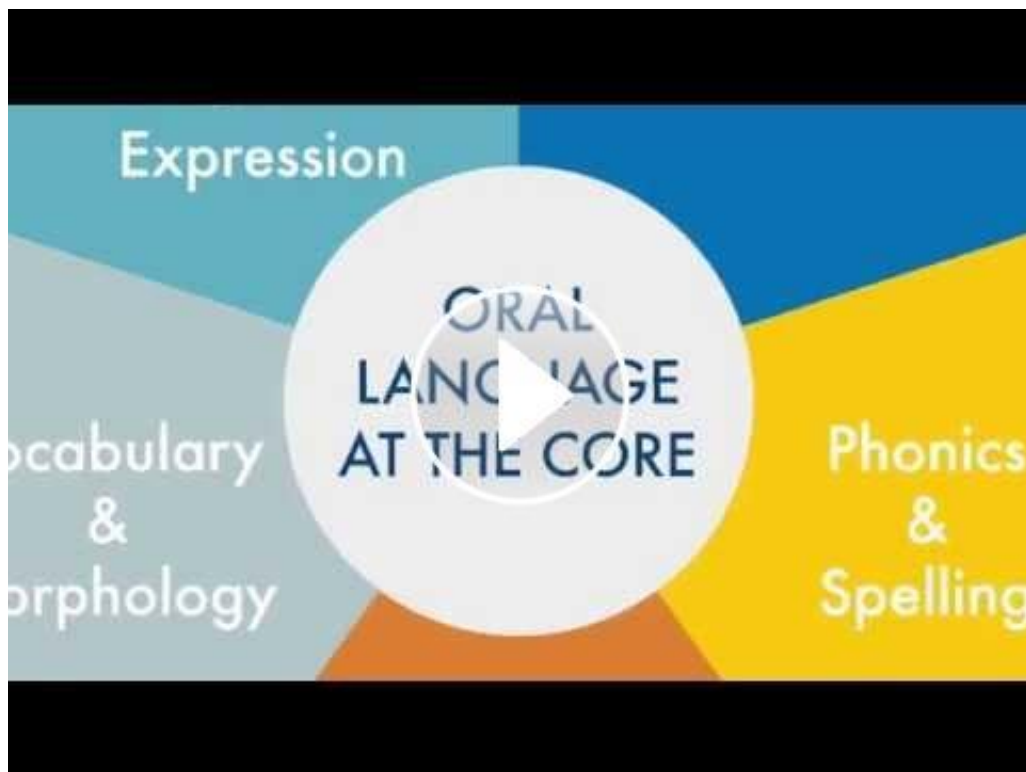


Literacy How-To: Developing Oral Language



Oral Language in the Classroom: Language Line Up



Reading is a Language-Based Skill

Babies are born with their brains “hardwired” to learn language. Listening and speaking develop naturally, but reading and writing must be learned. Oral language skills provide the foundation for both aspects of reading—word reading and text comprehension—which is why Oral Language is at the core of our Reading Wheel model.



How to Develop Oral Language in the Classroom

Beware of a too quiet classroom! Silence isn't golden when it comes to developing all-important speaking and listening skills. This is especially true for dual language learners, who need ample opportunities for oral practice.

The Common Core State Standards for speaking and listening call for increased rigor. So how can teachers fit oral language into their busy days? By intentionally building these two techniques into your plans, you'll provide students with the frequent, productive language practice they need.

Permanent Partners

Establish classroom routines for oral language practice by assigning “permanent partners” as talking and working buddies. Developed by Sara Buckerfield, permanent partners takes "think, pair, share" to the next level.

Think carefully about how to pair students to increase rigor and cognitive output; this may take up to three weeks of trial and error. Consider your students’ behavior and cognition—e.g., pairing two quiet students should prompt each to speak up, while pairing chatty students may help them be better listeners. No child should be left out; be sure to partner dual language learners. Formally train partners to turn toward each other, to look each other in the eye, to each take a turn answering a prompt, and to be alert for a call back signal. Integrate a brief permanent partner task into every activity to increase the number of students participating and to develop an efficient, familiar routine.

Listen to Sara's [webinar](#) or view her [slides](#) to learn more.

Language Line Up

Language Line Up is a fun and effective activity to get students moving while facilitating a series of short exchanges. When combined with formal sentence frames (as in the video above), it can be a way to learn and practice academic language.



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Our Mission is to EMPOWER TEACHERS to ensure that every child learns to read by third grade.

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