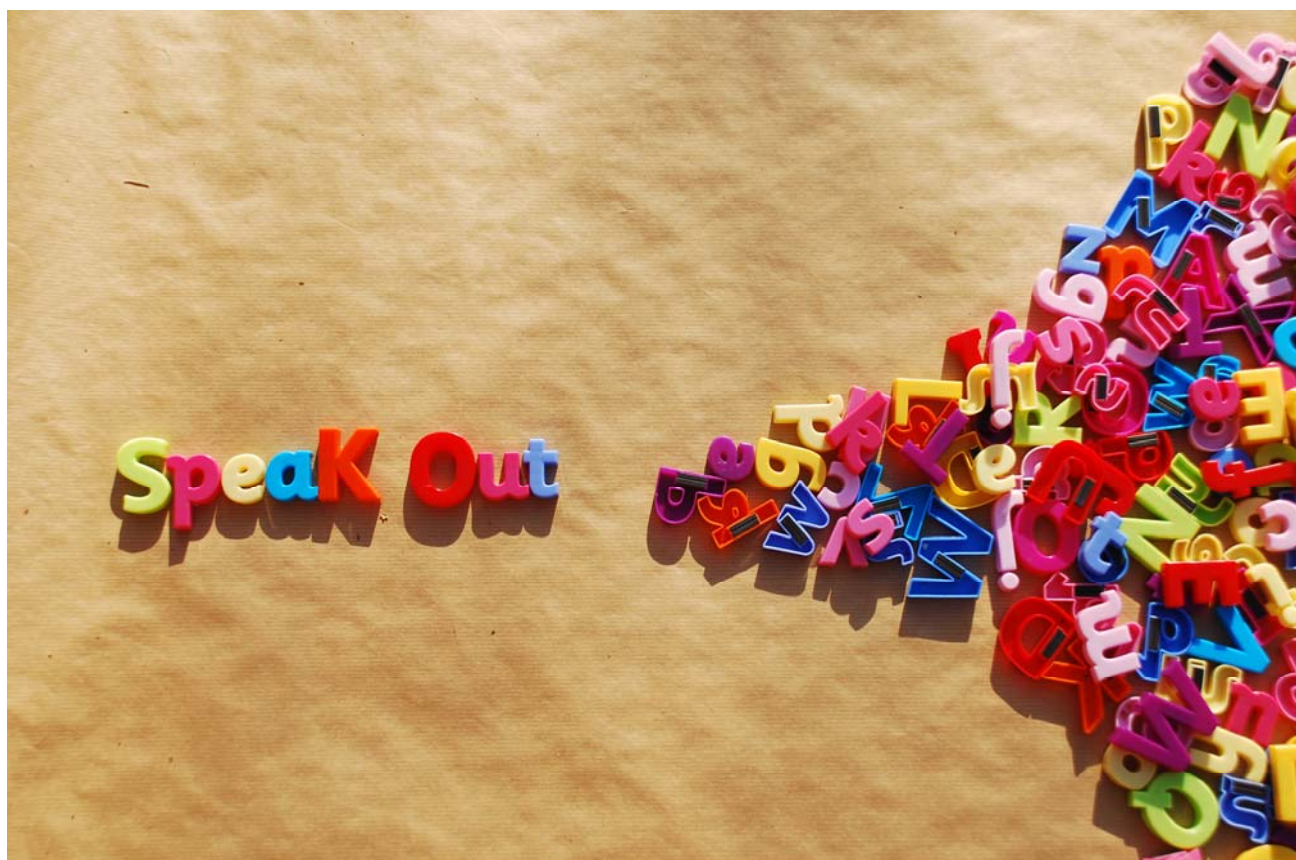


SPEAK OUT: Practice Sharing Report

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Lewisham
Primary Care Trust



/LEAN
Lewisham Education
Arts Network



"A word does not start as a word - it is an end product which begins as an impulse, stimulated by attitude and behaviour which dictates the need for expression." (*Peter Brook - The Empty Space*)

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1. Preface

Speak Out – Introduction

Early in 2006, Lewisham Extended Services began a programme of workshops, meetings and events to engage schools and other stakeholders in the extended schools and Every Child Matters agenda. Extended services co-ordinators were assigned to assist the schools achieve the Every Child Matters objectives and one of these co-ordinators saw an opportunity to use the arts to achieve some of these objectives and to that effect approached the Lewisham Education Arts Network.

At the same time Head teachers from six Lewisham schools expressed their concerns about the increasing numbers of pupils with speech and language development needs in their schools. These six schools also had increasing levels of diversity in their pupil populations, that enrich the school community but create a need to understand a range of different cultural norms. A period of scoping took place and partnerships cemented. London Bubble and Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre were approached and became key partners in the project, alongside Lewisham Education Arts Networks (LEAN), and Lewisham Primary Care Trust's Speech and Language Therapy Department.

Speak Out targets children identified by their schools as having difficulties with speaking and listening. It is delivered in partnership between Schools, Drama Practitioners and Speech and Language Therapists. 'Speak Out' is typically delivered through weekly sessions with two groups of ten children over three terms. The project worked with 18 primary schools and in its entirety, the programme ran over a two and a half year period.

Practice Sharing – Purpose of the Report

The primary purpose of this document is to collate the best of the practice during the project, to make it available to practitioners working in both arts and health and to spread awareness of Speak Out and its aims. The activities and exercises outlined in the later stages of the document are transferable to a wide range of arts and education projects.

Each team of practitioners developed a unique way of working, both between themselves and with the participants in their groups. The sessions developed from week-to-week in accordance with the needs of the children, with each group of practitioners ultimately generating a bespoke model of practice: a model that it is not designed to be employed out of the context of these sessions, but one from which it is possible to draw ideas, information and stimulation.

2. Project Summary

2.1: Speak Out - An Introduction

'An excellent experience that was both educational and inspiring.' (Teacher)

The sessions

Sessions consist of activities, games and songs which are planned in close collaboration between Drama Practitioners and Speech and Language Therapists against relevant speaking and listening targets. The programme of work across the year is specific to each school in which it is undertaken and each 'team' of professionals leading it, but there are shared ideas across all the practitioners: the building of confidence and a basic exploration of communication through mime and gesture, an understanding of narrative, story-making tools and vocal skills and a development of each child's 'voice', both verbally and in regard to their unique interpretation of the world.

Assessment

A sample group of children from each school was assessed by a Speech and Language Therapist before the project commenced so that a baseline measurement of the children's language skills and confidence in communication could be taken. Children were then re-assessed at the end of the programme so that the changes in the scores could be analysed and the impact of the project could be identified.

The project aims

- to address the speech and language needs of the children referred by the schools
- to develop partnership working between arts and health
- to create new models of working
- to create and promote a positive attitude to the arts within the schools and across Lewisham.

Parents Workshops

Two parents' workshops took place per school as a "taster" for what happens in the weekly sessions and provided an opportunity for the parents to ask any questions they have about the project. In many cases, the parents participated in the activities, which was an enjoyable and beneficial experience for both the students and the adults

It was really nice to work in this way with my child – we don't really get an opportunity in daily life.' (Parent)

The sessions also gave the practitioners a chance to hear about the children's progress at home and if/how Speak Out had impacted on their development.

2.2: The Referral Process

Referral Criteria

The project worked with three clusters of primary schools (in total 18 schools) over a two and a half year period. After the first cohort, and through assessments taken before and after the Speak Out project, it was found that the children who benefited most from the programme were:

- Children with mild speech and language delay
- Children with English as an additional language
- Children whose confidence needs building, but whose speech and language was within normal range
- Children who require more opportunities to use expressive language

A referral criteria based on these key discoveries was compiled by the key partners and disseminated to each participating school.

Referral: The School's role

On the basis of the criteria, the school was asked to select 20 children to participate in the project. Once the children had been selected, the school was asked to complete a referral form for each child and to notify their parents that they would be participating in the project. Making the right referrals determined the success of the project for the children.

The referral forms were made available to the practitioners leading the project and helped the facilitators to become aware of each child's specific speech and language needs.

'Each child had a wonderful opportunity to develop their communication skills in a safe, but exciting environment.' (Teacher)

2.3: Ideal Conditions

Through the assessment of the children at a number of different schools and the examination of variables that could have determined the success of the outcomes, it became possible to generate the following criteria of "conditions"¹ so that optimum success could be achieved:

- Speech and language therapist consistent for all sessions
- Planning – consistently including practitioners, SLT and school
- Observations made by SENCO's and class teachers
- Children chosen based on the previously identified areas of difficulties: Confidence/EAL/Language Delay/Attention and Listening difficulties

¹ All data taken from "Speak Out! Speech and Language Report: Result and Analysis – Results Obtained 2007-2009" compiled by Jodi Lea, Lewisham PCT SLT Services, 2009

- Groups of 10 carried out for 45 minutes each
- Ages separated
- Learning Support Assistants consistent throughout project and continually “feeding back” to teachers
- Content of sessions to be structured and to follow a distinct model, as agreed between practitioners and Speech and Language Therapist.
- Sessions to contain drama practitioners/SLT and member of school staff to achieve optimum success and quality in session. The mix of these professionals is key to positive outcomes

3. Creating an Integrated Practice

Within the Speak Out programme, the triangular relationship between drama practitioners, staff members and speech language therapists (SLT's) was a defining feature of the project and instrumental to the success of the sessions.

3.1: Partnership with the Schools

At the outset of the partnership with each new school, the relevant staff member met with the SLT and the Drama Practitioner and would address the needs of all the selected children in the group. A member of staff from the school would then be assigned to the group – ideally for the duration of the project.

Depending on the school this staff member would be a classroom assistant, the SENCO for the school or in one case a teaching assistant who had an interest in working with speaking and listening targets. In a few cases, the classroom teacher would be assigned to the project – but this was very rare. This staff member provided a crucially important link between the group and the school in view of their personal knowledge of individual children and the context of the curriculum.

Where it was possible for their lessons to be covered, the classroom teachers also became involved with the project. Observing the sessions enabled class teachers to see their students in a different situation; one in which the children might display signs of increased confidence and verbal ability, which could in turn be encouraged by teachers in a classroom context.

3.2: Partnership: Arts and Health

Speech and Language Therapists and Drama Practitioners have differing and complementary fields of knowledge and experience. Identifying the separate areas of work facilitates the generation of a shared practice; one in which each practitioner brings their independent skills and expertise for the full benefit of each participant.

Speech and Language Therapists

- Work in various areas including clinic settings, schools, early years centres, Children's Centres and nurseries
- Provide assessments and intervention for Speech, Language and Communication difficulties
- Encourage partnerships working with others such as parents, teachers, other professionals to achieve shared goals and look at the child holistically

Drama Practitioners

- Work in different settings such as schools, theatres and community centres to provide creative activities to support learning
- Foster an environment wherein the individual is encouraged and appreciated and participants support each other
- Nurture an atmosphere of joy and a positive emotional state within the individuals in the group, wherein they are open to new ideas, connections and learning

- Work with character and role-playing, to enable participants to reflect on their own perception of the world and their behaviour
- Undertake movement activities and exercises that enable children to actively use their bodies
- Draw upon mime/gesture to explore communication on a fundamental level and to heighten awareness of the body and how it functions within communication
- Explore the creative use of voice; undertaking exercises and activities that enable expression through the voice and that build vocal technique

At the outset of the Speak Out Programme, Speech and Language Therapists (SLT's) and Drama Practitioners from London Bubble and Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre, came together to discuss their independent modes of practice and to explore the ways in which the integrated teams of practitioners could collaborate to achieve the aims of the project.

This project focused on the following areas of speech and language therapy: listening and attention, memory and sequencing, vocabulary, receptive language, expressive language and social skills. In each school and within each model of practice, these were the areas of content against which each session was planned. Planning the session with these areas in mind, ensured that each activity had an explicit purpose and a key role within the development of the child.

In the initial stages of the programme, the practical role of the SLT was primarily that of an observer and advisor. In each group of children, there is always a wide spectrum of needs. Although the sessions were not designed to provide one-to-one contact with the children, the presence of the SLT at most of the sessions ensured that each child was closely observed and their needs informally assessed at a number of different points within the year. At the culmination of each session, the SLT would be in a position to discuss any observations made. The appropriate action required to meet the needs of the children would form the basis of the next session plan.

Planning the sessions with key areas of speech and language development in mind, generated rigour and ensured that each session was tailored to the needs of the individuals in the group. With core aims and objectives in place, the use of drama exercises became more considered and well placed within the overall structure of the project. Depending on the team of practitioners and on the model of practice within the sessions, the SLT would often assist in facilitating the sessions. In the cases where this happened, the direct contact with the children would typically increase the therapists' knowledge of the child and how best to meet his/her needs.

4. Foundations of the Practice

At the core of the communication process is emotion and emotional engagement: negative emotions can greatly impede the communication process. Working with, and on, emotional awareness through the body and through stories – creates a strong foundation for communication.

4.1 Emotional Engagement

We understand that emotions, or feelings, effect communication. Our emotions communicate themselves without the use of words – through body language, facial expressions and a myriad of eye movements – all picked up, and responded to, by others.

The relevance of this to a project dealing with Speech and Language is that non verbal communication links to our self-esteem and our sense of connectedness (or not). All of this feeds into our emotional state and our impulse to speak.

In drama we explore a whole body approach to communication. We recognise that exploring and developing communication includes an awareness of, body language, proximity, gesture, facial expression, eye contact, sounds, words and this leads to more complex language. We start from the belief that children learn best when they are in a positive emotional state and conversely states of negative emotion, anger, anxiety, sadness actually constrict the blood and oxygen flow to the brain thereby making it less effective.

We promote those positive emotions by creating a safe and nurturing environment in which the pupils have a sense of ownership over the material being explored.

In Speak Out the facilitators promoted a positive emotional engagement by:

- Making eye contact with the participants and using positive, open facial expressions.

- Encouraging participants to make eye contact with each other and being supportive of each others contributions.

- Modelling a joyful, playful approach in which pupils creativity, imagination and expression can be nurtured.

- Leading games and activities that work with the body and emotions without the pressure of having to speak.

- Enabling participants to explore the emotional content of their stories.

- Allowing space and time for self expression.

How we feel affects how we communicate and how we communicate affects how we feel.

4.2 Non-Verbal Communication

Concentrating on non-verbal communication releases the participant from the pressure of vocal expression and also allows the practitioner to concentrate on the basic, physical state of the child's being; this "state" is the foundation of their confidence and their communication skills. Creating a strong foundation will shape the way in which they use their voice and interact within a group. Working from the body also has a direct impact on the emotional state of the participant and their positive engagement in activities.

Speak Out is not aimed at children with specific speech and language disorder or severe delay or for children that would normally require one-to-one intervention, a large number of children referred to the programme are done so on the basis of confidence issues. As this is the case, building the confidence of the child is instrumental to developing speaking and listening skills. Many of the young people referred are highly aware of their fear of speaking and in targeting this fear indirectly and giving them time and space to be away from their "voice", children are much more likely to participate in activities, to enjoy doing so and to gradually gain a new perspective on vocal expression.

Practitioners mainly worked with mime, gesture, soundscapes, to develop a child's emotional and physical communication skills. Working with images, most effectively described as "statues" within the practice, became a key feature of the sessions. The purpose of making an image – of a person or of an object – is to distil knowledge/understanding and express it physically. Such images or "statues" could be seen as visual poems, which even the least confident communicators can access.

Although the approach to non-verbal communication varies between teams of practitioners, it is a common key feature of practice throughout the programme.

4.3 The role of Storytelling

Sharing and creating stories is a means of making sense of our experience; it is a way of reflecting on our world and re-organising it to understand ourselves and our surroundings. Hearing and making stories, allows children to become fascinated with the world around them. Such a fascination can initiate a will to participate in the world – engaging emotions and giving drive and fuel to communication.

The structure of the year and at what point "story-making" began, varied between the teams of practitioners. In many cases, however, the facilitators did not work directly with stories until the foundational work with the children had been undertaken i.e. the activities that focussed on non-verbal communication. Starting with the body and working on themselves and their "inner" voice, stories are a highly effective means of developing this voice and bringing it "out" of the child. Storytelling is integral to the work of the project, both as a means of expression and a communication "tool"

Storytelling: A means of expression

The creation of stories enables participants to re-interpret and re-organise their own personal experience and to continue to access a child's inner voice. The subsequent telling of these

stories binds their two voices – inner and “outer” – together in a creative, self-driven purpose and builds strength and confidence in the child’s sense of self and abilities.

Play What You Say, the technique originally pioneered by Vivian Gussin Paley, provided an effective means of creating stories. The basic format is one in which the teacher/practitioner asks a child to tell them a story and they notate it word-for-word, with the original language and grammar of the child. The story is then retold in a “story square” -usually marked out with tape - asking the children to perform the story as it is told. This basic format was adopted in a number of ways throughout the project, according to the needs of the group. The advantage of this technique is that it enables children the time and space to get their own “voice” heard; in both the literal and metaphorical sense.

In the initial stages, many practitioners used well-known stories in the “story square” – and as the children became more familiar with the format, they created their own stories. There were a number of other means used to generate narrative; objects were employed as “stimuli”, as were items of clothing and photographs. In all the stories made, participants brought aspects of themselves and reflections on their surroundings into the narratives

Storytelling: A communication “tool”

Once a child has a story to tell, gaining an understanding of how to shape it, give it form and essentially “communicate” it - is essential; having a sense of the workings of narrative structure, will assist the child in communicating. In view of structure, a story is essentially an extended sentence; both require a beginning, middle and an end. In learning about the narrative structure of a story, the child also learns about the structure of a sentence: a foundation of communication.

Narrative Cards

In most teams of practitioners, narrative cards were used extensively throughout the sessions. These cards were colour coded and displayed the basic tenets of narrative construction: Who / What Happened / Where / When / The End. When the participants were making stories, hearing stories, reflecting on other children’s “news”, these cards were used weekly as a means of re-iterating essential elements of story compilation.

5. Practice

5.1: Models of Practice

Activities that were undertaken on a session-to-sessions basis, according to the needs of the participants, and the content of weekly sessions generally culminated in a model for the year-long project. Although there was much common ground between schools and teams of practitioners, each team did have its own specific model of practice. In the later stages of the project in particular, when the practitioners had significant experience of *Speak Out* and its aims, these models became more definite and structured.

Articulating a final “model” for the practice is counter-productive, as it negates the unique experience of each team of practitioners, yet common to each group - in different forms - are the following themes of practice:

- Starting from a basis of non-verbal communication and working with physical expression and the body as a premise for verbal communication and confidence i.e. mime, gesture and developing eye-contact. Using physical communication to stimulate an emotional engagement in stories, from which vocal work and a technical knowledge of storytelling could be developed
- Working with well known stories to develop an understanding of story structure which then could equip participants with the tools to create their own stories. The story square/Play What You Say technique was instrumental in exploring both well known stories and enabling participants to create their own stories.
- Using narrative cards to re-cap on stories, to structure “news-sharing” and to reflect on the stories created by participants.
- Having a “ritualistic” aspect to sessions, with a set procedure for warm-up activities and closing exercises to allow participants within the group to feel confident with an established structure

The following samples of practice models have been structured on the basis of super objectives (overriding objectives for the year), termly objectives and in some cases, samples of exercises that were used to achieve these exercises; a structure which arose from a theatrical approach to understanding story.

Sample One

Objective	Nature of Objective	Exercises
Super Objective	- To use a puppet cat as a story stimulus, enabling children to create their own narrative journeys, which incorporate new words and build confidence.	
1st Term Objective	<p>-To create the character of the cat.</p> <p>-To begin to construct the journeys that the cat went on.</p> <p>-To explore emotion through the cat's experiences in the story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create emotional faces of how the cat might be feeling, so place hands in front of face and altogether we will pull a happy face. The repeat, with a sad, lost face and use suggestions made by the children. • Ideas of journeys created by children: Monkey Jungle, dig a hole to Hogwarts, magic garden leading to another garden, magic door which you press a button in a lift that leads to another path and then another garden, swimming pool – magic word for the cat to go somewhere, winter wonderland. • Work in pairs to enact journey with sound/dialogue.
2nd Term Objectives	<p>-Look at stories and structure of stories with guidance from SLT and enact story in story square.</p> <p>- Introduce visual, narrative cards: who/where/when/what happened/the end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marked out a square on the floor and then as the story was read out, each child took it enact the next part of the story in the story square by becoming the character/landscape/animals/sounds etc. Around the edges of the story square, other participants were encouraged to join in to make the sounds of the environment and to make bigger pictures such as forest, landscapes etc. • “Re-capped” on stories using story cards.
3rd Term Objectives	<p>- Developing the objectives of the second term through the children creating their own stories.</p> <p>- Continue to build up an understanding of narrative structure and content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play What You Story (story square with the children making their own stories). • Using story cards to consolidate an understanding of how a story is built.

Sample Two

Objective	Nature of Objective	Exercises
Super Objective	. -To learn to speak and to listen and to encourage the children to explore communication through the use of their bodies as well as sound.	
1st Term Objective	-To create communication foundations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soundscapes • Mirroring • Eye Contact Work • Mimed Actions/Gesture Work • Focus on Facial Expressions
2nd Term Objectives	- To understand basic narrative structure and develop voice work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate Verbal and Physical work. • Story sequencing using story cards • Before and after chair exercise • Play what you say • Vocal Work • Voice in the hall game • Used outdoor voice to encourage speaking indoors.
3rd Term Objectives	-To explore the children's own stories and narratives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play What You Say • Focus on who, what, when, where • Continue to push vocal work

Sample Three

Objective	Nature of Objective	Exercises
Super Objective	To nurture the children's innate ability to create stories and to learn to share them, listen to each other's and believe in their own creativity.	
1st Term Objective	-To work with the body and voice. - To have the confidence to play with and in front of an adult.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Songs • Monsters game • Human machines
2nd Term Objectives	- To become comfortable with re-telling a narrative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story square • Working with familiar stories i.e. Tiger Who Came To Tea and story cards to re-cap narrative content and structure.
3rd Term Objectives	- To create own narrative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story square • Storylines game • Telephone story game • Developing characters • Imagination hats

Sample Four

Objective	Nature of Objective	Exercises
Super Objective	-To develop listening and attention skills, develop emotional awareness and sensitivity, to understand the narrative of a story and to gain confidence to speak and be seen.	
1st Term Objective	-To introduce storytelling and character work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioner presented a story and acted it out asking the children to direct first and then asked them to get up and be involved. • Same story was used from week 2 to week 8. • Props such as a wizard hat were used as well as musical instruments. • Character mapping was used.
	-To develop listening, attention and eye contact skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm up games were played to foster attention skills, emotional awareness and emotional expression.
2nd Term Objectives	<p>-To learn to make sense of a story through the use of the “who, what, when, where” cards.</p> <p>To learn to break the story down.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story was put into a different context (using Little Red Riding Hood) such as “conscience alley”. • Children were asked to identify the good and/or bad decisions that a character in the story might make.
3rd Term Objectives	<p>-To increase the application of the narrative story structure.</p> <p>-Other cards were added to who, what, when, where such as “emotion cards”, “problem cards”, “solution cards” and “speech bubbles”.</p> <p>-To develop deductive reasoning skills.</p> <p>-To learn to work in a group collectively.</p>	

5.2: Drama exercises and activities that may be used to develop speaking and listening skills.

Each group created a programme of drama activities to develop speaking and listening skills. The following list is indicative of the type of activity and exercises used and have been nominally organised according to where they might appear in the sessions.

<p>Opening Activities – Making a creative space These are repeated activities that mark the beginning of the session. They are gentle, shared and welcoming. They aim to create a structured, collaborative and fun environment.</p>	
News Sharing	Pupils are given the opportunity to share a piece of news with the rest of the group. The students that are giving the news are encouraged to make eye contact and students that are receiving, are encouraged to listen and not talk amongst themselves. All participants are encouraged to make eye contact.
My favourite...	Ask children to complete this sentence and provide a number of different “categories” for them to consider i.e. my favourite....things to do / food / time of year is_____ because _____ (ask children to provide a reason) Facilitator initiates a discussion about the different answers given.
I remember....	Each pupil and adult says their name and one thing they remember about the sessions. They may remember general things about the sessions, “I remember we play games” or more specific recap “last week we told the cat story”
Chant	“In Speak out we do....” A call and response chant is developed for the group. The lines re-enforce the positive things that we do in the group, for instance – good listening, make eye contact, take turns. Each line is accompanied with a rehearsed gesture. The pupils take it in turns to lead the chant.
<p>Games/warm ups – Attuning the body and emotions These are fun and playful and stimulate the pupil’s senses, getting them ready as an individual and as a group for the core activities.</p>	
Stop and Go	Following Instructions: Stop & Go – Instructions are given stop & go, then reversed so when you say stop you mean go. Other sets of instructions can be added that can be swapped over, jump & clap, touch sky and touch floor.
Bean Game	Remembering simple instructions. Facilitator calls out a number of beans – all with separate actions. When they hear the name of the bean,

	they do the specific action for that bean i.e. Runner beans (run on the spot), French Beans (twirl moustache and say “Ooh la la”), Baked beans (make a ball on the floor).
Development of “Bean Game” using character actions	Remembering simple instructions. Used at the start of a session to recap on the story generated in the previous session. Facilitator asks “who did we meet last week?” Participant answers, for example, “the mum.” The group agrees on an action – for example, the shaking of a fist and this is used as the first action in the game.
Mirroring	In pairs, person A undertakes a physical action and person B “mirrors” their movement, whilst maintaining eye contact. As they get better at the activity. It can be turned into a game by asking the rest of the group if they can identify who is leading.
Vocal conducting	Move between three levels, each represented by a hand position: quiet, indoors and playground voices. Can be used to create a “vocal orchestra” and is good preparation for creating a sound-scape. The physical terminology of volume can be transferred to other exercises in the sessions.
Quiet voice/medium / full voice	In pairs. Participant stands facing a partner and says their partners name - then step back and say it again, making sure they can hear every time.
Image of the Hour	Recalling simple story/sequence of events in order: Facilitator goes through the times of the day i.e. “its 9 o’clock, 10 o’clock” and the children – as a collective group – do their own mimes as to what they would be doing at that time of day. Helps children understand the concepts of sequencing through applying it to their daily routines.
Leading with a body part	Mainly used as an immediate means of character invention/development. Participants are asked to move around the room and when the facilitator calls out a body part – participants are asked to lead with this body part. Exercise can be extended by asking participants what kind of characters are conjured up for them when they are leading with a particular body part (i.e. leading with the stomach might conjure up a character of a pregnant women), these characters can then be put into an improvisation.
Door to nowhere	Participant mimes opening the door and walking through it – and reacts to an imagined environment or situation on the other side of the door. The rest of the participants watch and when they guess what is happening, they whisper it to the facilitator and if they are right – they are able to join in the “mime”. Can be continued until the whole group is actively involved or at the facilitator’s discretion.
Travelling Suitcase	Participants are asked to mime packing a suitcase and are asked questions about where they are going and what they are packing.

Making a Cake	The children use their bodies to create a cake-making machine. They use their bodies and repeated actions and sounds to work together to make the machine. Done in groups of five or six. Before the practical element of the exercise begins, there is a discussion where the children can think and talk about the sequence of making a cake and what would need to happen in what order. The children worked in small groups and showed the other groups what they had done.
Emotion Square	Facilitators draw up a square on the floor and participants position themselves on all four sides of the square, behind the lines of the square. An emotion is decided upon i.e. “angry” and the participants are asked to cross to the opposite side of the square – using their body and face in an “angry” manner. Can be adapted in a number of ways, for example, emotions can explored on a scale of 0-10 – building up emotion stage-by-stage.
Foley Game	Pair work- Person A does the actions for a scene, and Person B describes what Person A does, as a soundtrack. In this the action leads. Using sounds rather than words can help eliminate the pressure of speaking. Build up to the game with exercises on gesture, mime and sounds. An extension of the game can be to add in dialogue, Person B speaks for Person A as they enact the scene.
Market Place Game	Facilitator asks the questions: Have you been to a market? What do people sell there. Each young person chooses something to sell and sets up their stall. Practice “market” – all speak together and individually. Can be extended to character in role work i.e. - Jack approaches each stall holder to try and sell his cow.
Songs with actions	Heads, Shoulders, Knees & Toes, Banana Song, London’s Burning, Penguin Song.
Core activity - Story making.	
These activities are concerned with stories and characters and are divided into two sections Creating and Sharing Stories and Exploring and Developing the Stories and Characters . These activities are designed to be engaging and give the pupils a sense of ownership of the material.	
Creating and sharing stories	
Group stories	Create a story in the group. Once told, re-tell the story in a story square, including input from the children. Ask the group what happened in the story, and as you narrate, children come into the circle one at a time to act out what is being said (go round the circle, so each child gets a go). To return the children to the circle, and invite new ones up, to start a new section of the story, say Whoosh! A horse shoe shape also works well-sometimes better than a circle.

Play What You Say/Story Square	<p>The facilitator invites children to tell them a story. One at a time the children who have a story to tell work with a facilitator who scribes their story. The group gather around the story square and the story is told back to the group. This adds the value of an adult telling it. (We considered this exercise in terms of good modelling and speaking and listening development. We thought about how and when it might be appropriate to change the children's language used in their stories to demonstrate good use of language. Writing down exactly what the child says and then telling it back to the group with the correct grammar means we change only some of the wording and not the content of the story). A similar exercise allows the children to be the director of their own story. Another variation involves creating place, character and acting out and gives the children the tools to build up their narrative skills and gives them a forum to share their stories.</p>
Narrative Game	<p>Each student thinks of a random beginning, middle and an end and writes these on slips of paper. These slips of paper are then put in a hat. In pairs, one person reads the beginning, middle and end out – and the other person performs the actions of this story. Ask group to re-cap on story.</p>
Imagining Life as....	<p>In this exercise, the children are asked to think about life as an animal and act out how that animal behaved. They think about the animal's home, what food they eat, how they find/catch their food. This allows the children to learn vocabulary and the stories of the animals in discussions before acting out the animals. This can be themed i.e. animals that live in cold places. There are ways of learning new words for example the arctic tern was learned by using the word turn in its other meaning. This exercise also explores differences and similarities.</p>
Conversations with an Alien	<p>This is an improvisation activity. It starts with a facilitator and one volunteer participant. The pair takes suggestions from the audience about where they are i.e. in the playground, in the swimming pool, in a restaurant etc. The facilitator is the interviewer and the child is the alien. The interviewer asks the alien questions and the alien replies in "gobbledegook" i.e. in an invented language of random sounds and noises. Not having to converse in actual words takes pressure off a child that does not enjoy speaking in front of people. This activity could be developed in a number of different ways i.e. there could be a 'translator' behind the 'alien', who is responsible for translating the gobbledegook into English or after the alien has conducted the interview in gobbledegook, he/she could do it in English.</p>
Object stories	<p>Facilitator introduces bag of objects, passes the bag around the group and asks the children to pick out an object and tell a story about that object. The objects can open doors for a varied and rich use of vocabulary. Alternatively the children can create a physical representation of the object or act out how it is used.</p>

Character Objects	Participant takes an object from a bag and invents a character. These characters are then woven into a story by the facilitators. This process encourages exploratory talk, such as “I wonder who might have such a thing, I wonder who would wear this, I wonder what kind of weather there was that day? I wonder what these keys might open” etc.
Story starters/story enders	Using the story square the facilitators introduce the beginning of a story for the group to act out, making it clear that they don’t know the ending. They are then given the opportunity to create and act out alternative endings.
Before and after chair exercise	Facilitator places three chairs in the space, the chair in the middle is the “present”, the chair to the left is the “past” and the chair to the right is the “future.” Facilitator asks participant to share some piece of news, or to tell a part of a story and then asks him/her to move to the other chairs, to talk about what happened before and after it. Enables the participant to have an embodied, experiential understanding of past/present/future and before/after.
Picture Sound-Scape	Photographs/pictures are shown to the group of participants. Children are asked to name what they see within the pictures. Children are also asked to make imagine what they would hear and making a sound scape of the picture. Extension - create a physical representation of the picture through the children’s bodies.
Exploring the stories and characters	
Character Statues/ Dialogue	As a way of rehearsing characters that appear in stories, facilitator asks participants move around the space and when the facilitator calls out a character they make a representative statue. The facilitator then gives them a short line of dialogue from that character eg “Little Red, please stay on the path.” And they walk around the space as the character repeating the line. Change the character.
Soundscapes	Using the “where” of any story that the group are working on, ask them what sounds would be heard in that place, discuss in pairs, small groups or whole group. Come together as a group and one person acts as the conductor, the conductor can bring in different numbers of sounds, can set volume levels and can decide when the piece should finish. Different children get the chance to conduct.
Before and after chair exercise	Facilitator places three chairs in the space, the chair in the middle is the “present”, the chair to the left is the “past” and the chair to the right is the “future.” Facilitator asks participant to share some piece of news or to tell a part of a story and then asks him/her to move to the other chairs, to talk about what happened before and after it. Enables the participant to have an embodied, experiential understanding of past/present/future and before/after.

Teacher-In-Role	Using a character from the story the group is working on the teacher takes on the role of one of the characters who may have a problem, a question or a dilemma. The character then talks to the children. Examples have included, being the Bear from “where going on a bear hunt” with the opening question “Why they are following me!” Max from “where the wild things are” with the opening question “Why Mum sent me to my room?” The teacher in role can introduce concepts and vocabulary to extend the groups thinking and can encourage them to formulate both responses and exploratory questions.
Hot seating	Can be used in a number of different ways. Participant sits on a chair as themselves being asked about an object, or as a “character” being asked about them.
Closing activities. Providing a positive end to the session and leaving the characters and stories for further exploration work in future sessions.	
Children’s Evaluations	The children in the groups were asked to complete ongoing evaluations and worked in pairs to create whole sentences to describe what happened in the sessions and their response to it.
The Wash	<i>Shower:</i> Imagine showering, and wash the session off. Control this as you narrate it- guide it as the game goes on. Use the same device each week.
The Box	There is an imaginary box in which everyone will put their imaginary bean (chosen because the work was centred on Jack and the Beanstalk). Children hold onto their bean and think about something they’ve learnt, or remember from the story. Take turns to say something before putting your bean in the box.

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7. Credits/Contacts

Credits

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