressions, adjusting my face to match my message and engage listeners.



THE BROWN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Stance Discipline	Examples
Pacing	<p>Example 1: In a speech, I slow down before saying an important word: "This... is the most important thing to remember."</p> <p>Example 2: When answering a tricky question, I take a short pause to gather my thoughts before responding.</p>



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Engaging Gestures and Posture	<p>Example 1: When describing something scary, I make myself look smaller.</p> <p>Example 2: When giving a speech, I stand tall with my feet apart and use hand movements to support my words.</p>
Expressive Eyes and Face	<p>Example 1: When speaking to a group, I make eye contact with different people instead of just looking at the floor.</p> <p>Example 2: When telling a joke, I use my eyes and a grin to build up to the funny part.</p>



THE BROWN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Flow Discipline	Description
Precise Vocabulary	I carefully choose words that create strong images, e.g., "The castle towered over the village."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	I adjust my language depending on the situation, e.g., "Good morning, sir" in a speech, but "What's up?" with friends.
Rhetorical Flair	I use description and patterns like lists of three, e.g., "That was exciting, thrilling, and unforgettable!"



THE BROWN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Flow Discipline	Examples
Precise Vocabulary	Example 1: I say "The enormous elephant stomped through the jungle." Example 2: I say "The cake had a rich, velvety taste that melted in my mouth."



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Adapting Register	Example 1: In a presentation, I say "Today, I will explain why recycling is important." Example 2: With my friend, I say "Recycling is cool, right?"
Rhetorical Flair	Example 1: I say "The dog is as loyal as a best friend." Example 2: I say "The food was so good, I could eat it every day."



THE BROWN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Mind Discipline	Description
Content and Purpose	I focus my message so my main idea is always clear, e.g., "I want to persuade you that dogs are better than cats, so I will give three reasons."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	I summarise key points so others understand my main message, e.g., "The three main reasons we should recycle are to reduce waste, save energy, and protect animals."
Task Time and Focus	I help keep discussions focused by guiding the group back if we go off track, e.g., "That's interesting, but let's get back to our main question."



THE BROWN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Mind Discipline	Examples
Content and Purpose	Example 1: I explain why recycling is important by giving three clear reasons. Example 2: I keep my message focused so I don't go off track in a discussion.



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Summarising	Example 1: I summarise a class discussion into key points for others. Example 2: I write a short conclusion that captures the main message of my speech.
Task Time and Focus	Example 1: I manage time by making sure my group finishes discussing all key points. Example 2: I bring the discussion back when someone talks about something off-topic.



THE BROWN BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Bond Discipline	Description
Managing Interactions	I guide discussions by keeping the topic focused, e.g., "Let's come back to our main question—how can we improve the playground?"



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Liveliness and Engagement	I use voice and movement to hold my audience's attention, e.g., pausing dramatically before revealing an important idea.
Encouraging Collaboration	I make sure quieter people are included, e.g., "I noticed you had an idea earlier—do you want to share it?"



THE BROWN BELT: EXAMPLES



The Bond Discipline	Examples
Managing Interactions	<p>Example 1: I help organise the discussion by summarising, e.g., "So far, we have three ideas..."</p> <p>Example 2: I make sure everyone has a turn, e.g., "Let's hear from Maya next."</p>



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Liveliness and Engagement	<p>Example 1: I vary my tone and movement to match the mood of my speech.</p> <p>Example 2: I use strategic pauses to build anticipation.</p>
Encouraging Collaboration	<p>Example 1: I encourage teamwork by building on others' ideas.</p> <p>Example 2: I help keep the group positive by recognising good contributions.</p>



THE BLACK BELT: DESCRIPTOR

Black Belt learners demonstrate mastery of communication, combining fluency, adaptability, and influence in their speech. Their delivery is dynamic, using deliberate pacing, tone shifts, and

Cognitively, their reasoning is sophisticated, integrating multiple perspectives and refining arguments with well-structured justification.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

compelling. They transition seamlessly between formal and informal registers, adapting their language with ease.



THE BLACK BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Stance Discipline	Description
Pacing	I adjust my pacing to match my audience, speaking quickly to build excitement and slowing down to make people think carefully.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Engaging Gestures and Posture	I use gestures with precision and intent, guiding my audience's attention and enhancing meaning through controlled movements.
Expressive Eyes and Face	I use sustained eye contact and controlled facial expressions to build trust, convey emotion, and draw people into my message.



THE BLACK BELT: EXAMPLES



The Stance Discipline	Examples
Pacing	<p>Example 1: In a debate, I speak faster when listing facts and slow down for dramatic effect: "We need action now."</p> <p>Example 2: In a storytelling activity, I pause before revealing a surprise ending to build suspense.</p>



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Engaging Gestures and Posture	<p>Example 1: When telling a story, I act out parts with my hands, like miming knocking on a door.</p> <p>Example 2: When persuading an audience, I step forward slightly and gesture to include them in my ideas.</p>
Expressive Eyes and Face	<p>Example 1: When delivering a speech, I make direct eye contact with key people in the audience.</p> <p>Example 2: When showing concern, I soften my expression and tilt my head slightly to show I care.</p>



THE BLACK BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Flow Discipline	Description
Precise Vocabulary	I select precise and powerful words that add depth, e.g., “The fortress loomed, casting a shadow over the trembling town.”



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	I switch between formal and informal speech smoothly, e.g., “Ladies and gentlemen, let’s begin” vs. “Right, let’s get started.”
Rhetorical Flair	I use rhetorical devices like metaphors and questions, e.g., “That match was a battle—who would emerge victorious?”



THE BLACK BELT: EXAMPLES



The Flow Discipline	Examples
Precise Vocabulary	<p>Example 1: I say "The towering elephant, a living mountain, moved with surprising grace."</p> <p>Example 2: I say "The chocolate cake, a sinful indulgence, left a lingering sweetness on my tongue."</p>



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Adapting Register	point." Example 2: In a speech, I say "We all want a better future, don't we?"
Rhetorical Flair	<p>Example 1: I say "The dog, a guardian and companion, stood watch like a soldier."</p> <p>Example 2: I say "The meal was a masterpiece, each bite a melody of flavour."</p>



THE BLACK BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Mind Discipline	Description
Content and Purpose	I shape my message to suit my audience and purpose, e.g., "I use humour in a speech to entertain but a serious tone when explaining a problem."



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	I create powerful summaries that highlight my key message and leave an impact, e.g., "Recycling isn't just a choice; it's a responsibility to our planet."
Task Time and Focus	I manage discussion time well by making sure we cover all key points and do not waste time on unrelated ideas.



THE BLACK BELT: EXAMPLES



The Mind Discipline	Examples
Content and Purpose	Example 1: I adjust my explanation depending on who I am talking to, giving a detailed answer to my teacher but a simpler one to my younger sibling. Example 2: I structure my speech so my audience stays interested from start to finish.



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Summarising	Example 1: I create a powerful summary that leaves a lasting impression. Example 2: I condense a long, detailed argument into a single, memorable sentence.
Task Time and Focus	Example 1: I plan discussion time carefully, making sure all points are covered efficiently. Example 2: I make sure everyone in the group has spoken before moving on to the next topic.



THE BLACK BELT: SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID



The Bond Discipline	Description
Managing Interactions	I control interactions effectively, ensuring voices are balanced, e.g., "We haven't heard from Sam yet—what do you think about this idea?"



**SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE
WATERMARK**

Liveliness and Engagement	I engage my audience by using energy and expression, e.g., acting out emotions in a speech: "Imagine the excitement! The crowd roared!"
Encouraging Collaboration	I lead my group by making sure everyone contributes, e.g., "We need all ideas on the table—let's hear from everyone before we decide."



THE BLACK BELT: EXAMPLES



The Bond Discipline	Examples
Managing Interactions	Example 1: I lead a discussion by setting the topic, e.g., "Let's start by listing all the possible solutions." Example 2: I make sure different opinions are heard and managed fairly.



SUBSCRIBE TO REMOVE WATERMARK

Liveliness and Engagement	Example 1: I use dramatic techniques such as pacing and voice modulation to hold my audience's attention. Example 2: I create emotional impact through energy and expression.
Encouraging Collaboration	Example 1: I manage group discussions to ensure balanced participation. Example 2: I mediate disagreements by helping people find common ground.

