

Produced by Wigan
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

The Talking Table

Acknowledgement to The Talking Table,
Gateshead Council Raising Achievement
Service, 2008



"The Talking Table is an excellent way to boost the children's confidence and interact with one another."
ST. GABRIEL'S PRIMARY

"Excellent for turn-taking and listening skills."
ST. THOMAS' ASHTON

"Very valuable as the children in our setting come in below national average for communication."
BRITANNIA BRIDGE COMMUNITY

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An exciting opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills in young children.

The EMAS team at Wigan have adopted, and adapted The Talking Table as a training strategy to share and embed in Wigan schools. The Talking Table also offers a fantastic opportunity for CPD.

What is the Talking Table?

The Talking Table was created by Fleur Griffiths in Early Years settings in North East England. This was in response to OFSTED reports noting poor base-line language assessment results.

The aims of The Talking Table are to :

- Improve speaking and listening by modelling conversational principles with small groups of children
- Develop a more imaginative use of play opportunities.

Who is the Talking Table for?

Although delivered by Wigan Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS), The Talking Table strategy can offer significant benefits to all children, specifically in the following areas:

- Reluctant speakers;
- Speech and language difficulties;
- English as an Additional Language (EAL);
- Lack of creativity / imagination;
- Behavioural , social and emotional issues (e.g. turn-taking).

How does The Talking Table work?

After initial interest has been shown, a member of EMAS will make contact with a view to working in school alongside Early Years staff.

A short preliminary meeting will follow with a member of SMT and the class teacher explaining the structure of 'The Talking Table' and agreeing its context:

- Timetabling—one half day for 6 consecutive weeks;
- Selection of pupils to participate—3 groups of 4 pupils for each session lasting 20-30 minutes;
- T timetable of teachers and TAs to observe delivery. (It is recommended that each member of staff observes one half hour session of The Talking Table with a view to continuing this strategy in the future);
- Classroom arrangements. The Talking Table needs to take place within the classroom.

"I think the Talking Table is a brilliant idea. It lets the children be creative without any pressure."
WESTLEIGH METHODISTS

"They loved it. They are always eager to join in. All the children want to have a go."
BRITANNIA BRIDGE

"The informal and intimate setting gave reluctant talkers the confidence to share their ideas and have them celebrated with warmth and praise."
INCE CE

"Very valuable not just for EAL children but also for children who find literacy (including speaking) challenging."
ST. ANNE'S CE