

Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades

by

Deanna Callander

Bachelor of Arts, Malaspina University-College, 2006  
Bachelor of Education, Malaspina University-College, 2006

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the area of Language and Literacy  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

© Deanna Callander, 2013  
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This project may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

## **Abstract**

Overall, the project, “Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades” focused on exploring how teachers can improve the quality of collaborative talk within the classroom. The theories, concepts and research reviewed in Chapter 2 informed the PowerPoint workshop that was created for teachers about how to implement dialogic approaches to teaching and learning into their daily practice. The workshop was designed in accordance with tenets of sociocultural theory, dialogic talk, exploratory talk, D/d discourse, and the transactional theory of reading. The dialogic approach to teaching and learning featured in the PowerPoint presentation is the use of interactive picturebook read-alouds. The presentation addresses the following topics: the foundations of dialogic and monologic talk, the development of speaking and listening skills, the importance of establishing a supportive learning environment, the use of uptake and valuable questioning techniques, and the assessment of talk. The workshop includes explicit connections to relevant Prescribed Learning Outcomes and recommendations from the British Columbia English Language Arts curriculum package for Kindergarten to Grade 3. The PowerPoint workshop also includes an accompanying script that includes detailed explanations of slides and descriptions of the hands-on activities.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Figures.....	vi
Acknowledgments.....	vii
Dedication.....	viii
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
My Journey with Picturebooks and Talk in the Classroom.....	1
The Importance of Talk.....	2
Connections to Curriculum Documents.....	4
Project Overview.....	6
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	8
Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations.....	8
Lev Vygotsky.....	8
Douglas Barnes.....	10
Gordon Wells.....	11
James Paul Gee.....	12
Louise Rosenblatt.....	13
Children Talking and Listening in School.....	15
Children learning to talk.....	15
Assessment of children's talk.....	17
Creating an optimal learning environment.....	21
Thinking Together program.....	24

Listening in the classroom.....	26
Teacher Talk in the Classroom.....	29
Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Initiation-Response-Feedback/Follow-up.....	29
Uptake.....	30
Dialogic talk.....	32
Dialogic Teaching and Learning.....	37
Alexander’s international research.....	39
Dialogic approaches to teaching in science.....	40
Dialogic approaches through the use of wikis.....	41
Philosophy for Children.....	42
Dialogic reading interventions.....	43
Interactive Read-Alouds.....	44
Reading aloud picturebooks.....	47
Read Together, Talk Together.....	53
Summary.....	56
Chapter 3 Reflections.....	57
Visual Organizer.....	57
Background Information and Context: Slides 2-7.....	58
Environment: Slides 8-15.....	61
Instructional Strategies: Slides 17-30.....	63
Assessment: Slides 31-35 and 37-40.....	69
Take Home Message: Slide 36.....	72
Reflection.....	72

References..... 74

Appendix A PowerPoint Presentation ..... 81

Appendix B Script..... 102

**List of Figures**

Figure 1. Ways of Assisting Readers Through Their Zones of Proximal Development: Modes of Scaffolding..... 16

Figure 2. Rating Scale for Evaluating Group Discussions ..... 19

Figure 3. Checklist for Dialogic Talk ..... 20

Figure 4. The Building Blocks of Language..... 26

Figure 5. Selected DIT Indicators..... 36

## Acknowledgments

Many people have supported me through this process and without whom I could not have been successful. The love and support I received from those around me played a significant role in my journey to complete my Master's of Education.

I am grateful to my friends, family and colleagues who have shown amazing encouragement and support throughout this process. You have all stood by me, listened to my explanations and rationales, asked the right questions and respected the time commitment that was involved in this journey. An extra big thank you to my Mom.

Thank you to Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo for your patience, support, expertise and guidance through this entire process. Your passion for picturebooks and literacy inspired me to pursue this topic at the University of Victoria, under your supervision.

A big thank you to Allison and Kathy for all of your time spent helping me talk through my ideas and edit my writing. Your patience and support were instrumental in my success.

It is especially important for me to thank my partner, Drew, for his patience, love and understanding during my Master's program. The unconditional support that you gave me with your kind words, calm demeanour and wonderful hugs are deeply appreciated. I am grateful to have such a loving and supportive partner by my side.

## **Dedication**

This project is dedicated to all lifelong learners –may your quest for knowledge continue to drive  
your curiosity.



## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **My Journey with Picturebooks and Talk in the Classroom**

I have always been interested in the use of picturebooks in classrooms at all grade levels. When deciding to complete my Master of Education degree I knew that my final project would involve the use of picturebooks. Throughout my teaching I have used picturebooks to promote talk among my students, but traditionally the children sat quietly, listening attentively to the story. Although the children would have opportunities to make predictions prior to reading, I expected the students to raise their hand in order to share their thoughts or to make connections to the story or to ask a question. Often, these types of contributions occurred only after the picturebook was read. Through my coursework and readings I have come to understand the importance of students engaging in talk, not only before and at the end of the reading aloud of a story, but also throughout the reading as ideas and connections develop. I came to understand that by teaching students the appropriate skills for speaking and listening, and by creating a supportive learning environment, teachers can move away from nominating students to talk, and facilitate oral language in an environment where students and teachers alike are responsible for respectful learning.

Throughout my coursework I developed an understanding of the multiple benefits of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning and immediately began trying them out with my students and experienced considerable success. For my project I wanted to create a workshop that could assist and support my colleagues when implementing dialogic approaches to teaching and learning into their daily classroom practice.

## **The Importance of Talk**

Our society is based around talk – “language is fundamental to thinking, learning, and communicating” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 3). We talk to communicate with others and most people spend a large amount of time each day engaging in speaking and listening for numerous purposes. Therefore, it is essential that we learn how to speak and listen effectively. Talking with someone who is not an attentive listener impacts the outcome of the conversation. Alternately, when someone is unable to express him or herself clearly, those listening, even if listening attentively, will experience trouble understanding the intended message.

Before children come to school they learn language through interactions with and observations of those within their surrounding environments. Language learning is a social process and the more children are exposed to and provided with opportunities to experiment with language, the better they will become at using language. Within a supportive environment, children need multiple opportunities to observe language in use and practice using talk with those who have more developed skills and experience so that they can assimilate these skills into their own. Indeed, children develop both linguistic and communicative competence through language socialization. Since language affects cognition, the development of children’s oral language skills is critical to both their social and academic success. As described in Chapter 2, the explicit teaching of speaking and listening skills is a foundational piece of dialogic teaching and learning in the primary grades.

Talk within a classroom has multiple purposes and can be used for sharing information and stories, asking questions, expressing viewpoints and feelings, building relationships, and communicating with each other. The research reviewed in Chapter 2 reveals that dialogic talk is

instrumental in the primary classroom. Dialogic talk can vary depending on the situation, but overall it consists of purposeful, collaborative and engaging talk where students and teachers share authority for knowledge within a supportive learning environment. Dialogic talk involves extended conversations and aims for deeper understandings from all persons involved. Dialogic talk can provide opportunities for teachers and students to listen to and share ideas with each other supportively, including the consideration of alternative perspectives. However, the simple use of dialogue in education does not make learning dialogic. Alexander (2006) identifies five essential principles for dialogic teaching on which this project was firmly grounded: collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful.

Dialogic teaching and learning is founded on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, Barnes's (2008) concepts of exploratory talk, Wells's (1999) dialogic inquiry approach, Gee's (1989) concept of D/d discourse, and Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional theory of reading. Conceptual contributions from Mercer (2000), Alexander (2006), and Mercer and Dawes (2010) are also influential to the creation and expansion of dialogic talk in various forms. Support for dialogic talk is evident through the growing body of research that has explored children talking in classrooms and dialogic approaches to teaching and learning. As is evident by the findings from the research that are discussed in Chapter 2, the use of dialogic talk in the classroom provides student-focused opportunities for talk that are engaging and supportive for learners of all levels (Alexander, 2006; Hardman, 2008; Lyle, 2008a, 2008b; Mercer & Dawes, 2008; Skidmore, 2006; Wells & Ball, 2008). In Chapter 2 I also share the findings from research that has explored the use of interactive read-alouds as one type of dialogic approach to teaching and learning. Essentially this body of research has revealed that through the use of interactive read-alouds, students are able to demonstrate enhanced higher-order thinking skills because the

collaborative interactions facilitate and enable the expansion and development of more complex ideas (Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Blom-Hoffman, O’Neil-Pirozzi, Volpe, Cutting & Bissinger, 2007; Greene-Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Lever & Senechal, 2011; Pantaleo, 2007; Sipe, 2002; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Wiseman, 2011). The use of interactive read-alouds embraces a dialogic approach to teaching and learning because children are engaged collaboratively in the reading process. Indeed, one of the primary goals of my PowerPoint workshop, “Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades,” is to encourage teachers to collaboratively engage students in purposeful talk such as that which can occur during interactive read-alouds.

### **Connections to Curriculum Documents**

The Primary Program in British Columbia is strongly grounded in oral language skills (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2000). Foundational speaking and listening skills are taught in Kindergarten and these are both maintained and built upon throughout the rest of the grades. Within the English Language Arts curriculum document, the overall aim is for students to “make meaning of the world and to prepare them to participate effectively in all aspects of society” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 2) through developing skills in speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and representing. The curriculum document recommends that teachers create a safe and respectful learning climate, provide frequent, sustained opportunities for language development, and ask open-ended questions to help students make meaning, all to maximize oral language development. All of these recommendations, while developing language skills, strongly align with the use of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning.

The Prescribed Learning Outcomes are organized under three curriculum organizers: Oral Language, Reading and Viewing, and Writing and Representing (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006). Within the Oral Language organizer, outcomes are classified into categories for: Purposes, Strategies, Thinking, and Features. Active participation of students, reflection on the learning process, and setting goals for improvement are some of the guiding principles on which the Prescribed Learning Outcomes were founded. Student Achievement Indicators further expand and describe each of the Prescribed Learning Outcomes. As well, the document contains criteria that describe a good thinker, a good speaker and listener, a good reader and viewer, and a good writer and representer. Criteria for a “Good Speaker and Listener” are described for Grades K-3 and 4-7. Some of the criteria for a good speaker and listener in the primary grades are as follows:

- speaks and listens for a variety of purposes
- listens carefully to understand and respond to others’ messages
- communicates ideas and information clearly
- uses vocabulary and presentation style that are appropriate for the audience
- is attentive and respectful to others in conversation
- uses language effectively for a variety of purposes [and]
- self-evaluates and sets goals for improvement. (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 105)

Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning incorporate the above criteria to maximize opportunities for engaging, collaborative talk and extending oral language development in the classroom.

## **Project Overview**

In Chapter 1 I have discussed the inspirations that led me to this project, the importance of speaking and listening skills to cognitive development, and the connections of my project to the curriculum. As well as describing the theoretical foundations of unit, in Chapter 2 I also review a selection of literature that was foundational to my project. Topics addressed in the literature review include children learning to talk, assessment of talk, optimal learning environments, listening in the classroom, teacher talk, dialogic teaching and learning, interactive read-alouds, and the use of picturebooks in the classroom. In Chapter 3, I describe each section of the workshop and its relevant connection to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. I also identify the challenges that I encountered with my review of the literature, areas for future research, and my own personal journey with dialogic approaches to teaching and learning, both past and present.

I created the PowerPoint workshop, “Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades,” which is featured in the Appendix, with the intention that teachers will be motivated to reflect on their pedagogy and include more dialogic approaches to teaching and learning in their daily teaching practices. The PowerPoint workshop presentation consists of 40 PowerPoint slides and an accompanying facilitator script that I wrote to assist me with the presentation of information and explanation of the activities. The content of the PowerPoint presentation is grounded within a foundational visual organizer that I created in order to clearly display the essential elements of dialogic teaching and their interactions with and among each other. Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning are incorporated into the activities within the workshop to provide teachers with concrete demonstrations and experiences with the tools and approaches they can use in their own classrooms. The overall intention of the workshop and its

activities is to provide educators with the information and tools necessary for them to begin incorporating dialogic approaches to teaching and learning into their daily teaching practice. The workshop is important to the growing body of research on dialogic approaches to teaching and learning as it focuses on selected relevant topics and theories and attempts to implement them through a professional development presentation for educators.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

In this chapter I discuss ideas from Lev Vygotsky's work that constitute the foundation for dialogic teaching and learning: the social origin of cognition, the role of language as a tool for thinking, and the zone of proximal development. Other foundations of the project include Douglas Barnes's concepts of exploratory talk, Wells's (1999) dialogic inquiry approach, James Paul Gee's (1989) concept of D/d discourse, and Louise Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional theory of reading. Below I discuss teacher talk, children's talk, assessment of oral language, and interactive read-alouds. These are the topics that informed the creation of the "Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades" (see Appendix A), the workshop presentation that was developed for this project.

### Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

#### Lev Vygotsky.

Constructivist theory argues that humans create knowledge and meaning from their own experiences. Social constructivist theory expands the tenets of constructivist theory emphasizing that in social settings both individuals and groups construct knowledge collaboratively with one another, creating a culture of shared meanings (Palinscar, 1998). The work of Vygotsky highlights that learning is a social process. Vygotsky (1978) stressed the "social origins of language and thinking" (p. 6) and explained how culture and society are rooted within the nature of the individual. In his view, higher mental functions are socially formed and culturally transmitted; young children behave according to the activities they participate in and the conditions in which they are placed (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) viewed "the relation between the individual and the society as a dialectical process" (p. 126) and



contended that learning should be viewed and studied as a process of change. Thus, “the sociocultural contexts in which teaching and learning occur are considered critical to learning itself, and learning is viewed as culturally and contextually specific” (Palincsar, 1998, p. 354), making it impossible to separate the individual from social influences (Berk & Winsler, 1995).

Another key concept in Vygotsky’s work is the zone of proximal development (hereafter referred to as ZPD), which describes how “learning should be matched in some manner with the child’s developmental level” (1978, p. 85). The ZPD highlights the abilities of the child that are developing and may be mastered for independent success through nurture and support. The ZPD includes two levels of development and is defined as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). The ZPD reflects how learning is a social process whereby children learn through dialogue with others and develop their cognitive abilities through collaboration with more knowledgeable members of society (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1986) argued that “thought development is determined by language” (p. 94) giving language a critical role in the learning process.

Vygotsky (1986) maintained that written speech and inner speech (the use of talk with oneself) represent monologic talk, and oral speech (with others) represents dialogic talk. When engaging in read-alouds, teachers overtly and explicitly share the use of inner speech. Modeling of inner speech can provide students with opportunities to observe the invisible processing that occurs within one’s mind when reading.

Vygotsky (1986) also discussed how oral speech often occurs spontaneously during conversation and time is not always given for the speaker to formulate and deliberate before

offering an answer or thought, in part to keep the conversation flowing. Dialogic talk within the classroom addresses this issue and provides children with multiple opportunities to talk through their ideas, to acknowledge alternative viewpoints, and to practice and explore their thoughts with others before communicating a final response.

### **Douglas Barnes.**

Douglas Barnes (2008) is another scholar who has written about the importance of students' active creation of knowledge through talk and its uses within the classroom. Barnes (2008) describes two types of talk, exploratory and presentational, each with their own functions: "exploratory talk is hesitant and incomplete because it enables the speaker to try out ideas, to hear how they sound, to see what others make of them, to arrange information and ideas into different patterns" (p. 5) while sorting out their own thoughts. In contrast, in presentational talk "the speaker's attention is primarily focused on adjusting the language, content and manner to the needs of an audience" (Barnes, 2008, p. 5). During exploratory talk, new knowledge is created as learners use prior knowledge along with knowledge available to them through their peers to actively construct new meanings. Ideas can be tested and re-formed through conversations with both self and others. Within the classroom context, Barnes (2008) argues that "only pupils can work on understanding: teachers can encourage and support but cannot do it for them" (p. 4), which strongly supports a dialogic approach to teaching and learning.

Barnes (2008) cautions that it is important to remember that within the classroom students learn individually, creating their own meanings and versions of information, even when lessons are shared by the entire class. Acknowledging that children need opportunities to talk in order to learn, Barnes argues that children should be given more opportunities for talk within the classroom, along with increased responsibility for their own learning. Providing repeated and

extended opportunities for talk within the classroom can provide optimal learning experiences for all learners, allowing for the knowledge of each learner to be brought forth and valued within a discussion. Collective knowledge is central to a dialogic approach.

### **Gordon Wells.**

Reiterating Vygotsky's belief that in order to understand the development of human beings it is necessary to look at both the individuals and the constantly changing social environments with which they interact, Wells stated (2000), "individuals and society are mutually produced and reproduced" (p. 55). Furthermore, just as individuals and society are intertwined, so too are learning and development. Wells (2000) discusses the application of Vygotsky's concept of the ZPD in regards to human development noting that it provides "a way of conceptualizing the many ways in which an individual's development may be assisted by other members of the culture, both in face-to-face interaction and through the legacy of the artifacts that they have created" (p. 57). According to Wells (2000), learning within the traditional educational system does not allow for collaborative learning through the ZPD because "schools have a strong tendency to cultivate conforming, risk-avoiding identities" (p. 59). As emphasized by Vygotsky, children need to be engaged with others to learn concepts and principles they can apply to new tasks and problems. Wells (2000) argues for classrooms to be reorganized as communities of inquiry featuring an exploratory and collaborative approach to learning and teaching where students are "motivated and challenged by real questions, [and] their attention is focused on making answers" (p. 64).

Classroom communities of inquiry are consistent with "the social constructivist belief that understanding is constructed in the process of people working together to solve problems that arise in the course of the shared activity" (Wells, 2000, p. 66). Dialogue plays a central role

in this process as knowledge is created and re-created among people. Positive learning communities can provide opportunities for learning for all involved; teachers are the key to providing these opportunities to positively affect both individual and community development. Both Wells (2000) and Alexander (2006) emphasize how students and teachers benefit from participation in dialogic learning communities, learning from each other through dialogue and interactions.

**James Paul Gee.**

Gee's (1989) work on oral language also recognizes the social nature of language learning. His conceptualization of D/d discourse emphasizes that, "it's not just *what* you say, but *how* you say it" (p. 5). The body language or tone of voice of both teachers and students communicate messages that are sometimes more powerful than the words themselves. Indeed, multimodal approaches to teaching and learning in classrooms recognize how written language is only one mode of conveying information and validates other modes such as speech, images, sound, gesture, body posture as valid sign systems to communicate and represent meaning (Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 2003).

According to Gee, everyone has multiple Discourses, or identity kits. "Discourses are ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions and clothes" (Gee, 1989, pp. 6-7). Similar to Vygotsky's ideas about the social origin of thinking and the ZPD, Gee (1989) argues that Discourses are acquired through 'supported interaction' and 'social practices' with others more knowledgeable in that Discourse. Indeed, society and culture play large roles in the acquisition of one's primary Discourse because primary Discourse cannot be explicitly taught and must be learned through practice and enculturation (Gee, 1989). Gee (1989) differentiates

between primary and secondary Discourses, describing primary Discourse being our “home-based sense of identity” (p. 8) that we use to make sense of the world, remaining present in all our interactions. Secondary Discourses are obtained through apprenticeship, a term Gee uses to discuss the scaffolding and instruction one could identify with Vygotsky’s ZPD. A secondary Discourse provides access to various institutions and agencies (i.e., church, school, businesses, organizations) beyond families and immediate peer groups. Gee (1989) further distinguishes secondary Discourses as dominant or non-dominant, depending upon whether or not status and goods are obtained from membership.

Within a dialogic classroom setting, not only do children bring their primary and secondary Discourse knowledge to discussions, but they also begin to acquire the discourse required for dialogic learning. Through enculturation within a safe learning environment, children can engage in extended dialogue with both adults and peers to utilize, improve and extend their discourses. Gee (1989) makes valid arguments about the importance of dialogue and teaching within classroom settings stating, “if you have no access to the social practice, you don’t get in the Discourse, you don’t have it” (p. 7). This statement underscores the importance of pedagogy and exploration associated with talk within a dialogic approach to formal schooling, as students need instruction about, as well as exposure to and practice with, the discourse associated with dialogic talk if they are expected to successfully understand and utilize it.

### **Louise Rosenblatt.**

Rosenblatt (1994) also stressed the social nature of teaching and learning stating that humans are “continuously in transaction with an environment” (p. 1059). Her transactional theory of reading drew upon the work of philosopher John Dewey as well as Vygotsky, emphasizing how specific individual, social and cultural factors influence readers’ responses to

and interpretations of the texts. According to Rosenblatt (1994), the “text actually remains simply marks on paper, an object in the environment, until some reader transacts with it” (p. 1062); that is, the meaning of the text is created when the reader and text transact. The meaning constructed by an individual can change due to changes in the particularity of the reading event. For example, because the nature of the reading transaction involves reader, textual and contextual factors, various readers respond to and interpret the same text in different ways.

Rosenblatt identified stances that a reader can adopt when engaging in reading or when listening to someone read aloud. Her description and explanation of the aesthetic stance is most relevant to the project because it emphasizes the holistic experience of the reader as they engage with texts. Rosenblatt (1994) emphasized that the stances occur along a continuum, but acknowledged that a reader may adopt different stances during the reading of a single text. “The aesthetic reader pays attention to, savors, the qualities of the feelings, ideas, situations, scenes, personalities, and emotions that are called forth, and participates in the tensions, conflicts, and resolutions of the images, ideas, and scenes as they unfold” (Rosenblatt, 1994, p. 1067). The reader lives through the text and responds authentically, which is why Rosenblatt stated that the text itself cannot be identified as either efferent (primarily concerned with reading to gain information) or aesthetic, but rather that the reader’s attitude in response to the writer’s intention determines the overall nature of the stance.

Rosenblatt wrote about the importance of creating environments in schools where students draw on their knowledge and experiences to create meanings. Dialogic interactions can provide opportunities for the learner to play an active role in constructing understanding as children can incorporate personal experiences into their learning (Alexander, 2006; Hardman, 2008; Lyle, 2008a, 2008b; Rosenblatt, 1994; Vygotsky, 1986; Wells & Ball, 2008). When

teachers read aloud to students using a dialogic approach, they encourage students to adopt an aesthetic stance, bringing forth emotions and personal responses to be discussed at length. Through explicit modeling of the aesthetic stance, teachers can demonstrate the personal and emotional experiences one can have when listening to or reading a text. Within a dialogic learning environment, these experiences become central to rich dialogic discussions.

In the next section I discuss children talking and listening in schools within optimal learning environments. This section reflects the theoretical and conceptual foundations discussed above and focuses on dialogic approaches to teaching and learning.

### **Children Talking and Listening in School**

#### **Children learning to talk.**

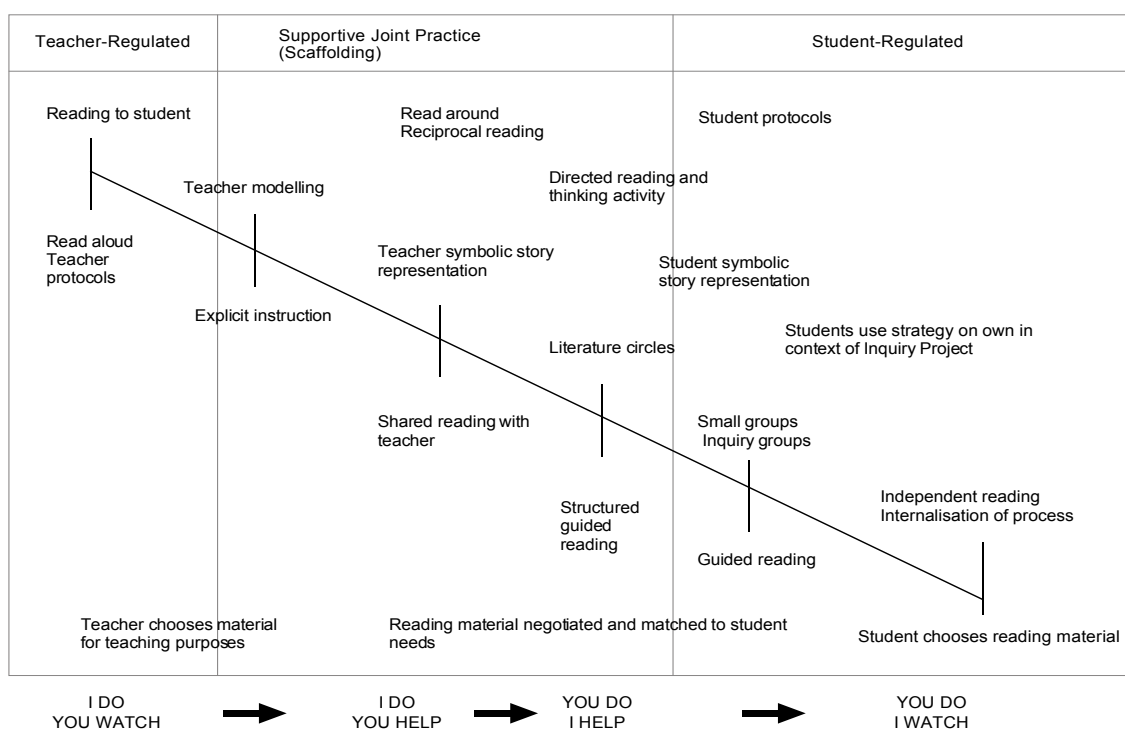
Vygotsky's (1986) key ideas about the social origin of language describe how language learning involves a reciprocal interaction between the child and his or her environment. For adults and children to attain shared meaning, adults need to understand the intent of the child's meaning and use language terms that are understandable for the child (Wells, 1986). Indeed, as emphasized by Wells (1986), "learning to talk is more than acquiring a set of linguistic resources; it is also discovering how to use them in conversation with a variety of people and for a variety of purposes" (p. 15) (i.e., communicative competence). Thus, children in schools need instruction about "talk" and multiple opportunities to practice talk with each other and with adults, engaging in extended dialogue to enhance their knowledge of language.

Learning to talk requires constant modeling and practice. In school, in optimal learning conditions, children learn within their ZPD using a guided release of responsibility model whereby a teacher provides opportunities for learning to occur at differentiated rates and through differentiated means. While being guided by the teacher to independence, students are constantly

exploring both through and with talk to deepen their understandings within this dialogic approach to teaching and learning. Figure 1 provides an example of the application of the guided release of responsibility model showing how a teacher can use scaffolding in various reading activities to assist readers through their ZPD towards independence. Consequently, as students become more successful and gain greater independence within a particular activity (as described in Figure 1), they move along the continuum, shifting the role of talk from teacher-directed to student-directed, towards the overall goal of less teacher talk and more student talk as they acquire greater independence. Within a dialogic approach to teaching and learning, as described in detail later in this chapter, teachers model dialogic approaches and then guide students through discussions while transferring control as the students acquire independence.

### Figure 1. Ways of Assisting Readers Through Their Zones of Proximal Development: Modes of Scaffolding

Ways of Assisting Readers Through Their Zones of Proximal Development: Modes of Scaffolding



Source: <http://www.myread.org/images/scaffolding/scaffolding.pdf>



Through a guided release of responsibility model, teachers can use various degrees of modeling to scaffold students through the awareness and internalization of certain processes. Jones (2007) emphasizes that explicit teacher modeling of the metacognitive process allows children opportunities to observe the process and encourages their guided and then independent use of metacognition. Reflecting on the process of talk and considering “*how one thinks and knows*” (Jones, 2007, p. 571) is the basis of metacognition. Jones notes how the development of metacognitive awareness occurs through purposeful planning of lessons and multiple opportunities for assessment of students’ speaking and listening skills by both teachers and students.

#### **Assessment of children’s talk.**

*“Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; Everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted” Albert Einstein*

As noted by Jones (2007), student and teacher reflection along with metacognition are key in the planning of and assessment of talk within the classroom. Although it can be difficult for educators to assess talk in the classroom, Butler and Stevens (1997) acknowledge that, “the development of children’s oral language skills is critical to both their social and academic success” (p. 214). A cohesive interrelationship exists among teaching, learning and assessment. Assessment of oral language, as with other literacy skills, is most accurate and effective when viewed as an ongoing and continuous process that occurs within a strong context of meaning (Butler & Stevens, 1997; Jones, 2007). Assessment can be used to inform the teacher of a child’s understanding, to indicate areas for further instruction, and to evaluate a child’s progress with reference to certain criteria. According to Vygotsky (1986), dynamic assessment enables teachers to view the child’s potential level of development. “Dynamic assessment provides a

prospective measure of performance, indicating abilities that are developing and is predictive of how the child will perform independently in the future” (Palincsar, 1998, p. 366).

Dynamic assessment, paired with ongoing formative assessment and reflection of talk can afford teachers the necessary information to create lessons that help to develop children’s communicative competence. Butler and Stevens (1997) discuss the importance of communicative competence as “the ability to express oneself effectively to others and to understand what others in turn are communicating” (p. 214) so that one can adjust their language depending on their situation and the audience. Providing exposure to various opportunities for talk aids in the development of language use within contexts other than the classroom. Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning can help counter traditional Initiation-Response-Feedback/Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRF/IRE) exchanges (discussed below), and provide spaces for reciprocal and collective interactions among teachers and peers (Butler & Stevens, 1997; Jones, 2007). As well as providing students with opportunities to practice and refine their communicative competence, dialogic approaches to teaching can afford students with opportunities to “experiment with language in interesting ways and in doing so provide teachers with reliable assessment information” (Butler & Stevens, 1997, p. 215).

Oral language profiles are another method of collecting and assessing both formal and informal samples of students’ oral language. Teachers monitor and make notes of various “incidents” of student language throughout the day and use these samples to build individual profiles. Listening to a child tell a joke or asking a child to provide directions to another student are examples of language incidents a teacher could include within a profile. Butler and Stevens (1997) explain how oral language profiles can provide information beyond test scores, enhance teaching and learning for students, and communicate information to students, parents and other

teachers. The profiles provide examples of how an educator could implement this oral language assessment tool within the classroom context to support the development and assessment of communicative competence. Butler and Stevens (1997) state that both formal and informal assessment tasks are needed for creating a holistic understanding of learners. For example, tasks such as “book talks” can be a formal way to assess a child’s presentational language skills (e.g., eye contact, posture, voice level, and appropriate language) whereas group discussions can be used as an informal way to assess a child’s conversational language skills (e.g., quality/quantity of information, understandability, and ease and flow of speech) (Butler & Stevens). A way to informally assess oral language skills is through observation of peer teaching (Butler & Stevens), which demonstrates a deeper understanding of concepts. Butler and Stevens provide an adapted 1-4 rating scale (see Figure 2) for use when evaluating a group discussion task.

**Figure 2. Rating Scale for Evaluating Group Discussions**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
	Quality and Quantity of Information
4	<i>Very elaborate</i> comments, opinions, solutions, or replies. Includes category 3 below with greater elaboration of reason, solution (e.g., weighing the alternatives, pro and cons).
3	<i>Elaborated</i> comments, opinions, solutions, or replies; i.e., opinions with reason(s), solution with detail or explanation, generalization with reason(s), comments with details.
2	<i>Simple</i> comments, opinions, solutions, or replies; not necessarily a complete sentence. In general, these are remarks or ideas, with no supporting evidence, examples, details, or illustrations.
1	<i>Irrelevant</i> comments having nothing or little to do with the discussion or introduced into the discussion without context or explanation; may be complete or incomplete sentences or one or two words.

Source: Butler, F., & Stevens, R. (1997). Oral language assessment in the classroom. *Theory into Practice*, 36(4), 214-219.

Finally, using self-assessments of talk, children can come to understand their own thought processes and “gain control over *how* they learn” (Jones, 2007, p. 571). Jones (2007)

posits that “talk is both a means of learning and an aspect to be developed and refined in its own right . . . [and] within the classroom, both assessment of and through talk is vital” (p. 577).

When students engage in dialogic talk, they become more actively engaged in dialogue, resulting in a deeper understanding of concepts and stronger connections to their own personal lives and experiences. Mercer (2000) discusses the use of talk phrases such as: “I think,” “because,” “if,” and “why” to indicate the use of exploratory talk. Using information from Mercer (2000), Dawes and Sams (2004), Alexander (2006), and Butler and Stevens (1997), I created a checklist for teachers to use when assessing whether or not their students are engaging in dialogic talk. The checklist (see Figure 3) combines various assessment tools into one easy-to-use format and is intended for use in conjunction with a student self-assessment.

### **Figure 3. Checklist for Dialogic Talk**

<p>When engaging in talk, the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ uses exploratory phrases (I think, because, if, why) when sharing and discussing ideas with others</li><li>✓ provides reasoning for ideas and responses</li><li>✓ listens attentively using whole-body listening</li><li>✓ listens carefully to and accepts others’ opinions and ideas (and negotiates viewpoints when necessary)</li><li>✓ uses appropriate conversational skills (i.e., turn taking)</li><li>✓ engages in uptake during discussions (building on others’ ideas)</li><li>✓ uses various types of talk for different audiences and purposes</li><li>✓ describes their discussions and sets personal and group goals for talk</li><li>✓ asks higher level thinking questions</li></ul>
--

### **Creating an optimal learning environment.**

Jones (2007) notes how “risk-free environments are fundamental to dynamic teaching/learning/assessment” (p. 576) when engaging in dialogic talk in classrooms. Indeed, as well as creating an environment in the classroom where children can talk effectively, students also need to learn to listen, both to the teacher and to each other. “Children who cannot stay quiet have a bigger impact on the listening environment than anything else” (Spooner & Woodcock, 2010, p. 40) and teaching within a noisy environment becomes difficult for both teachers and other students. Claxton and Carr (2010) discuss four different types of educational learning environments that can be observed within a classroom, differentiating among those that are dynamic and interactive and those that are strictly controlled lacking opportunities for dynamic talk:

*A prohibiting* environment consists of a tightly scheduled program where children are not engaged for lengthy periods of time. *An affording* environment provides a range of opportunities for development, although without the use of deliberate strategies to make clear these opportunities for children to engage in. *An inviting* environment affords time for and values the asking of questions. *A potentiating* environment both provides and develops individual expression through participation in shared activities where both students and teachers take responsibility for sharing the power to lead and learn. (pp. 91-92)

Within a potentiating classroom learning environment, which is perceived as optimal, Claxton and Carr (2010) differentiate four aspects of the teacher’s role – to explain, orchestrate, commentate and model. In a potentiating environment, dialogic approaches to teaching and learning can thrive; the teacher shares responsibility and ownership of learning with the students.

Although ownership of learning becomes shared in a potentiating environment, teachers maintain their roles (to explain, orchestrate, commentate and model), while demonstrating empathy, value for children's ideas and efforts, and enthusiasm towards learning, both their own and their students'.

Along with the teacher-child relationship, the optimal environment for dialogic teaching and learning is affected by multiple factors, ranging from the visible, physical layout and organization of the classroom, to more subtle factors such as body gestures and positioning of the teacher (Alexander, 2006). When developing an environment for dialogic talk in the classroom, Mercer and Dawes (2010) suggest the use of several strategies.

*a) provide small group discussions before whole-class discussions to allow students time to prepare their responses*

Providing opportunities for students to talk through their ideas with a partner or small group can afford students the opportunity to refine their thinking and scaffold each other before they share their thoughts with a group. Not only can this rehearsal increase children's confidence, but it can also encourage those who are normally apprehensive about sharing their ideas in whole-class discussions to share more frequently.

*b) encourage a range of responses before providing feedback or judgment*

When students listen to multiple responses, peer contributions can prompt new ideas and provide students with the opportunities to talk through their thinking and question each other before receiving feedback or judgment.

*c) seek justifications and explanations of answers*

Through the use of prompts, teachers can use uptake (discussed below) to extend students' thinking and encourage them to further explain their answers.

*d) allow children to nominate others instead of the teacher doing so*

When authority is removed solely from the teacher and students are given the opportunity to nominate their peers during discussions, the interactions can become extended and more conversational, appearing less like answers provided to appease the teacher.

*e) set ground rules collectively as a group*

By collectively constructing ground rules, the teacher and students develop clear expectations, thus creating a sense of ownership and commitment towards learning.

*f) use reflection for examining quality of talk within the discussion*

The use of reflection both by the teacher herself and with the students is critical to the creation of a successful dialogic environment. By reflecting on the quality of talk within the discussion, teachers can identify areas for further instruction and students can identify their strengths and weaknesses. Constant and ongoing reflection is important; as learners develop, their oral language skills will improve and require re-assessment.

*g) model the language behaviours you expect from your students*

Appropriate teacher modeling of expected language forms is necessary for children to understand what they are being asked to do. Consistent modeling by teachers reinforces the expected language skills.

The above strategies can facilitate the development of what Mercer (2000) describes as “interthinking.” He explains interthinking as “the joint, co-ordinated intellectual activity which people regularly accomplish using language” (2000, p. 16). Interthinking involves the collective engagement with others’ ideas through the use of oral language (Pantaleo, 2007). As evidenced by the strategies above, interthinking plays a pivotal role when developing an environment for dialogic talk. Myhill (2010) also discusses how learning to talk is about learning to think, and

notes that, “children do not simply hear words in their environment and then use them” (p. 221) but they listen for context and meaning.

Interestingly, Wegerif (2013) states that dialogic practices often involve monologic discourse and that monologic talk “should not be simply rejected but engaged in the dialogue at a higher level” (p. 30). Monologic talk is foundational to dialogic talk; therefore, students’ dialogic talk is better when they become better at monologic talk. In a potentiating environment, where interthinking and Mercer’s strategies are prominent, proficiency in monologic and dialogic talk can complement each other when used with the correct intentions. For children to explore through language they must be able to clearly express their ideas and opinions, and become active listeners, processing what they hear and making connections to existing ideas and schemata so they can respond appropriately to the discussion. The *Thinking Together* program (Mercer & Littleton, 2007), which includes incorporation of the above strategies, is specifically designed to develop both speaking and listening skills.

### **Thinking Together program.**

The *Thinking Together* program, created by Mercer and Littleton (2007), is “designed to ensure that children have educationally effective ways of talking and thinking together in their repertoires” (p. 69) that can be used both when working together and alone. The program features the teaching of explicit skills where students collaborate and use talk to actively and collectively discuss issues in order to reach a group consensus. The goal of attaining group consensus encourages students to give opinions and explore others’ perspectives to try and reach a collective understanding. Aligning with the strategies identified above by Mercer and Dawes (2010), the *Thinking Together* program encourages teachers to collectively set ground rules with students to create a positive classroom climate where children can take intellectual risks within



the discussion. Within this potentiating classroom environment, the teacher can seek justifications or explanations of students' responses and have children nominate each other to talk, eliminating teacher authority. The role of the teacher is not just to instruct or guide students, but to orchestrate dialogue and foster development and to aid in the creation of personal understanding (Mercer & Littleton, 2007).

Mercer and Littleton (2007) identify three types of talk within the *Thinking Together* program. *Disputational* talk is discourse where students make their own decisions and can disagree and make suggestions to others via constructive criticism. In *cumulative* talk, speakers build on what others have said (similar to uptake discussed further on). *Exploratory* talk, which is similar in many ways to Barnes's concept of exploratory talk, is evident when partners engage with each other's ideas constructively and provide reasoning for their statements. These types of talk are all part of dialogic communication as teachers guide and model language use within a safe and supportive learning environment, supporting "children in learning to talk as well as providing them with opportunities for talking to learn" (Mercer & Littleton, 2007, p. 69).

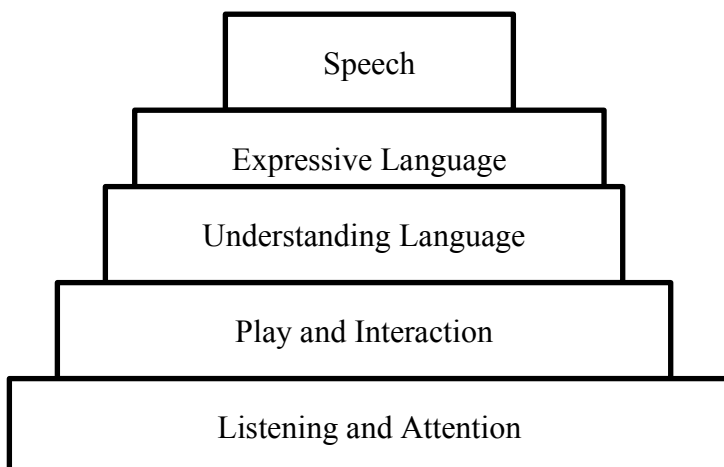
The *Thinking Together* program emphasizes how powerful messages are conveyed by teachers' use of dialogic dialogue and actions. Teacher modeling of collaborative talk is critical in demonstrating best practices that children will attempt to emulate in their own dialogue. Within each *Thinking Together* lesson, the teacher shares with the children the goal or purpose of the activity and the connections to the curriculum. The children then work in groups on a specific task until they are all brought back together for a final large group session where discussions are shared and questions are raised within the larger group. While children are working in their small groups, the teacher circulates and supports or extends group talk, and models aspects of talk, while making observational assessments. The use of programs such as *Thinking Together* in

classrooms can provide children with opportunities to develop communicative competence and life skills needed “to develop intellectual habits that will not only help them in their study of the curriculum but should also serve them well across a diverse range of situations” (Mercer & Dawes, 2010, p. 57).

### **Listening in the classroom.**

Many researchers (Alexander, 2010; Jones, 2007; Mercer & Dawes, 2010; Myhill, 2010) have linked listening with speaking and language development. Figure 4, which presents the Building Blocks of Language, illustrates how “listening underpins all language development” (Spooner & Woodcock, 2010, p. 3); listening and attention are the initial step to building higher-level speech and language skills. Listening skills should be the first foundational skills that are addressed both at school and at home, as they are indeed necessary for the development of successful literacy skills. The International Listening Association (ILA) (1996) defines listening as “the process of receiving, constructing meaning from and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages” (para. 1). According to the International Listening Association, 45% of a student’s day is spent listening, and yet only 2% of the population has ever received formal listening instruction ([www.learningthroughlistening.org](http://www.learningthroughlistening.org)).

**Figure 4. The Building Blocks of Language**



Source: Spooner, L., & Woodcock, J. (2010). *Teaching children to listen: A practical approach to developing children's listening skills*. London, UK: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Imhof (2008) researched the amount of time students spent listening during a typical school day, the variance of listening requirements across grades, and the specific sources of oral information in schools. Quantitative and qualitative observations were made in Grades 1-5 German classrooms. Findings from the analysis of the data supported the ILA's statistics as the students in the research classrooms were required to listen for an average of 27 minutes within each 45-minute class period. Imhof (2008) found that the most frequently used form of instruction was teacher-directed, and that intervals of teacher talk were lengthy. Indeed, teachers were the main source of oral information and they spoke for over one-half of the time that children were required to listen (i.e., average of 14.3 of the 27 minutes). Listening to other students, as well as listening to media comprised the remaining listening time at 11.1 minutes and 1.6 minutes respectively. Although this study took place in Germany and should therefore be viewed with a critical lens when considering the results for North American classrooms, it seems an accurate reflection of what happens in most classrooms in North America.

For example, Nystrand (2006) has conducted multiple studies with various colleagues over the past two decades in North America and his research has revealed how students still "listen" to a predominance of teacher talk when they reach the middle and secondary levels. Although little research has been conducted on solely listening within primary classrooms, that which has been done has revealed an overwhelming amount of teacher talk (Nystrand). Further, children are expected to listen to talk and extract the necessary information without explicit instruction on listening.

Spooner and Woodcock (2010), who are both Speech and Language pathologists, attribute some of the difficulties children experience with listening in today's classrooms to the following: the constant availability of screen-based entertainment, changes in the way children play and learn to interact, increased noise levels in the home during the crucial time when children are learning to talk, and a reduction in the time that families spend talking and listening to each other. Specifically addressing the above difficulties and making intentional changes can support children as they develop and improve their listening skills.

Spooner and Woodcock (2010) have created a resource, *Teaching Children to Listen*, that provides practical strategies and games to explicitly teach and reinforce good listening skills to children. They define four distinct behaviours of a good listener: “look at the person who is talking, sit still, stay quiet so that everyone can listen, and listen to ALL of the words” (Spooner & Woodcock, 2010, p. 7). Along with providing a listening skills assessment rubric, their resource focuses specifically on each of the four listening behaviours and presents them through a series of 10 short games and activities that can be used to explicitly teach and reinforce the focused skill within the classroom. Many of the games are easy to implement with minimal materials.

Suzanne Truesdale originally conceived the concept of whole-body listening, which focuses on teaching children to listen to a speaker with multiple parts of their body, in 1990. Since that time, this concept has been incorporated within classrooms and improved upon to develop young children's awareness about the need to actively engage in listening, providing them with “tangible referents” (Barrick, 2000) of what it looks like and feels like to listen with the whole body. This concept acknowledges the need for explicit teaching and modeling of what listening looks like, along with discussion of the body parts involved. Expanding from just

listening with the ears, whole body listening has grown over the years to include ears, eyes, mouth, hands, feet, body, brain and heart (Barrick, 2000). A Poster (see Appendix A, PowerPoint slide # 15 for example) has been created that describes whole body listening and serves as a visual reminder to help young learners become successful listeners with this technique.

The following section discusses how children's opportunities to talk and listen within a classroom are affected by various types of teacher talk and dialogic approaches to teaching and learning.

### **Teacher Talk in the Classroom**

As indicated above, teachers often do the majority of talking in classrooms. This section examines teacher talk and ways in which teachers can use dialogic approaches to teaching and learning to shift their talk from monologic to dialogic.

#### **Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Initiation-Response-Feedback/Follow-up.**

According to O'Connor and Michaels (2007) and Wells (2006), typical whole-class discourse often involves IRE/IRF (Initiation – Response – Evaluation/Initiation – Response – Follow-up/Feedback) with the primary focus on eliciting answers and little attention allocated to the formation of connections and meanings. Wells (1999) describes IRF as a form of 'triadic dialogue' with three steps: an *initiation*, usually a question posed by the teacher; a *response*, where students attempt to answer the question; and *follow-up/feedback*, where the teacher responds to the answer. Many forms of IRF involve teachers asking questions to which they already know the answers and expecting students to produce the correct response. Because teacher feedback to this previously known response often comes in the form of "correct," "wrong," or "well done," there are no opportunities for discussion or alternative viewpoints to occur. O'Connor and Michaels (2007) describe IRE/IRF as superficial and monologic, a

discourse that places the teacher in an authoritative position. However, both O'Connor and Michaels (2007) and Wells (1999) note that IRE/IRF discourse has a place within the curriculum when reviewing or recapping previously learned ideas at the beginning of a new day or at the end of a thematic unit of study.

The F, follow-up/feedback, or E for evaluation, phase can provide opportunities for co-construction of meaning and dialogic interactions. O'Connor and Michaels (2007) discuss IRE with the inclusion of a fourth step, re-voicing, where the teacher evaluates the student's response through reformulation. The student is then given the chance to agree or disagree with the final explanation. Re-voicing provides opportunities for students to refine their idea beyond an initial response; students hear their ideas spoken out loud by the teacher and have the opportunity to take ownership of and extend their idea to ensure they have expressed themselves clearly. Although the teacher is still in a position of control, revoicing positions the teacher and student on more "equal footing, in co-constructing and jointly explicating an idea" (O'Connor & Michaels, 2007, p. 281) by providing opportunity for students and teachers to work collaboratively to build and extend understanding.

### **Uptake.**

The concept of re-voicing is consistent with teachers engaging in uptake – the responding to and following up of students' answers (Alexander, 2006; Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991). "There's little point in framing a well-conceived question and giving children ample 'wait time' to answer it, if we fail to engage with the answer they give and hence with the understanding or misunderstanding which that answer reveals" (Alexander, 2006, p. 25). It is not enough to repeat verbatim what a child has said; teachers need to provide wait time for reflection and extend dialogue between teacher and students, and between and amongst students to co-construct and

extend meaning. Through the use of uptake teachers can substantively engage their students in extended conversation.

Nystrand and Gamoran (1991) use the term substantive engagement to mean “sustained commitment to and engagement in the content of schooling” (p. 262). They collected data from 58 eighth-grade English classes in 16 Midwestern schools to examine substantive student engagement in classroom activities. Nystrand and Gamoran (1991) supported the use of teacher uptake and provided teachers with examples of how to incorporate elements of a student’s response into subsequent questions, noting that, “high-quality instructional discourse frequently manifests uptake because, like authentic questions, it accommodates input from students” (p. 264). Data sources included student tests and questionnaires, teacher questionnaires, and classroom observations. The findings revealed that substantively engaging instruction occurred in patterned ways across classrooms and had a strong, positive effect on achievement. Teachers who engaged in substantively engaging instruction were also more likely to use uptake in their discussions with both small and large groups.

Consistent with Nystrand and Gamoran’s promotion of teacher engagement in uptake, Alexander addresses both the need for and role of uptake in his writings about dialogic talk in the classroom. Alexander (2006) defines authentic questions as “those for which the teacher has not prespecified or implied a particular answer” (p. 15), questions such as, “Why do you think that?” and “How do you know?” Incorporating a dialogic approach involves the use of authentic questions, uptake and the flexibility for student responses to adapt the topic being discussed (Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991; Skidmore, 2006).

### **Dialogic talk.**

Unlike the IRE/IRF discourse discussed above, dialogic talk provides opportunities for teachers and students to listen to and share ideas with each other supportively, including the consideration of alternate perspectives. The simple use of dialogue in education does not make learning dialogic; “for education to be dialogic it is necessary that dialogue is not only the means of education, as it often is, but also an end” (Wegerif, 2013, p. 29). In Alexander’s opinion (2006), the interactive experience of dialogic classroom talk “harnesses the power of talk to engage children, stimulate and extend their thinking, and advance their learning and understanding” (p. 37). Alexander cites Wells, Vygotsky, Mercer, Barnes and Palincsar as scholars who have advocated approaches to dialogic teaching and learning using dialogue as an essential tool. As stated by Wegerif (2010), teachers are “teaching *for* dialogue as well as teaching through dialogue” (p. 18).

Alexander (2006) identifies five essential principles of dialogic teaching:

\**Collective* – teachers and children address learning tasks together, whether as a group or as a class, rather than in isolation

\**Reciprocal* – teachers and children listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints

\**Supportive* – children articulate their ideas freely, without fear of embarrassment over ‘wrong’ answers; and they help each other to reach common understandings

\**Cumulative* – teachers and children build on their own and each others’ ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry

\**Purposeful* – teachers plan and facilitate dialogic teaching with particular educational goals in view (p. 28)



In addition to these foundational five principles, Alexander (2006) discusses five types of teaching talk: rote, recitation, instruction/exposition, discussion and dialogue. Discussion and dialogue are most likely to meet the criteria of dialogic teaching as they provide opportunities for more interactions to occur and are less strictly controlled by the teacher. The strategies described previously by Mercer and Dawes (2010) to develop an environment of dialogic talk parallel Alexander's (2010) principles of dialogic teaching. In his publications, Alexander (2006) also provides a comprehensive discussion of justifications, principles and indicators for classroom use of dialogic teaching, including cultural, psychological, pedagogical, social and political justifications for the incorporation of talk in education. Alexander's international research on the use of dialogic talk in classrooms is discussed later in this chapter.

David Skidmore's (2006) work on dialogical pedagogy, which draws on Bakhtin's contrast of monologic and dialogic discourse, parallels Alexander's foundational work on dialogic approaches. Where monologic recitation is controlled by the teacher, dialogic instruction is a collective process where students and teachers address tasks together and "students are asked to think, not to simply remember" (Skidmore, 2006, p. 504). Similarly, Susan Lyle (2008a) claims that monologic talk "stifles dialogue and interactions between pupils and their ideas," whereas dialogic talk "creates a space for multiple voices and discourses that challenge the asymmetrical power relations constructed by monologic practices" (p. 225). Dialogic discourse removes teacher authority and provides powerful opportunities for extended collaborative talk.

Boyd and Markarian (2011) posit that a teacher can use both dialogic and monologic talk, as long as they have adopted a dialogic stance – a way of preparing the students to receive information: "it's not just how we say it, but also how we are predisposed to receive it" (p. 516).

According to Boyd and Markarian (2011), within a dialogic stance, learning opportunities involving engaged talk are scaffolded in ways to enhance student learning; “teachers adopting a dialogic stance encourage students to articulate what they know and position them to have interpretive authority” (p. 519). Through the examination of seven minutes of talk from a Morning Meeting in a Grade 3 classroom, Boyd and Markarian analyzed the talk of the teacher and his nine-year-old students for turn taking and communicative function. The findings suggested that although the observed teacher used didactic statements and closed questions at certain times, his adoption of a dialogic stance resulted in the conversations that occurred during the Morning Meeting being collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful, meeting all of Alexander’s criteria of dialogic talk (Boyd & Markarian). This observation reinforces the importance of teachers adopting a dialogic stance.

Although the research described in this section indicates that dialogic approaches and interventions ultimately lead to an improvement in oral language skills development, dialogic approaches are not ideal for all contexts. Alexander (2006) and Hardman (2008) acknowledge that in some contexts, other teaching methods may be more appropriate. Teachers can still engage in monologic discourse within certain contexts (i.e., quick review of concepts at the beginning or end of a thematic unit, listening to stories told by elders, etc.). Although “monologic instruction alone is not sufficient” (Wells, 2006, p. 387), monologic interactions do have a role, both within the school and home environments (Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Wells, 2006), building and transmitting culture and community values.

The shift from a strictly monologic approach to a dialogic approach can be challenging for some teachers and requires self-reflection and knowledge of what dialogic talk sounds like. Wells (2006) states that, “the single most important action a teacher can take to shift the

interaction from monologic to dialogic is to ask questions to which there are multiple possible answers” (p. 414). To assist in this discourse shift, Reznitskaya (2012) created a Selected Dialogic Inquiry Tool Indicator (see Figure 5) for teachers to use to become more cognizant of their teaching practices (usually via videorecording). The scale enables teachers to engage in self-assessment and reflection on a monologic-dialogic continuum. These indicators are useful for examining discourse patterns and the quality of talk within a classroom (Reznitskaya, 2012); teachers can analyze the nature of their talk along the continuum and set clear goals for improvement.

**Figure 5. Selected DIT Indicators**

Indicator	Ratings		
	Monologic 1,2	3,4	Dialogic 5,6
1. Authority	The teacher has exclusive control over discussion content and processes. She or he nominates students, asks questions, initiates topical shifts, and evaluates the answers.	There are occasional opportunities for students to freely engage in the discussion. These are rare and involve only a few students. Most of the time, the teacher controls turn-taking, prescribes topic choice, and reshapes the discussion to align with specific fixed content.	Students share major responsibilities for the process and substance of the discussion. They manage turns, ask questions, react to each other's ideas, suggest topical shifts, and propose procedural changes.
2. Questions	Teacher questions target recall of specific facts from the story. These are simple "test" questions with one right or wrong answer known from the story or other sources.	The teacher asks questions of mixed quality, including complex, open-ended questions. Open questions are often designed to "lead" students to a narrow range of interpretations of the text deemed acceptable by the teacher.	The discussion centers on truly open and cognitively challenging questions. The questions target higher order thinking, involving students in critical evaluation and analysis.
3. Feedback	The teacher uses short, formulaic, or ambiguous feedback. The feedback does not invite students to further develop their answers (e.g., "Ummm, OK, Tracy?")	The quality of teacher follow-up is mixed. The teacher often listens to and works with student responses, but occasionally misses important opportunities to help the group to advance their inquiry further.	The teacher consistently works with student answers to inspire further exploration. He or she praises or questions the process of reasoning, not the conclusions (e.g., "But how is cheating different from lying?")
4. Meta-level Reflection: Connecting student ideas	The teacher does not relate student answers to each other	The teacher sometimes misses opportunities to connect students' ideas	The teacher does not miss opportunities to make visible the connections among student ideas and prompt students to relate their ideas to what's been said by others. He or she often attributes student ideas and questions to specific speakers (e.g., "Bill, do you want to respond to Kim's example?")
5. Explanation	Students do not explain what they think and why. Their responses are brief and factual, consisting of a word or a phrase.	Students occasionally share opinions and provide good justification for them. Longer student responses may represent simple retelling of events from the story.	Students take personal positions on the issue (e.g., "I think", "I believe", "I feel") and support them with reasons and examples. They make elaborate, lengthy contributions, explaining their thinking to others.
6. Collaboration	Student responses are short, disjointed, and unrelated to each other. Students primarily "report" about established, known facts.	Students occasionally build on each other's ideas. The collaboration often involves sharing of similar experiences, rather than a critical analysis of each other's ideas (e.g., "This happened to me, too! I was visiting my aunt in Boston...")	Students engage in critical and collaborative "coconstruction of ideas". Their responses are "chained together", as they react to each other's ideas.

Source: Reznitskaya, A. (2012). Dialogic teaching: Rethinking language use during literature discussions. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(7), 446-456.

## **Dialogic Teaching and Learning**

Dialogic talk is foundational to dialogic teaching and learning and is grounded in a social constructivist approach (Alexander, 2006; Hardman, 2008; Lyle, 2008a, 2008b; Mercer & Dawes, 2008; Skidmore, 2006; Wells & Ball, 2008). The term dialogic teaching “reflects a view that knowledge and understanding come from testing evidence, analyzing ideas and exploring values [through the use of talk], rather than unquestioningly accepting somebody else’s certainties” (Alexander, 2006, p. 32). Similarly, Wegerif (2010) states that “real education is about understanding ideas, not just learning how to repeat them, and understanding requires dialogic relations” (p. 28). In a potentiating environment of dialogic teaching and learning, students are encouraged to assume a more active role in their learning, to agree or disagree and to explain their ideas and reasoning, while working together and learning from both their peers and teachers. Drawing upon the foundational ideas of Vygotsky and Rosenblatt, the teacher guides and coaches learners, becoming another member within the community of learners, while engaging in the co-creation of shared knowledge (Alexander, 2006; Skidmore, 2006).

Dialogic teaching is not a program, like spelling or math, but a framework of teacher understanding and beliefs about the use and importance of talk within a collaborative learning environment. Underlying dialogic teaching is a philosophical belief about how children can learn through oral language. Recognizing the social nature of cognition, dialogic approaches to teaching and learning involve a shift in thinking about the role of teacher and student talk in the classroom.

Dialogic learning involves students’ extended and supported use of talk (involving both teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions) that includes open-ended questions, reflections, extended exchanges of dialogue, authentic feedback, and uptake/building on the

ideas of others to collaboratively engage in knowledge construction within a safe learning environment. Reznitskaya's (2011) Dialogic Inquiry Tool (Figure 5) reinforces the importance of all of these elements from both teacher and students. Although the teacher facilitates the learning, s/he becomes the listener, the questioner, and a member of the audience as the students do the majority of talk to authentically create new knowledge. "If we want children to talk to learn – as well as learn to talk – then what they say probably matters more than what teachers say" (Alexander, 2006, p. 26). However, it is imperative that teachers model the forms of language they expect so that students grow to become more effective communicators. It is also necessary for teachers to provide appropriate opportunities for students, using a gradual release of responsibility model, to practice talk structures that are modeled by the teacher and reinforced by listening to their peers use them.

Boyd and Galda (2011) discuss communicative competence and talk in elementary classrooms with a focus on "real talk in real situations for relevant purposes" (p. 3). They describe a continuum for the function of talk from reproduction to transformation. As students make sense of new experiences and discussions evolve, students can move freely along this continuum through a process called language socialization (Boyd & Galda, 2011). In dialogic classrooms, students become socialized, learning how to use language to learn, while connecting what they know between home and school. Real talk, according to Boyd and Galda (2011), "is central to learning language, learning about language, and learning through language" (p. 22).

Within a dialogic approach to teaching, the teacher's role shifts from the 'giver of knowledge' to the facilitator of knowledge creation, remembering that "the greatest benefit of collaborative knowledge building is the reciprocal development of understanding between individuals and the group" (Wells, 2006, p. 415). Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning

can afford children with opportunities to learn speaking and listening skills, to gain confidence to make mistakes, and to reflect and evaluate when others are speaking. Alexander (2006) and Jones (2007) view mistakes as learning opportunities for children and note how “the making of mistakes in front of other children is intrinsic to learning rather than a matter of shame or embarrassment” (Alexander, 2006, p. 21). Through teachers’ use of uptake, and the collaborative nature of dialogic teaching in general, learners can embrace their mistakes as opportunities to explore and develop new understandings within a safe and non-threatening environment.

### **Alexander’s international research.**

Alexander, who is director for the Cambridge Primary Review, a group of educational professionals who do intensive enquiries into the future of primary education in England, discusses decades of research on talk within the classroom and believes that talk is both critical and essential for children’s intellectual and social development. Alexander (2006) emphasizes the complexities of dialogic teaching and states that teachers must first address the task of creating an appropriate classroom learning community – one that is collective, reciprocal and supportive (i.e., a potentiating environment). Although the creation of a dialogic learning community is ideal, Alexander (2006) notes that what matters most is “the quality, dynamics and content of talk, regardless of the way classrooms and lessons are organized” (p. 23).

In 2000, Alexander embarked on a comparative analysis of primary education in five countries – England, France, India, Russia and the United States. He aimed to use comparative education to drive change in English primary education. Across the five countries, Alexander engaged in extensive fieldwork within 30 schools. He observed 166 instructional lessons and transcribed six to nine lessons from each country for a total of 36 lessons. One of Alexander’s main goals of the *Five Countries* project was to gain information that could guide future

development and policy in primary education in England. His findings suggested that culture must be given strong consideration within educational policy and that classroom interactions on the basis of shared understandings and values are necessary. Although specific details about this study were challenging to locate, the findings from this ambitious, but well-known international research clearly informed Alexander's creation of the dialogic principles outlined above.

### **Dialogic approaches to teaching in science.**

Using Alexander's principles for dialogic teaching and a desire for shared understanding, research on dialogic teaching and learning has occurred across multiple settings. Within science classrooms, Mercer, Dawes and Staarman (2009) examined six primary and six secondary teachers within two lower socioeconomic schools in England to see how teachers used talk to teach science. Of the teachers who volunteered for the study, two were chosen for the final case studies as their use of talk differed and highlighted the variation that was observed across the whole sample of 12 teachers. The researchers made no interventions as to how the lessons on acids and alkalis and rocks and soils were taught or assessed. Data collection included video/audio recordings of three consecutive lessons, students' written work, teacher assessment data, and recordings of interviews with both teachers and students. Analysis of the data involved the use of Mercer's Sociocultural Discourse Analysis to identify processes of interaction. The researchers found that the teachers contributed approximately 85% of the classroom talk. Both teachers provided opportunities for students to talk and used questioning techniques to motivate and encourage involvement, but only one of the teachers used more dialogic approaches to teaching, particularly when using dialogue in pairs or small groups. That being said, even when incorporating dialogic features, neither teacher generated extended whole-class discussions that would be considered dialogic. Within comparisons of their 12 case studies, Mercer, Dawes and



Staarman (2009) concluded that children who were taught science with a dialogic approach appeared more engaged and motivated when their teachers provided opportunities to talk and asked open-ended questions. By expanding the number of teachers involved in the study, future research opportunities could provide for deeper examination of talk structures in the area of science. The potential for whole-class dialogic discussions can be seen from this research and requires further exploration by researchers using an intervention approach, where teachers are taught and encouraged to incorporate dialogic approaches to teaching and learning.

### **Dialogic approaches through the use of wikis.**

Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have also been used within a wiki environment. The research by Pifarre and Staarman (2011) involved primary students creating a dialogic space for deeper participation and contribution to a final collaborative writing task. Twenty-five students, 9-10 year olds from mainly disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds in an urban area in Lleida, Spain participated in 13 one-hour lessons. The lessons were organized into phases with exploratory talk being taught explicitly and encouraged throughout. The first phase was strongly based on the *Thinking Together* program and involved explicit instruction across three lessons about how to work on the collaboration process within a wiki environment. During the second phase and next three lessons, the students worked in pairs to research Mars. The students discussed ideas, negotiated information and created an initial text to present their ideas. The third phase involved 7 one-hour sessions where three pairs of students worked together within the wiki environment to write a collaborative text about Mars. Final data were collected during the seven weeks of phase three where groups were negotiating and creating their final argument. Data involved all contributions within the different spaces of each wiki. Two groups of six children were chosen as focus participants and their data were analyzed using

Mercer's Sociocultural Discourse Analysis and Wordsmith Tools, which searched for the presence of keywords that may indicate reasoning and collaboration. The findings from the research revealed that keywords were evenly distributed throughout the negotiation process within both groups and the most frequently used words were as follows: we have, if, but, we are, why and because. Because students' use of language helped them to open up a dialogic space for collaboration and provide time for reflection, their contributions were found to be longer and deeper within the collaborative text. Therefore, the researchers concluded that the product of the students' collaborative work was more than the sum of its parts and the collaborative nature of the wikis was an important factor in providing a dialogic space for this collaboration to occur. Results from this study promote the use of wikis to create dialogic space, and although it is an international study, results can be connected to classrooms in North America.

### **Philosophy for Children.**

Dialogic talk can be used to explore scientific topics, to facilitate the creation of wikis, or to promote philosophical discussions. Robert Fisher (2007) emphasizes the importance of developing dialogic interactions within classrooms to enable children to become critical thinkers, because "it is through dialogue that we develop consciousness, learn control over internal mental processes and develop conceptual tools for thinking" (p. 616). Fisher discusses how Matthew Lipman's 1981 program called Philosophy for Children, relies on a dialogical pedagogy because it emphasizes the development of critical and creative thinking through questioning and dialogue, between both children and teachers, and among children. Features of the approach incorporate the curious, collaborative, critical, creative and caring and are built upon a dialogic approach where children are encouraged to ask questions and be receptive to alternative viewpoints. The use of uptake is another strong component of the Philosophy for Children

approach as teachers teach children how to critically question and think about things they are curious about, while building on the ideas of others. Fisher acknowledges how the work of Alexander, Mercer and Barnes influenced the incorporation of exploratory talk and uptake into the dialogic nature of the Philosophy for Children program. Fisher emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence within discussions and how children need to be self-aware and able to self-regulate and use empathy in order to effectively participate within the discussion.

Negotiating ground rules, reflection of self and process, and the metacognitive process Fisher calls “me-cognition” (becoming aware of how we think and feel about ourselves) are critical elements of Philosophy for Children and essential components of dialogic teaching. Lipman’s program has been around for decades and is still used effectively in classrooms today with such benefits as improvement of student questioning and discussion skills, enhancement of student creative thinking, and development of student emotional intelligence (Fisher, 2007).

### **Dialogic reading interventions.**

Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have also been researched in relation to reading aloud. Whitehurst, Zevenbergen, Crone, Schultz, Velting and Fischel (1999) were the first to develop a dialogic reading approach for use as an emergent literacy intervention. Through a longitudinal study, Whitehurst et al. (1999) replicated and expanded a previous study that involved dialogic interventions at Head Start centers. This research revealed that emergent literacy skills of children from low-income or at-risk backgrounds can be enhanced with dialogic reading interventions. The participants in their longitudinal study included 280 children, all attending a Head Start program within Suffolk County, New York. Head Start is a funded program aimed to increase school readiness skills for those living below the poverty line. Thirty-seven classrooms (17 from their original study cohort; 20 new classrooms for the replication

cohort) were observed within 8 Head Start centers (four per cohort). Classes of children were randomly assigned to a condition, and parents and teachers were given training on how to read dialogically. The children within the intervention classrooms received a dialogic interactive book reading program both at school and at home. Children in the control classrooms received a regular Head Start curriculum. Baseline measures were determined using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and children were followed up at the end of Grades 1 and 2 and various standardized tests were used to assess their language and literacy abilities. Analysis of the data revealed that the results from the original study were successfully replicated as the intervention group performed better than the control group at both post-test and Kindergarten follow up. Although those in the intervention group performed better during Kindergarten follow up, results did not generalize to reading scores in Grade 1 or 2; these findings could be due to subsequent teachers' awareness and use of dialogic strategies.

Research on dialogic approaches that specifically involve the use of picturebooks and interactive read-alouds is presented below.

### **Interactive Read-Alouds**

Picturebooks are often read aloud to children in primary classrooms. Picturebooks are a union of text and illustration, where words and pictures work together to tell a story or to convey information. Arizpe and Styles (2003) describe a picturebook as a book “in which the story depends on the interaction between written text and image and where both have been created with a conscious aesthetic intention” (p. 22). Indeed, picturebooks are multimodal in nature as “the meaning of the whole involves the weaving together of multiple modes” (Martens, Martens, Doyle, Loomis & Aghalarov, 2013, p. 287). Picturebooks are classified according to their format and not their content. Therefore, different genres such as fiction, non-fiction, fantasy, and poetic

are found in picturebook format. Due to the multimodal nature of picturebooks and their accessibility to students of varying ages and abilities, they are invaluable instructional resources.

Studies have revealed multiple benefits of integrating picturebooks into a literacy curriculum (Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Hoffman, 2011; Pantaleo, 2007; Sipe, 2002; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Wiseman, 2011). From a social constructivist perspective, extended interactions around a shared text can enhance higher-order thinking because the interaction allows for the expansion and development of more complex ideas. Picturebooks can provide a platform for the exchange of stories and information, where students and teachers can effectively share their understandings and create meaning. Arizpe and Styles (2003) found that children could read the sophisticated visual features of text, even when they struggled with the written words. Insights from Martens et al. (2013) echo the findings of Arizpe and Styles that young children are most capable of reading and interpreting multimodal texts such as picturebooks.

The reading of picturebooks, a common practice in most primary classrooms, plays a role beyond basic acquisition of literacy skills when used interactively. However, one caution when reading aloud picturebooks is the delicate balance between the use of dialogic talk and reading simply for the enjoyment of books. One way to avoid confusion is for the teacher to set a clear purpose for reading and ensure that the level of talk that occurs during the story does not distract children from being able to follow the story.

When teachers read aloud to students using a dialogic approach, making their “implicit thoughts explicit through talk” (Jones, 2007, p. 569), they model proper pronunciation, fluency, pacing, and inner speech. Barrentine (1996) used the term interactive read-aloud to describe the use of questions throughout a reading to “enhance meaning construction and also show how one makes sense of text” (p. 36). Students are engaged with the reading process and have

opportunities to respond “personally and interpersonally with the story” (Barrentine, 1996, p. 38), offering spontaneous comments and interacting with each other and the teacher as the story is being read. During an interactive read-aloud, the reader of the text engages in explicit talk as the story is being read. The reader’s explicit talk can include asking questions, making predictions, connecting to other texts, or making inferences to interactively engage the children in an extended discussion about the book. During an interactive read-aloud, the children also ask questions and make connections to their personal experiences or other books. The use of interactive read-alouds embraces a dialogic approach to teaching and learning because it collaboratively engages children in reading, by asking them authentic questions, by allowing them to ask questions, and by including uptake and genuine extended dialogue. The goals of interactive read-alouds are to involve children in reading even before they are able to decode words, emphasizing how dialogue can develop and extend understanding.

Fisher, Flood, Lapp and Frey (2004) observed the read-aloud practices of 25 expert teachers and identified seven common components of an effective interactive read-aloud: 1) selecting text; 2) previewing and practicing texts; 3) establishing a clear purpose for reading; 4) modeling fluent oral reading; 5) reading with animation and expression; 6) discussing the text; and 7) connecting to independent reading and writing. After observing the expert teachers and identifying the common practices, 120 teachers were then randomly selected and observed by two researchers as they conducted a read-aloud with their Grades 3-8 classes. Observations were noted and compared to the read-alouds done by the experts. Analysis of data highlighted that most teachers were consistent in intentionally selecting texts, establishing a purpose for reading, including animation and expression when reading, and conducting book discussions. However, observed teachers did not consistently preview and practice reading the chosen texts, resulting in

less fluent models of oral readings. As well, connections were often not apparent between read-alouds and other classroom activities. By observing teachers against a common set of practices, reinforced by expert teachers, researchers were able to identify areas of need for future teacher development and inservice training.

Below I describe different approaches that can be used when reading aloud picturebooks to children, and describe some studies that have employed an interactive read aloud approach.

### **Reading aloud picturebooks.**

According to Wells, (1986) when “listening to stories read aloud at the age of 2, 3, or 4 – long before they can read themselves – children are already beginning to gain experience of the sustained meaning – building organization of written language” (p. 152). Wells (1986) states that stories “provide one of the most enriching contexts for the development of language, both spoken and written” (p. 203). In schools, picturebooks are usually easily accessible and are a good medium for initiating collaborative talk between children and parents and between teachers and children. Generally, picturebooks are used a great deal within the primary grades, especially in Kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms. However, according to the student interviews conducted in their two-year study on children’s responses to picturebooks, Arizpe and Syles (2003) found that children beyond the age of 7 believed that picturebooks were for only young children. The observations conducted during their study revealed how children aged 4 to 11 engaged in sophisticated reading of pictures and visual text in picturebooks. Indeed, picturebooks are appropriate literature for all grade levels and can be used across all curricular areas to enhance meaning making.

Although teacher read-alouds of picturebooks can reflect dialogic approaches to teaching and learning, teacher read-alouds can vary in their structure and style. Pauline Davey Zeece

(2007) reviewed three styles of read alouds: didactic-interactional, co-construction, and performance-oriented. Didactic-interactional is used for direct instruction where teachers probe for recall and literal information; conversations are teacher directed with low cognitive demands from the students. The co-construction style involves a collaborative approach, focusing on children's understanding of the story and their ability to make connections with the story and their personal experiences. This approach includes various interactions and joint reflection while the story is being read. Lastly, the performance-oriented style involves a more dramatic flare, with teachers essentially acting out the story with voices and props. Conversation about the book is used to make meaningful connections, but only once the book is finished and not during reading. Zeece's (2007) co-construction style of reading contains multiple features of dialogic teaching with its collective nature and focus on children's understanding through connections. The fact that children can ask questions throughout the story and jointly interact with the text and the teacher promotes dialogic engagement as well. The performance-oriented and didactic-interactional styles of reading are not very dialogic in nature, but as mentioned before, are appropriate within the curriculum depending on the purpose for reading.

Maloch and Beutel (2010) examined the nature of students' spontaneous contributions during daily interactive read-alouds. They also explored the role of the teacher in acknowledging, inviting, and building on these contributions. Over five months, Maloch collected data from a second grade classroom with 15 students. Data included observations, interviews with the teacher and students, and classroom artifacts (i.e., students' work, teacher notes, classroom assessments). Through analysis of data, six types of initiations were observed: predicting, observing, connecting, clarifying questions/comments, entering story world (where students relate to characters or act as if they are part of the story), and meta-processing



questions/comments. The first five types of initiations demonstrated how the students were engaging with the texts being read to them and were more likely to occur during pauses in the story. Analysis of data revealed three ways the teacher fostered student initiations: by establishing a low-risk environment where students felt safe, by fostering an active stance where students were encouraged to talk about the texts, and by responding to students' initiations with various techniques (validating/acknowledging, re-voicing, labeling their strategies, and reflecting questions back to the students). Through the use of these techniques the teacher was able to encourage and scaffold responses from students, "positioning students as more active participants in the reading process" (Maloch & Beutel, 2010, p. 28).

Hoffman (2011) and Wiseman (2011) each engaged in ethnographic research to examine the co-construction of knowledge with kindergarten children through interactive read-alouds that promoted "language and literacy development through interaction among students and teachers about texts" (Hoffman, 2011, p. 183). In both studies, kindergarten teachers used read-alouds and dialogic approaches to teaching and learning to create and reinforce higher-level literacy practices. Both studies (Hoffman, 2011; Wiseman, 2011) were founded on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional theory of reading, which, as described previously, are the theoretical foundations of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning within a classroom learning community.

Hoffman (2011) worked closely with a kindergarten teacher for one year to provide her with professional development and to design instructional supports to help meet the two goals of the study: to change the form of teacher and student talk from mostly IRE to interactive discussion, and to shift the focus of meaning from literal to higher level interpretive meaning making. The teacher purposefully chose books and read them aloud at least twice, working

alongside students through the meaning-making process and using follow-up questioning techniques to guide students into higher level, interpretive meaning. The teacher became part of the discussion, allowing for scaffolding through a variety of perspectives and interpretations. The teacher and researcher worked together on various occasions where they discussed instructional supports and how they could be used within the classroom. The teacher then attempted these strategies while teaching and these sessions were video recorded. The teacher and researcher analyzed each of the videos at subsequent sessions and used the data to help plan future lessons and strategies. Analysis of the data revealed how the children were “entirely capable of engaging in higher level literacy practices when their meaning making is [sic] facilitated by teacher supports and interactive discussion” (Hoffman, 2011, p. 184). Through involvement in this study the teacher became more aware of the benefits to her teaching when she incorporated interactive instructional techniques. As a result of teacher awareness and professional support, the teacher changed her behaviours and redesigned her classroom practices. Although the findings of this case study cannot be generalized, Hoffman worked closely with one teacher for an entire year and through this collaboration, they were able to illuminate how ongoing personalized reflection and constructive self-assessment allowed the teacher to make specific pedagogical changes to her teaching.

Wiseman (2011) also worked with a kindergarten class; her study involved 21 African-American children from a major metropolitan city in the Northeastern United States. The study spanned 9 months where Wiseman worked as part of a three-person research team who acted as participant-observers in a classroom where the teacher already incorporated interactive read-aloud techniques. During the study, the class participated in multiple read-alouds, following a structure that reflected the gradual release of responsibility model. On a daily basis, the class

engaged in an interactive read-aloud, involving whole class discussion, questions and connections with the story. Students then engaged in further discussion with a partner and lastly the children completed an independent writing activity in their journals. Data collection included field notes and recordings of interactions and responses; read-alouds were also recorded and transcribed. Secondary sources of data included student journals and informal interviews with the teachers and students. The read-alouds were transcribed and coded using NVivo software to identify emergent themes. Analysis of data revealed four major categories of teacher response: confirming, modeling, extending ideas, and building meaning. In this case study, the use of these specific response techniques led to a positive classroom environment where children's ideas were accepted and both student engagement and academic performance increased. Data analysis also reinforced that "for the young child, an interactive read aloud is an important method for learning about the conventions of text that ultimately lead to independent reading" (Wiseman, 2011, pp. 431-2). This case study provided for a close, in-depth observation of one teacher who incorporated interactive strategies (without manipulation of the researcher team) that resulted in a more positive classroom environment with increased student engagement.

Wasik and Bond (2001) conducted a study that focused on the effects of language acquisition during interactive read-alouds with 127 at-risk preschool children in Baltimore. Four-year-old children from low-income families participated in the research while attending sessions at an early learning center. Four teachers were randomly assigned, two to the intervention and two to the control condition where the same trade books were read to the students. Teachers in the control group were not trained in interactive reading strategies, but they read the same trade books for the same number of times as the intervention group. Teachers within the intervention group were taught specific strategies for reading interactively, teaching target vocabulary with

props, pictures and extension activities before and after reading the book. The teachers provided an interactive read-aloud experience as they explicitly used talk and engaged the children with the story during the read-aloud sessions. Children within the intervention group were also given multiple opportunities to interact with the vocabulary words through discussion and extension activities during center time. All of the children were pre and post-tested using the PPVT-III. At the end of the intervention, the children were tested using a receptive language measure and a measure of expressive vocabulary. Not surprisingly, analysis of the data demonstrated that the students who received a more meaningful, interactive style of read-aloud instruction performed better on both receptive and expressive measures of language.

Greene-Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002) also explored teachers' interactive read-aloud styles, focusing specifically on vocabulary acquisition in Grades 1 and 2 students. Thirty pre-service teachers were trained to read dialogically with children and participated in this study as readers. Three hundred and sixty student participants were selected from Grades 1 and 2 classrooms across five schools in the southeastern United States and randomly assigned to one of three reading groups. All of the students were read the same story during 20-minute sessions and re-readings occurred over three consecutive days. Two informational storybooks of the same length and age range were used. The children in the 'just-reading' group were told to listen to the story and write or draw a response. The children in the 'performance' group were allowed to ask questions before or after, but not during reading. The 'interactional style' group participants were encouraged to interact before, during and after the reading of the story. Data from 246 students were collected via pre- and post-tests, which consisted of multiple-choice questions on comprehension. Results showed statistically significant vocabulary gains and demonstrated the effectiveness of increasing the number of stories read and using an interactive reading approach.

A limitation of the study was the single method of data collection: multiple-choice questions. More forms of data collection (e.g., observations, interviews) would have provided a more holistic picture of the nature and effects of the interactive read-alouds.

### **Read Together, Talk Together.**

The *Read Together Talk Together* (RTTT) program by Pearson Learning (2006) employs an interactive approach to dialogic reading with the goals of expanding children's language and emergent literacy skills. When reading books aloud to children, RTTT involves children as active participants in their learning through conversation about books. Teachers or parents prompt children with questions, expand on their answers and encourage storytelling through a shared picturebook experience. The program is aimed to support children aged 2-5 years old and kits are available in both English and Spanish. Program kits, created for both home and school use, are available in two levels and include a program handbook, teacher training/parent videos and recommended trade books.

A Canadian study by Lever and Senechal (2011) used the *Read Together, Talk Together* program (Pearson Learning, 2006) to examine whether dialogic shared book reading was causally linked to the development of fictional narrative abilities among 40 English-speaking kindergarten students within a city in central Canada. Three researchers were trained to administer the dialogic reading intervention. Children were randomly assigned to either the dialogic reading group or the alternative treatment group. Within the dialogic reading intervention group, eight books were used from the RTTT kit. Pre-packaged dialogic questions were asked in addition to the spontaneous repetition, expansion and recasting of children's oral contributions. Students in the alternative treatment group participated in an early literacy study, receiving a researcher-developed 8-week phoneme awareness program. The intervention took

place within the schools in small groups of 1-4 children over an 8-week period. Students in the intervention groups received small group intervention twice a week for 20 minutes.

Pre-tests involved the children listening to the reading aloud of short picturebooks that featured one story grammar episode. The children were then asked to retell the narrative and then complete an original narrative production task in that order. Post-tests involved the children listening to longer picturebooks that included three story grammar episodes and multiple characters. These books were counterbalanced across groups for the order of the retelling and production tasks. After 8 weeks, the children were tested both on their ability to retell a story with appropriate detail, as well as their ability to create a story from a wordless picturebook. Fictional narrative ability was measured using the Edmonton Narrative Norms Instrument (ENNI). The children's retellings were audiotaped and coded for story grammar units. Analysis of the data revealed that dialogic teaching through the RTTT program promoted "more elaborate" story schemata that included "internal responses, internal plans and reactions" (Lever & Senechal, 2011, p. 17) with more detail about the characters, problems and setting. Dialogic teaching through the RTTT program also resulted in significant gains on the expressive measure of book vocabulary. The researchers noted the effect of dialogic reading on narrative skills was modest and that tighter controls and less variability in groups might improve effect sizes.

Blom-Hoffman, O'Neil-Pirozzi, Volpe, Cutting and Bissinger (2007) also used the *Read Together, Talk Together* (RTTT) program in their study that involved instructing parents to use dialogic reading strategies with preschool children. They recruited 18 parent-child dyads through their involvement with two community health centers in an urban Northeast part of the United States. The parents were randomly assigned to either the intervention or control group. All caregivers were asked to read with their child and were videotaped doing so for a baseline

assessment. Caregivers within the intervention group viewed a 15-minute RTTT video, which described and provided modeling of dialogic reading strategies, within a waiting room over three visits. As described by Blom-Hoffman et al. (2007), “the main goal of dialogic reading is for the child to become the storyteller and for the adult to facilitate, expand and respond to the child’s verbalizations” (p. 118). Caregivers were then provided with a handout and bookmark outlining the key strategies in the video. Caregivers within the control group were provided with only a bookmark entitled “7 Super Things Parents and Caregivers Can Do.” All children received three books at the end of their first visit. Second and third visits occurred 6 and 12 weeks after the initial visit where caregivers were again recorded reading to their child. The videos were coded and analyzed, looking for uses of dialogic reading strategies. The researchers observed a nearly twofold increase of dialogic behaviours in follow-up visits from the intervention group.

According to the researchers, viewing the short video changed reading aloud behaviours of the parents, and the changed behaviours of the parents subsequently affected the inclusion of structural components in the children’s production and retelling of fictional narratives during shared book reading. Further, the researchers found that all of the observed changes were still visible at the 12-week follow-up (Blom-Hoffman et al., 2007). This study supports the use of parent training materials that encourage dialogic reading strategies within the home.

The above research reveals the teaching and learning potentials of interactive read-alouds. When parents and teachers read aloud picturebooks to children using interactive reading strategies they engaged in dialogic teaching and learning. Through the use of explicit talk, prompts, and both authentic and probing questions, picturebooks can afford spaces for children to interact and transact with the story.

## Summary

As is evident by the literature review, a growing amount of research exists on the benefits of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning in the classroom. The literature highlights numerous theories that support and approaches that advocate for multiple ways of knowing and constructing meaning through talk. Overall, the research illustrates that when teachers make changes to the talk in their classrooms, including changing their questioning techniques, using uptake to expand and elaborate answers, and incorporating interactive read-alouds, and when teachers provide opportunities for students to engage in dialogic talk, they see measureable improvements in motivation, engagement and overall academic success.

In Chapter 3, I reflect on the literature, make connections between the literature and the workshop presentation (found in Appendix A), identify gaps in the literature, and address areas for further research.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Reflections**

Appendix A features the PowerPoint workshop “Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades” and Appendix B includes the accompanying script. As described previously, the overall goal of the workshop is to inform educators about ways in which they can begin to implement dialogic elements into their teaching practices. In this chapter I first describe the foundational visual organizer of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning and the decisions that led to its creation. I then organize the PowerPoint workshop slides into sections and discuss how the workshop’s approach, content and activities are consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 on talk in the classroom, dialogic teaching, interactive read-alouds, and the use of picturebooks in the primary classroom.

#### **Visual Organizer**

For the purposes of the workshop I created a foundational visual organizer to represent the essential elements of dialogic teaching and learning and their respective connections. Creation of the visual organizer involved many forms and drafts. The general classroom concepts of classroom environment and assessment are represented in the visual by the continuous shape of a circle; symbolizing ongoing, supportive and essential elements of the overall whole. Language learning involves a cyclical interaction between the child and his or her environment and the circle shape appears less rigid and more adaptive in nature. The visual organizer is used as an anchor throughout the workshop as each element is deconstructed and then reviewed as part of the whole. In the following sections I have divided the workshop to discuss the justifications and connections to literature for each section. The overall workshop was developed

using an interactive approach so that participants will be both learning about and through dialogic approaches.

## Background Information and Context: Slides 2-7

The image displays six presentation slides in a 2x3 grid. Each slide has a white background with black text and a small graphic at the bottom right.

- Slide 1 (Top Left):** Title: "What do we know about children learning language?" Content: "The development of children's oral language skills is critical to both their social and academic success" (Butler & Stevens, 1997, p. 214).
  - Language learning is a social process and the more children practice with language, the better they become at using language.
  - Children need opportunities to practice using talk with those who have higher skills and experience with the discourse.
  - Language affects cognition (socially through oral language).
 Graphic: A green key with the text "Language is the Key" on it.
- Slide 2 (Top Middle):** Title: "What do we know about children learning language?"
  - Explicit teaching of speaking and listening is required.
  - Linguistic competence - real talk for relevant purposes (Deyd & Gold, 2011).
  - Lev Vygotsky stressed the importance of supported interaction and social practices (i.e., ZPD).
 Graphic: A colorful graphic of two stylized human heads in profile, facing each other, with a speech bubble between them.
- Slide 3 (Top Right):** Title: "What do we know about children learning language?"
  - Exploratory Talk (Douglas Barnes)
    - hesitant and incomplete as speakers try out new ideas
    - constructs presentational talk
    - new knowledge is created through active construction of new meanings with peers
  - Exploratory Talk phrases (Ded Mercer):
    - "I think" "because" "if" "why"
 Graphic: A colorful graphic of two stylized human heads in profile, facing each other, with a speech bubble between them.
- Slide 4 (Bottom Left):** Title: "What do we know about teacher talk in classrooms?"
  - Studies show that typical whole-class discourse often involves traditional IRE/IRF questioning with the primary focus on eliciting answers and little attention allocated to the formation of connections and meanings (O'Connor & Michaels, 2007; Wells, 2006).
  - At least 45% of a student's day is spent listening, and yet only 2% of the population has ever received formal listening instruction. (International Listening Association, Imhoff, 2008)
  - So... how can we move into a realm of dialogic teaching?
 Graphic: A colorful graphic of a person standing on a globe with a speech bubble.
- Slide 5 (Bottom Middle):** Title: "What is dialogic teaching?"
  - Image of a teacher and students sitting around a table, looking at a large colorful map or poster.
- Slide 6 (Bottom Right):** Title: "Dialogic teaching is..."
  - Student-focused
  - Collaborative
  - Active and engaging
  - Purposeful and intentional talk for extended periods of time
 Graphic: A small version of the image from Slide 5, showing a teacher and students around a table.

“The development of children’s oral language skills is critical to both their social and academic success” (Butler & Stevens, 1997, p. 214). As discussed in Chapter 2, studies (O’Connor & Michaels, 2007; Wells, 2006) show that typical whole-class discourse often involves traditional Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Initiation-Response-Feedback/Follow-Up questioning with the primary focus on eliciting answers and little attention allocated to the formation of dialogic connections and meanings. Research by the International Listening Association and Imhoff (2008) revealed that children spend almost half of their day listening, with under 2% of the population receiving formal listening instruction. These findings further demonstrate a need for dialogic approaches to teaching and learning. Through the workshop, teachers are introduced to ways to create and engage in dialogic learning opportunities within their own classrooms.

Learning is a social process and “in social settings, both individuals and groups construct knowledge collaboratively with one another, creating a culture of shared meanings” (Palinscar, 1998). Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivist theory highlights the social formation of higher mental functions. His work on the zone of proximal development (ZPD) describes how learning should occur in connection to a child’s developmental level (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978), reflecting how children use dialogue with more knowledgeable others to collaborate and extend their ideas. These theoretical and conceptual ideas entail a brief synthesis of the information presented in Chapter 2 and although they provide background knowledge for the participants, the social nature of learning is enacted throughout the workshop as participants engage with the information interactively.

Slides 2-7 provide background knowledge of what is already known in relation to children learning language and teacher talk in classrooms. Definitions and principles for dialogic talk by Alexander (2006) are presented here with a comparative connection to current classroom practice. Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning encourage students to assume a more active role in their learning. Synthesizing the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, dialogic talk is defined as purposeful and intentional talk for extended periods of time that is student-focused, collaborative, active and engaging. As participants engage in talk with each other, they exemplify the ideas of Barnes (2008) with respect to exploratory talk as they test and re-form their ideas through conversations with both themselves and others. Mercer (2000) discusses the use of talk phrases such as: “I think,” “because,” “if,” and “why” to indicate the use of exploratory talk, while using the term interthinking to stress “the joint, co-ordinated intellectual activity which people regularly accomplish using language” (p. 16). Wells (2000) also argues for classrooms to be reorganized as communities of inquiry featuring an exploratory and

collaborative approach to teaching and learning, which I attempt to create throughout the workshop structure and activities as participants engage as a community, both as educators and learners.

Slides 2-7 are an example of monologic talk because I will be presenting the information without many opportunities for extended discussion. However, this context provides participants with an example of where monologic talk is necessary and fundamental for them to build a foundation of background knowledge in order to partake in upcoming dialogic conversations and activities. Throughout the workshop, teachers will be asked to assess their current teaching practices with a view to extending and adapting them to better meet the needs of their students in a dialogic realm. As discussed in Chapter 2, researchers and scholars have called for a shift in teaching and learning, with an increased focus on collaborative and substantive student talk in the classroom (Alexander, 2006; Barnes, 2008; Mercer, 2000; Wells, 2000). This approach is equally necessary for teacher professional development, when the teacher finds himself or herself in the position of the learner.

## Environment: Slides 8-15



**Supportive Environment**

Where do I start?

- Philosophical beliefs
- Shift in thinking

Using the T-Chart provided, take 2 minutes to think about some times when you felt comfortable sharing in a group situation and those times when you felt uncomfortable.

Scenarios where I felt comfortable sharing in a group	Scenarios where I did not feel comfortable sharing in a group

(Clarkson & Carr, 2010)

**Educational Learning Environments:**

- Prohibitive Environment
- Affordive Environment
- Invitive Environment
- Potentiative Environment

Invitive and Potentiative environments allow individual expression through participation in shared activities where both students and teachers take responsibility for sharing the power to lead and learn. (p. 92)

**Key Elements for Developing a Supportive Environment**

1. Provide small group opportunities or talk before whole-class discussions
2. Seek justifications and explanations of answers
3. Encourage children to nominate others
4. Model the language you expect to see
5. Negotiate classroom expectations collectively

**Classroom Expectations**

At your table, create some basic expectations that can be used today and within your classroom.

Use the chart (looks like, sounds like, feels like) for recording your thinking.

**Classroom Expectations**

- Curriculum Connections
- Gradual Release of Responsibility/ Scaffolding
- Explicit teaching/reflection
  - Role play
  - Fish bowl

**Whole Body Listening!**

Learn a whole-body strategy to listen with your entire body.

**Criteria for a Good Listener and Listener (Kindergarten to Grade 2):** (From Curriculum document p. 145)

**A good speaker and listener**

- maintain concentration during listening and speaking
- listen carefully to understand and respond to others' messages
- be attentive and respectful to others in conversation
- self-evaluate and set goals for improvement

**Listening behaviors:** (from curriculum document p. 145)

- make eye contact
- use appropriate body language
- use appropriate facial expressions
- use appropriate voice
- use appropriate tone of voice
- use appropriate volume of voice
- use appropriate pitch of voice
- use appropriate inflection of voice
- use appropriate rhythm of voice
- use appropriate tempo of voice
- use appropriate articulation of voice
- use appropriate pronunciation of voice
- use appropriate fluency of voice
- use appropriate coherence of voice
- use appropriate cohesion of voice
- use appropriate coherence and cohesion of voice
- use appropriate coherence and cohesion of voice
- use appropriate coherence and cohesion of voice

This group of slides describes and evaluates a supportive environment. Participants are introduced to the foundational visual organizer and its elements with a detailed deconstruction of the first element: a supportive environment. Within this section participants will use their previous experiences to recall positive and negative scenarios, helping them to identify and build on elements of positive and supportive environments and eliminate negative behaviours. Participants will not only reflect on previous experiences, but also share in a partner talk situation. Partner talk, rather than sharing to a larger group right away, provides a supportive environment for the participants. This step to building a supportive environment is equally

important in a workshop as it is in the classroom and is reflective of the creation of a potentiating environment described by Claxton and Carr (2010). A potentiating environment is considered the most ideal for dialogic approaches to teaching and learning as it “provides and develops individual expression through participation in shared activities where both students and teachers take responsibility for sharing the power to lead and learn” (Claxton & Carr, 2010, p. 92).


Throughout this section, activities were specifically chosen to include participants in the learning (as to demonstrate the sharing of authority of knowledge) and provide opportunities for them to use their current knowledge to expand and adapt their learning, and ultimately their teaching practices, while connecting their feelings and experiences with current research on supportive environments. Working together with a table group affords opportunities for the use of both negotiation skills and collaborative talk. As described in Chapter 2, Mercer and Dawes (2010) describe several strategies to use when developing an environment for dialogic talk in the classroom, including the setting of clear expectations and creating a positive classroom environment where students can personalize and take ownership of their learning, while becoming more independent. One particular activity supported by Mercer and Dawes (2010) involves participants taking on the role of the students to negotiate classroom expectations. Participants in the workshop will be asked to work with a table group to create classroom expectations. This activity is important as it provides an opportunity for teachers to experience the process of small group discussions, leading to further negotiation with a large group in order to co-construct a final set of classroom expectations.

Clearly connecting dialogical approaches to the prescribed learning outcomes (PLOs) for oral language (speaking and listening) is another important feature of this section that occurs continuously throughout the workshop. As teachers consider the implementation of these


practices into their teaching, identifying curriculum connections provides them with the confidence that these approaches are grounded and supported by the PLOs for Language Arts. References (whole-body listening poster, list of key elements, and sample classroom expectations) are also provided as tools that can be taken back into the classroom and adapted as necessary.

### Instructional Strategies: Slides 17-30

What is dialogic talk?




Monologic Talk



Dialogic Talk


Alexander's 5 Principles of Dialogic Teaching (2006)



- Collective** – teachers and students address learning tasks together
- Reciprocal** – everyone listens to each other, shares ideas and considers alternative viewpoints.
- Supportive** – once a supportive learning environment has been created, everyone can express their ideas freely and work together to reach common understandings.
- Cumulative** – teachers and students build on the ideas and concerns of each other, creating clear paths of understanding.
- Purposeful** – talk is planned and structured around specific learning goals.

Think of an activity you do in your classroom that involves the use of intentional talk.


With a partner, discuss your previous thinking and lesson. Work together to decide what steps you can take to incorporate the remaining principles into your lesson.



- Collective
- Reciprocal
- Supportive
- Cumulative
- Purposeful



Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have been used with...

- Science
- interactive read-alouds
- wikis for collaborative writing
- philosophical discussions (P4C)
- inquiry-focused learning
- children engaging in talk of any kind



Positive Effects From Using a Dialogic Approach

- Increased student engagement and focus
- Extended and in-depth analysis and discussion
- Decrease in off-task behaviour
- Development of metacognitive awareness
- Building of self-confidence
- Increased understanding of concepts
- Ownership of and excitement for learning

As the workshop moves from a focus on the supportive environment to instructional strategies, I return to the definitions for dialogic talk and emphasize how dialogic talk should be explained in conjunction with monologic talk, and as a continuum, not an either-or option. Monologic talk, as demonstrated in slides 2-7 of the workshop, involves one person, usually the teacher, talking. Students can partake in monologic talk, but it is not interactive and is usually more informative or presentational in nature. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, monologic talk plays an important role within dialogic classrooms and indeed, students' dialogic talk is better when they become better at monologic talk. Wegerif (2013) stated that monologic talk “should

not be simply rejected, but engaged in the dialogue at a higher level” (p. 30). Monologic talk is foundational to dialogic talk and as described in Chapter 2, there are places within the curriculum where it is appropriate for use. Dialogic talk does not mean that teachers and students are talking all of the time. There are still times when listening and silence is essential, but dialogic approaches to teaching and learning stress that when students and teachers are talking, talk should be collaborative, engaging and purposeful.

In Chapter 2 I discussed how Robin Alexander is well known for his work on dialogic talk, creating the 5 Principles of Dialogic Teaching (2006): collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful. In Alexander’s (2006) opinion, the interactive experience of dialogic classroom talk “harnesses the power of talk to engage children, stimulate and extend their thinking, and advance their learning and understanding” (p. 37). During the workshop, specifically on slide 19, participants will choose an activity from their classroom and analyze how it aligns with Alexander’s principles. Through self-reflection and discussion with colleagues, participants can think about their current practice and consider ways to incorporate and address more of the dialogic principles in their daily teaching, remembering that they are “teaching *for* dialogue as well as teaching through dialogue” (Wegerif, 2010, p. 18).

Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning are not solely used in language arts lessons. In Chapter 2 I reviewed research which revealed how dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have been used effectively in Science instruction (Mercer, Dawes & Staarman, 2009), during interactive read-alouds (Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Hoffman, 2011; Wiseman, 2011), with wikis for collaborative writing (Pifarre & Staarman, 2011), during philosophical discussions (Fisher, 2007), and basically during any time when children are engaged in discussion. Some of the positive effects that have been documented with the use of a dialogic approach to teaching



and learning include: increased student engagement and focus, extended and in-depth analysis and discussion, decreased off-task behaviours, development of metacognitive awareness, building of self-confidence, increased understanding of concepts, and increased ownership of and excitement for learning. Slides 20 and 21 provide participants with some of the contexts in which dialogic approaches have been successful, as well as a list of positive effects that have been revealed from the use of a dialogic approach.

**Instructional Strategies**

Types of Questions:

- IRE/IRF
- Open-ended
- Authentic

**Instructional Strategies** **Changing Your Questions**

Would you like vanilla ice cream?  
 Are you happy?  
 Do you enjoy your car?  
 Does your brother have the same interests as you?  
 Do you have a pet?  
 When is your birthday?  
 Do you like role?

**Instructional Strategies**

"The single most important action a teacher can take to shift the interaction from monologic to dialogic is to ask questions to which there are multiple possible answers" (Wells, 2006, p. 414).

**Instructional Strategies**

**What is the importance of structured talk in the classroom?**

Uptake is the incorporation of another person's ideas into your own (building on each other's ideas)


Ways to incorporate uptake in the classroom:

- Talking stick, ball, object
- Students nominating students
- Talking stems

According to O'Connor and Michaels (2007) and Wells (2006), typical whole-class discourse often involves IRE/IRF (Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Initiation-Response-Evaluation) with the primary focus on eliciting answers and little attention is allocated to the formation of connections and meanings. By exposing the participants to various types of questioning throughout the different workshop activities, they will be able to experience first hand how children may feel in a classroom. Slide 23 involves participants re-formulating closed questions in order to make them more open-ended or authentic. Through a hands-on table group activity, participants are offered the necessary scaffolding to practice this approach. Through

practice, participants are provided with immediate and formative feedback, thus providing an easy modification they can apply to their own pedagogy. Wells (2006) emphasizes the power of questioning and how a simple change in the way teachers approach questioning could stimulate a powerful shift in learning.

Questions may be used when teachers engage in uptake (Alexander, 2006; Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991), a process that involves the engagement with a student's answer, whether correct or not, into further discussion. Alexander (2006) also discusses the importance of uptake during classroom discussions. However, re-voicing a child's response is not enough; once provided with wait time, teachers need to extend the dialogue between teacher and students, and between and amongst students in order for uptake to provide for the co-construction and extension of meaning. In my opinion, uptake is often perceived as one of the hardest dialogic elements to implement, particularly with primary children. When choosing an activity to demonstrate uptake, I re-created a strategy I found useful in my own classroom. Participants will be given a question to discuss at their tables with little structure provided on how to organize their talk. After the discussion, participants will be asked to reflect on their group's organization of talk, use of uptake and expectations for speaking and listening. Engaging in a small group discussion and reflecting metacognitively to deconstruct the process will afford participants the opportunity to see through the eyes of learners. Participants will be able to identify how the talk occurred and then will be provided with strategies for incorporating these elements into their own classrooms. Ideally, by sharing my personal experiences with uptake in a kindergarten setting, participants will be able to visualize and comprehend how even young children can become metacognitively aware and thus validate the important features of the uptake process.

<p><b>Interactive Read-Aloud</b></p> <p>Interactive read-alouds involve the engaging use of questions and talk through a read-aloud to enhance understanding and explicitly demonstrate reading strategies.</p>	<p><b>Interactive Read-Aloud</b></p> <p>Fisher, Flood, Lapp &amp; Frey (2004) observed the read-aloud practices of expert teachers to identify seven components of an effective interactive read-aloud:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Selecting text</li> <li>2. Previewing and practicing of reading text</li> <li>3. Establishing a clear purpose for reading</li> <li>4. Modeling fluent oral reading</li> <li>5. Reading with intonation and expression</li> <li>6. Discussing the text</li> <li>7. Connecting to independent reading and writing</li> </ol>	<p><b>Interactive Read-Aloud</b></p> <p><b>Video</b></p>  <p>This video is an example of dialogic reading strategies using a video story. The same strategies can be used with a traditional story book.</p>
<p><b>Interactive Read-Aloud</b></p> <p><b>PEER CROWD</b></p> <p>Pause and Prompt Evaluate Expand Repeat</p> <p><u>Types of Prompts:</u> Completion Recall Open-ended Wh - prompts Distancing</p>	<p><b>Interactive Read-Aloud</b></p> <p><b>Research Findings for Interactive Read-Alouds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrated enhanced higher-order thinking and the expansion and development of more complex ideas</li> <li>• Students effectively shared their understandings to create meaning</li> <li>• Read-alouds increased student engagement and academic performance</li> <li>• Students performed better on both receptive and expressive measures of language, also demonstrating vocabulary and expressive book vocabulary gains</li> <li>• Improvement on production and retelling of fictional narrative</li> </ul> <p><small>Arigo &amp; Byles, 2015; Biles &amp; Byles, 2016; Fisher, 2016; Fisher, 2017; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2017; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2018; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2019; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2020; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2021; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2022; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2023; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2024; Fisher &amp; Frey, 2025</small></p>	

Once questioning and uptake have been discussed, I then focus on one particular approach that features dialogic teaching and learning: interactive read-alouds. In primary classrooms, picturebooks are often read aloud to children and this practice can play a role beyond acquisition of literacy skills when used interactively. In Chapter 2 I described how the use of interactive read-alouds embraces a dialogic approach to teaching and learning as teachers are able to explicitly model the use of questioning, uptake and inner speech (monologic talk) by asking authentic questions, making predictions, connecting to other texts, or making inferences. Throughout the reading, children are encouraged to ask their own questions and make connections to their own prior experiences or other stories providing for genuine extended dialogue. Participants will be reminded that one caution to keep in mind when reading aloud picturebooks is the balance between the use of dialogic talk and reading simply for the enjoyment of books. Too much talk within a picturebook read-aloud can deter listeners from

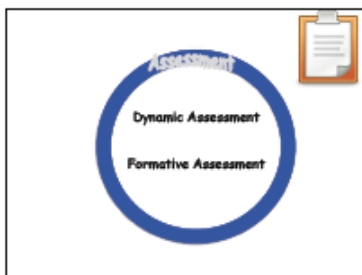
focusing on the story. Setting a clear purpose for reading is one way to avoid confusion and frustration in these scenarios.

Slide 27 presents the findings from the research conducted by Fisher, Flood, Lapp and Frey (2004). As discussed in Chapter 2, these researchers observed the read-aloud practices of 25 expert teachers and identified seven common components of an effective interactive read-aloud: 1) selecting text; 2) previewing and practicing texts; 3) establishing a clear purpose for reading; 4) modeling fluent oral reading; 5) reading with animation and expression; 6) discussing the text; and 7) connecting to independent reading and writing. These practices can be organized into before, during and after activities, with overlap of # 6 as both a during-reading and after-reading activity. As noted in Chapter 2, their research on expert teachers involved further observation of teachers against these criteria, whereby the researchers were able to identify areas of need for future teacher development and inservice training. By sharing these components with participants, I further provide opportunity for self-reflection of personal teaching practices.

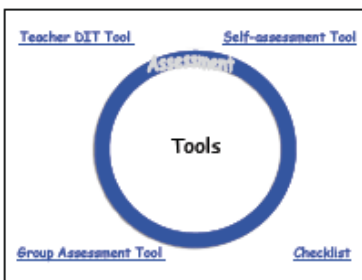
Along with research by Fisher, Flood, Lapp and Frey (2004), slide 30 provides participants with a brief summary of the research findings associated with the use of interactive read-alouds (Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Blom-Hoffman, O'Neil-Pirozzi, Volpe, Cutting & Bissinger, 2007; Greene-Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Lever & Senechal, 2011; Pantaleo, 2007; Sipe, 2002; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Wiseman, 2011). Providing research and justification to participants about these practices further validates teachers' choices and encourages pedagogical reflection. I chose to include a video in the workshop to model the diversification of content delivery that is possible for both classrooms and teacher development situations. The video presentation will allow participants to view the previously discussed strategies for interactive read-alouds in action, and examine the PEER and CROWD strategies.

The observation and discussion of these strategies will provide teachers with visual examples and a mnemonic to prompt them when reading or showing stories in their classrooms.

**Assessment: Slides 31-35 and 37-40**



Indicators	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
All connect what is already known with new experiences and thinking/ speaking and listening activities	All use speaking and listening to gain a solution/ thinking and play to develop thinking by identifying relationships and making new links	All use speaking and listening to develop thinking by making connections	All use speaking and listening to extend thinking by making connections
All ask questions to extend and clarify meaning	All reflect on their speaking and listening to identify their strengths and to discuss a teacher or good speaker and listener	All reflect on and assess their speaking and listening, by reflecting on their generated ideas	All use speaking and listening, by reflecting on and discussing peer and adult feedback
All speak clearly enough to be understood by peers and adults	All use a goal for improvement - making a simple plan to work on their goal	All use a goal for improvement - setting goals and creating a plan for improvement	All use a goal for improvement - setting more focused listening goals



Indicator	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Engage in discussion	Engage in discussion with others	Engage in discussion with others	Engage in discussion with others
Use appropriate conversational skills	Use appropriate conversational skills	Use appropriate conversational skills	Use appropriate conversational skills
Engage in speaker during discussion	Engage in speaker during discussion	Engage in speaker during discussion	Engage in speaker during discussion
Use various types of talk	Use various types of talk	Use various types of talk	Use various types of talk
Assess their discussion and set personal and group goals for talk	Assess their discussion and set personal and group goals for talk	Assess their discussion and set personal and group goals for talk	Assess their discussion and set personal and group goals for talk
Ask higher level thinking questions	Ask higher level thinking questions	Ask higher level thinking questions	Ask higher level thinking questions

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Talks to the whole class					
Talks in a group					
Asks a question					
Explains a reason					
Talks about a thought					
Talks to a partner					
My group talked well					
We could not agree					
We decided together					

Rating	Description
4	Very effective comments, opinions, solutions, or replies. Includes category 3 behavior with greater elaboration of reason, solution (e.g., comparing the alternatives, use and reuse)
3	Effective comments, opinions, solutions, or replies. (i.e., opinions with reasons), solutions with detail or explanation, generalization with reasons, comments with details
2	Simple comments, opinions, solutions, or replies not necessarily a complete sentence. In general, there are remarks or ideas, with no supporting evidence, examples, details, or clear ideas
1	Fragmentary comments being making an effort to do with the discussion or introduced into the discussion without context or explanation, may be possible or impossible to identify as one of two ways

- Checklist for Dialogic Talk
- What engaging DITLs do students?
    - use exploratory phrases (I think, because, I why) when sharing and discussing ideas with others
    - provide reasoning for ideas and responses
    - listen attentively using whole-body listening
    - listen carefully to and accept others' opinions and ideas (and negotiate viewpoints when necessary)
    - use appropriate conversational skills (i.e., turn taking)
    - engage in speaker during discussion (talking to others' ideas)
    - use various types of talk for different audiences and purposes
    - describe their discussion and set personal and group goals for talk
    - ask higher level thinking questions

Revisiting the visual organizer on slide 31 is important for participants so they will be able to make connections between their new learning and their previous understandings and beliefs. The visual organizer reinforces the interconnections among dialogic talk, instructional strategies and interactive read-alouds, based within a supportive learning environment. The representation and placement of the foundational element of assessment was essential within the visual. Assessment was placed in a circular shape, underneath the instructional strategies and within the supportive environment, to communicate its foundational and interconnected nature. I chose the shape of a circle again to represent the cyclical nature of assessment.

It is essential for teachers to understand the what, why and how of assessment. Jones (2007) supports the use of student and teacher reflection of process and product, as they both play a key role in the planning of and assessment of talk within the classroom. Various types of assessments are used for various purposes and it is important to understand the types of assessment that connect best with dialogic approaches to teaching and learning. I discuss two types of assessment with participants:

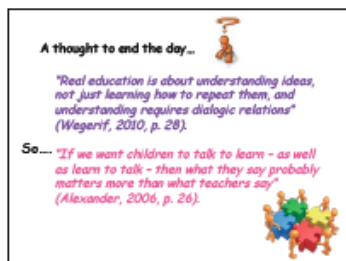
1. Dynamic assessment: interactive assessment that includes interventions to help teachers predict how the child will perform independently in the future. The most typical type of dynamic assessment involves a pretest, an intervention and a posttest (Vygotsky, 1986).
2. Formative assessment: assessment that occurs during the learning process to provide teachers with feedback so they can modify and enhance learning opportunities as needed for optimal student success. Formative assessment also provides students with opportunities to solidify their understandings and build upon their ideas.

As part of the discussion of assessment, on slide 32 teachers will be asked to work in small groups and brainstorm forms of dynamic and/or formative assessment for oracy that they

use in their classrooms. Teachers often want to know, “How can I make sure they learned something?” and this discussion will help them to answer that question while reinforcing the importance of ongoing and continuous assessment. Dynamic assessment, paired with ongoing formative assessment and reflection on talk, can afford teachers the necessary information to create lessons that help to develop children’s communicative competence.

As part of the discussion on assessment, the workshop re-affirms the connection to the PLOs by providing examples from each grade (K-3) and highlighting the metacognitive connection of oral language. Butler and Stevens (1997) assert that dialogic approaches to teaching can afford students with opportunities to “experiment with language in interesting ways and in doing so provide teachers with reliable assessment information” (p. 215). Both formal and informal assessment tasks are needed for creating a holistic understanding of learners, and therefore the assessment tools included in the workshop encompass teacher self-assessment, student self-assessment, group discussion assessment and an individual assessment checklist. The teacher self-assessment tool can assist teachers to become aware of their own dialogic discourse and teaching practices, as well as afford them opportunities to set personal pedagogical goals and develop a plan for implementation of dialogic talk in their classrooms. I chose to provide four examples of assessment tools to provide teachers who are experimenting with dialogic approaches ready-to-use examples. Each of these assessment tools has a different use and can be adapted to suit the needs of the teacher and students.

## Take Home Message: Slide 36



Before ending the workshop, I will provide participants with an opportunity to ask questions so they can clarify any concepts, extend their thinking on new concepts, and solidify the new information they have learned throughout the presentation. I end the workshop with two powerful quotes to synthesize participants' learning, and to ideally inspire teachers to take their new learning back into their classrooms in order to personally experience the positive differences that can occur when they embrace a dialogic approach to teaching and learning.

### Reflection

I experienced some challenges when I reviewed the literature and created the workshop. Since the defining terms for dialogic instruction are still fairly new, finding successful search terms proved to be a challenge during the research stages. It was difficult to find primary research that specifically explored dialogic instruction in primary classrooms. Although research on interactive read-alouds was more abundant, only a few studies were Canadian. Further research, ideally Canadian, in the areas of dialogic instruction at the primary level is important and necessary as it is more culturally relevant to Canadian classrooms.

As I stated in Chapter 1, when learning about dialogic approaches to teaching and learning throughout my courses, I knew that I wanted to focus my final project on this topic, as it seemed like a natural fit to my current teaching style with significant benefits. My goal was to create a way to share my discovery of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning with my



colleagues in an engaging manner. Developing a workshop, although extremely challenging, made the most sense and overall proved to be quite satisfying. Planning the workshop required me to consider the needs of both the teachers and students who would be engaging in these approaches. Creating a purposeful and engaging workshop that could appeal to primary educators (although it could easily be adapted for those teaching in intermediate and middle grades) required me to analyze and reflect on my own teaching practices. Careful consideration and selection of activities and resources to include were critical to the creation of a successful workshop.

My current job assignment affords me the ability to incorporate dialogic approaches in my own classroom, which I believe gives me a deeper knowledge base from which to deliver the information included in the workshop. By delivering this workshop, both within my current school and at the school district level, I will provide information and support for other teachers who want to shift their teaching practices and implement dialogic approaches in their classrooms. During the 2013-2014 school year, I will be taking on an extra role as the Literacy/Numeracy Mentor in my current school. This role will provide me with opportunities to share my workshop with my colleagues and to provide them with subsequent guided support as they incorporate dialogic approaches to teaching and learning directly in their classrooms.

Completion of this project has been a rewarding learning experience. Guided by the literature, my professors and especially my supervisor, I was able to create a learning resource that I am proud of. Through my passion for collaborative learning and student engagement, I hope to continue to develop my pedagogy and use my knowledge on dialogic approaches to teaching and learning to inspire both educators and students to take a more active role in their own learning.

## References

- Alexander, R. (2006). *Towards dialogic teaching: Rethinking classroom talk* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Cambridge, UK: Dialogos.
- Alexander, R. (2008). Culture, dialogue and learning: Notes on an emerging pedagogy. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in schools* (pp. 91-114). London, UK: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Alexander, R. (2010). Speaking but not listening? Accountable talk in an unaccountable context. *Literacy*, 44(3), 103-111.
- Arizpe, E., & Styles, M. (2003). *Children reading pictures: Interpreting visual texts*. London, UK: Routledge Falmer.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Barnes, D. (2008). Exploratory talk for learning. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in school* (pp. 1-15). London, UK: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Barrentine, S. (1996). Engaging with reading through interactive read-alouds. *The Reading Teacher*, 50(1), 36-43.
- Barrick, W. (2000). Whole Body Listening. *ADVANCE for Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists*. Retrieved from <http://speech-language-pathology-audiology.advancweb.com/Article/Whole-Body-Listening.aspx>
- Berk, L., & Winsler, A. (1995). *Scaffolding children's learning: Vygotsky and early childhood education*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Blom-Hoffman, J., O'Neil-Pirozzi, T., Volpe, R., Cutting, J., & Bissinger, E. (2007). Instructing parents to use dialogic reading strategies with preschool children. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 23(1), 117-131.

- Boyd, M., & Galda, L. (2011). *Real talk in elementary classrooms: Effective oral language practice*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Boyd, M., & Markarian, W. (2011). Dialogic teaching: Talk in service of a dialogic stance. *Language and Education, 25*(6), 515-534.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2006). *English language arts kindergarten to grade 7: Integrated resource package 2006*. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2000). *Primary program: A framework for teaching*. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education.
- Butler, F., & Stevens, R. (1997). Oral language assessment in the classroom. *Theory into Practice, 36*(4), 214-219.
- Claxton, G., & Carr, M. (2010). A framework for teaching learning: The dynamics of disposition. *Early Years: An International Research Journal, 24*(1), 87-97.
- Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London, UK: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Dawes, L., & Sams, C. (2004). *Talk box: Speaking and listening activities for learning at key stage 1*. London, UK: David Fulton.
- Fisher, R. (2007). Dialogic teaching: Developing thinking and metacognition through philosophical discussion. *Early Child Development and Care, (177)*6-7, 615-631.
- Fisher, D., Flood, J., Lapp, D., & Frey, N. (2004). Interactive read-alouds: Is there a common set of implementation practices? *The Reading Teacher, 58*(1), 8-17.
- Fumoto, H. (2011). Teacher-child relationships and early childhood practice. *Early Years: An International Research Journal, 31*(1), 19-30.

- Gee, J. (1989). Literacy, discourse, and linguistics: Introduction. *Journal of Education*, 171(1), 5-17.
- Granger, D. (2006). Teaching aesthetics and aesthetic teaching: Toward a Deweyan perspective. *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 40(2), 45-66.
- Greene Brabham, E., & Lynch-Brown, C. (2002). Effects of teachers' reading-aloud styles on vocabulary acquisition and comprehension of students in the early elementary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(3), 465-473.
- Hardman, F. (2008). The guided co-construction of knowledge. In M. Martin-Jones, A. de Mejia, & N. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 253-263). New York, NY: Springer.
- Hoffman, J. (2011). Coconstructing meaning: Interactive literary discussions in kindergarten read-alouds. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(3), 183-194.
- Imhof, M. (2008). What have you listened to in school today? *International Journal of Listening*, 22(1), 1-12.
- International Listening Association. (1996). *Definition of listening*. Retrieved from [www.listen.org](http://www.listen.org).
- Jewitt, C. (2008). Multimodality and literacy in school classrooms. *Review of Research in Education*, 32(1), 241-267.
- Jones, D. (2007). Speaking, listening, planning and assessing: The teacher's role in developing metacognitive awareness. *Early Child Development and Care*, 177(6-7), 569-579.
- Kress, G. (2003). *Literacy in the new media age*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2007). Thinking about meaning and learning in a world of instability and multiplicity. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 2(1), 19-34.

- Lever, R., & Senechal, M. (2011). Discussing stories: On how a dialogic reading intervention improves kindergartners' oral narrative construction. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 108*(1), 1-24.
- Lyle, S. (2008a). Dialogic teaching: Discussing theoretical contexts and reviewing evidence from classroom practice. *Language and Education, 22*(3), 222-240.
- Lyle, S. (2008b). Learner's collaborative talk. In M. Martin-Jones, A. de Mejia, & N. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 279-290). New York, NY: Springer.
- Maher, D. (2012). Teaching literacy in primary schools using an interactive whole-class technology: Facilitating student-to-student whole-class dialogic interactions. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education, 21*(1), 137-152.
- Maloch, B., & Beutal, D. (2010). Big loud voice. You have important things to say: The nature of student initiations during one teacher's interactive read-alouds. *Journal of Classroom Interaction, 45*(2), 20-29.
- Martens, P., Martens, R., Doyle, M., Loomis, J., & Aghalarov, S. (2013). Learning from picturebooks: Reading and writing multimodality in first grade. *The Reading Teacher, 66*(4), 285-294.
- Mercer, N. (2000). *Words and minds*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Mercer, N., & Dawes, L. (2008). The value of exploratory talk. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in school* (pp. 55-71). London, UK: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Mercer, N., & Dawes, L. (2010). Making the most of talk: Dialogue in the classroom. *English Drama Media, 16*, 19-25.

- Mercer, N., Dawes, L., & Staarman J. (2009). Dialogic teaching in the primary science classroom. *Language and Education*, 23(4), 353-369.
- Mercer, N., & Littleton, K. (2007). *Dialogue and the development of children's thinking: A sociocultural approach*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Moody, A., Justice, L., & Cabell, S. (2010). Electronic versus traditional storybooks: Relative influence on preschool children's engagement and communication. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 10(3), 294 -313.
- Myhill, D. (2010). Understanding language development. In D. Wyse, R. Andrews & J. Hoffman (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of English, language and literacy teaching* (pp. 216-227). London, UK: Routledge.
- Nystrand, M. (2006). Research on the role of classroom discourse as it affects reading comprehension. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 40(4), 392-412.
- Nystrand, M., & Gamoran, A. (1991). Instructional discourse, student engagement, and literature achievement. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 25(3), 261-290.
- O'Connor, C., & Michaels, S. (2007). When is dialogue 'dialogic'? *Human Development*, 50, 275-285.
- Palincsar, A. (1998). Social constructivist perspectives on teaching and learning. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49, 345-375.
- Pantaleo, S. (2007). Interthinking: Young children using language to think collectively during interactive read-alouds. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 34(6), 439-447.
- Pearson Learning. (2006). *Read together, talk together*. London, UK: Pearson.

- Pifarre, M., & Staarman, J. K. (2011). Wiki-supported collaborative learning in primary education: How a dialogic space is created for thinking together. *Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*, 6, 187-205.
- Reznitskaya, A. (2012). Dialogic teaching: Rethinking language use during literature discussions. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(7), 446-456.
- Rosenblatt, L. (1994). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. Ruddell, M. Ruddell & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 1057-1092). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Sipe, L. R. (2002). Talking back and taking over: Young children's expressive engagement during storybook read-alouds. *The Reading Teacher*, 55(5), 476-483.
- Skidmore, D. (2006). Pedagogy and dialogue. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 36(4), 503-514.
- Spooner, L., & Woodcock, J. (2010). *Teaching children to listen: A practical approach to developing children's listening skills*. London, UK: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language*. (A. Kozulin, Ed. & Trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Wasik, B. A., & Bond, M. A. (2001). Beyond the pages of a book: Interactive book reading and language development in preschool classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(2), 243-250.

- Wegerif, R. (2010). *Mind expanding: Teaching for thinking and creativity in primary education*. New York, NY: Open University Press.
- Wegerif, R. (2013). *Dialogic: Education for the internet age*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers: Children learning language and using language to learn*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogic inquiry: Toward a sociocultural practice and theory of education*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, G. (2000). Dialogic inquiry in education: Building on the legacy of Vygotsky. In C. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research* (pp. 51-85). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, G. (2006). Dialogue in the classroom. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 15(3), 379-428.
- Wells, G., & Ball, T. (2008). Exploratory talk and dialogic inquiry. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in school* (pp. 167-184). London, UK: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Whitehurst, G. J., Zevenbergen, A. A., Crone, D. A., Schultz, M. D., Velting, O. N., & Fischel, J. E. (1999). Outcomes of an emergent literacy intervention from head start through second grade. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91(2), 261-272.
- Wiseman, A. (2011). Interactive read alouds: Teachers and students constructing knowledge and literacy together. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 38(6), 431-438.
- Zeece, P. (2007). The style of reading and reading in style. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 35(1), 41-45.



## Appendix A

### PowerPoint Presentation

Appendix A contains images of the PowerPoint slides for the workshop “Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades.”

# Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades



By Deanna Callander



© 2013 Deanna Callander

## What do we know about children learning language?

"The development of children's oral language skills is critical to both their social and academic success"  
(Butler & Stevens, 1997, p. 214).

- Language learning is a social process and the more children practice with language, the better they become at using language.
- Children need opportunities to practice using talk with those who have higher skills and experience with the discourse.
- Language affects cognition (socially through oral language)



© 2013 Deanna Callender

## What do we know about children learning language?

- Explicit teaching of speaking and listening is required
- Linguistic competence - real talk for relevant purposes (Boyd & Galda, 2011)
- Lev Vygotsky stressed the importance of supported interactions and social practices (i.e., ZPD)



© 2013 Deanna Callender

## What do we know about children learning language?

### Exploratory Talk (Douglas Barnes)

- contrasts presentational talk
- hesitant and incomplete as speakers try out new ideas
- new knowledge is created through active construction of new meanings with peers

### Exploratory Talk phrases (Neil Mercer):

"I think" "because" "if" "why"



© 2013 Deanna Callender

## What do we know about teacher talk in classrooms?

Studies show that typical whole-class discourse often involves traditional IRE/IRF questioning with the primary focus on eliciting answers and little attention allocated to the formation of connections and meanings (O'Connor & Michaels, 2007; Wells, 2006).

At least 45% of a student's day is spent listening, and yet only 2% of the population has ever received formal listening instruction. (International Listening Association, Imhoff, 2008)

So... how can we move into a realm of dialogic teaching?



© 2013 Deanna Callender

# What is dialogic teaching?



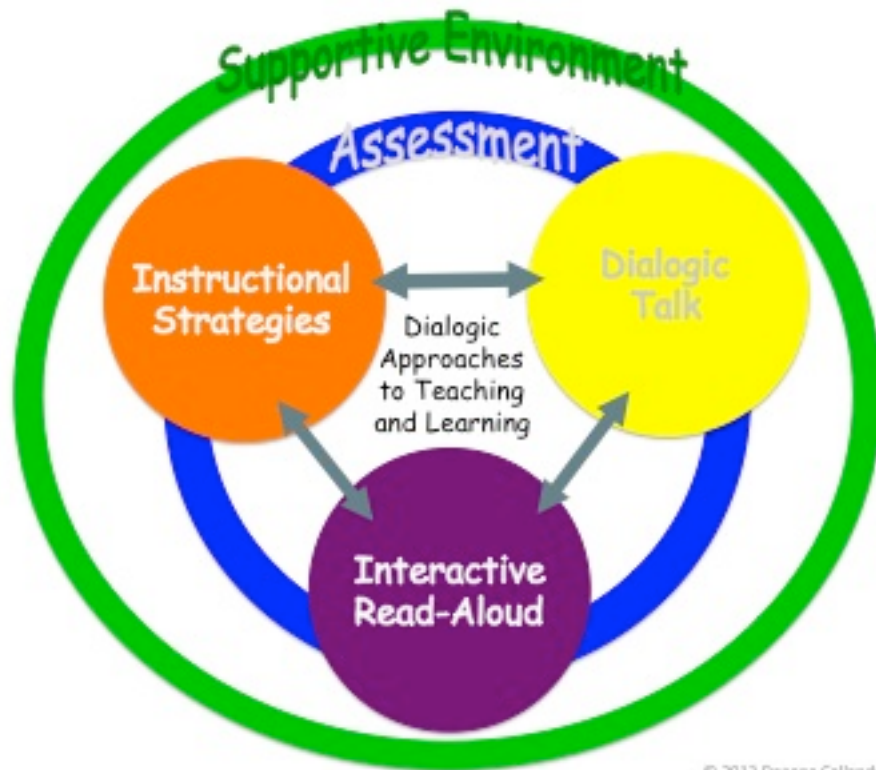
© 2013 Deanna Callender

## Dialogic teaching is...

- Student-focused
- Collaborative
- Active and engaging
- Purposeful and intentional talk for extended periods of time



© 2013 Deanna Callender







Using the T-Chart provided, take 2 minutes to think about some times when you felt comfortable sharing in a group situation and those times when you felt uncomfortable.

Scenarios where I felt comfortable sharing in a group	Scenarios where I did not feel comfortable sharing in a group

© 2013 Deanna Callender

(Claxton & Carr, 2010)

Educational Learning Environments:

Prohibiting Environment

Affording Environment

Inviting Environment

Potentiating Environment

Provides and develops individual expression through participation in shared activities where both students and teachers take responsibility for sharing the power to lead and learn

(p. 92)

© 2013 Deanna Callender



### Key Elements for Developing a Supportive Environment

1. Provide small group opportunities or talk before whole-class discussions
2. Seek justifications and explanations of answers
3. Encourage children to nominate others
4. Model the language you expect to see
5. Negotiate classroom expectations collectively

© 2013 Deanna Callender



### Classroom Expectations

At your table, create some basic expectations that can be used today and within your classroom.

Use the chart (looks like, sounds like, feels like) for recording your thinking.



- Looks like
- Sounds like
- Feels like

© 2013 Deanna Callender



## Classroom Expectations

- Curriculum Connections
- Gradual Release of Responsibility/  
Scaffolding
- Explicit teaching/reflection
  - Role play
  - Fish bowl

© 2013 Deanna Callender



**Criteria for a Good Speaker and Listener (Kindergarten to Grade 3):**  
(BC Min of Ed., IRP, 2006, p. 105)

*A good speaker and listener*

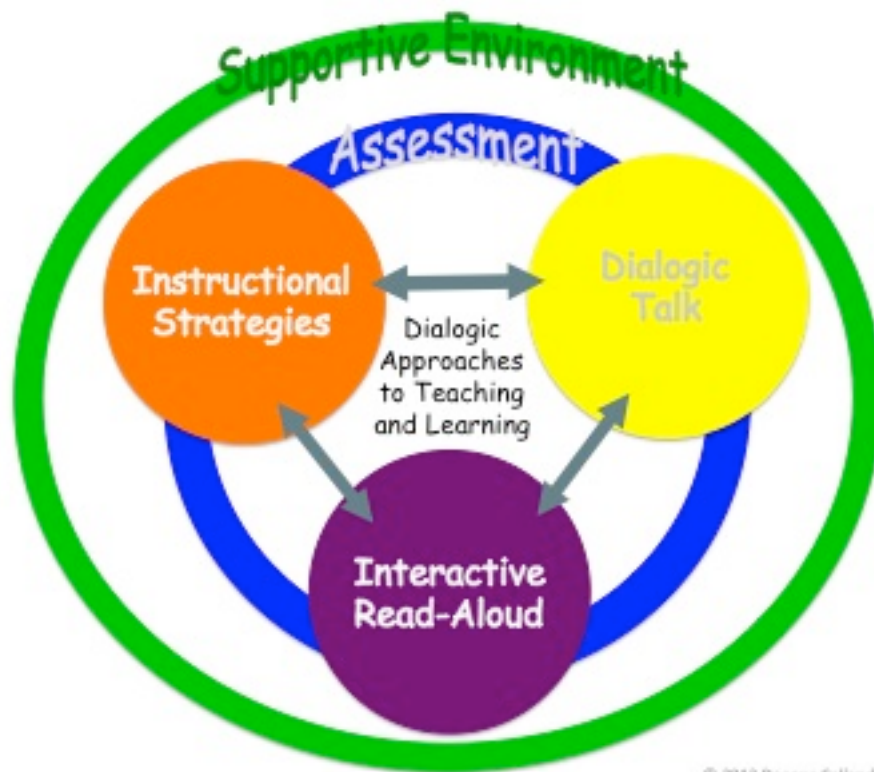
- maintains concentration during listening and speaking
- listens carefully to understand and respond to others' messages
- is attentive and respectful to others in conversation
- self-evaluates and sets goals for improvement

**Listening Outcomes:**

Kindergarten:  
A4 demonstrate being a good listener for a sustained period of time  
Grades 1 and 2:  
A1 use speaking and listening to interact with others  
A3 listen for a variety of purposes and demonstrate comprehension  
Grade 3:  
A3 listen purposefully to understand ideas and information

© 2013 Deanna Callender





© 2013 Deanna Callender



What is dialogic talk?



© 2013 Deanna Callender



### Alexander's 5 Principles of Dialogic Teaching (2006)

- Collective - teachers and students address learning tasks together
- Reciprocal - everyone listens to each other, shares ideas and considers alternative viewpoints
- Supportive - once a supportive learning environment has been created, everyone can express their ideas freely and work together to reach common understandings
- Cumulative - teachers and students build on the ideas and answers of each other, creating clear paths of understanding
- Purposeful - talk is planned and structured around specific learning goals

© 2013 Deanna Callender

Think of an activity you do in your classroom that involves the use of intentional talk.



With a partner, discuss your previous thinking and lesson. Work together to decide what steps you can take to incorporate the remaining principles into your lesson.

Collective

Reciprocal

Supportive

Cumulative

Purposeful

© 2013 Deanna Callender

Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have been used with...

- Science
- interactive read-alouds
- wikis for collaborative writing
- philosophical discussions (P4C)
- inquiry-focused learning
- children engaging in talk of any kind



## Positive Effects From Using a Dialogic Approach

- Increased student engagement and focus
- Extended and in-depth analysis and discussion
- Decrease in off-task behaviours
- Development of metacognitive awareness
- Building of self-confidence
- Increased understanding of concepts
- Increased ownership of and excitement for learning



© 2013 Deanna Callender



## Instructional Strategies



### Types of Questions:

- IRE/IRF
- Open-ended
- Authentic

© 2013 Deanna Callender



## Instructional Strategies

### Changing Your Questions



Would you like vanilla ice cream?

Are you happy?

Do you enjoy your car?

Does your brother have the same interests as you?

Do you have a pet?

When is your birthday?

Do you like rain?

What is your favourite flavour of ice cream and why?

What are some of the things that bring you the most joy?

Why did you decide to purchase a Volvo?

What interests do you and your brother share?

What is your pet like?

How do you like to celebrate your birthday?

Do you like rain and what do you usually do during rain storms?

© 2013 Deanna Callender

## Instructional Strategies

"The single most important action a teacher can take to shift the interaction from monologic to dialogic is to ask questions to which there are multiple possible answers" (Wells, 2006, p. 414).



© 2013 Deanna Callender

## Instructional Strategies

What is the importance of structured talk in the classroom?



Uptake is the incorporation of another person's ideas into your own (building on each other's ideas)

Ways to incorporate uptake in the classroom:

- Talking stick, ball, object
- Students nominating students
- Talking stems

© 2013 Deanna Callender

## Interactive Read-Aloud

Interactive read-alouds involve the engaging use of questions and talk through a read-aloud to enhance understanding and explicitly demonstrate reading strategies.

© 2013 Deanna Callender

## Interactive Read-Aloud

Fisher, Flood, Lapp and Frey (2004) observed the read-aloud practices of expert teachers to identify seven components of an effective interactive read-aloud:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
|               | 1. <b>Selecting text</b>                                |
| <b>Before</b> | 2. <b>Previewing and practicing of reading text</b>     |
|               | 3. <b>Establishing a clear purpose for reading</b>      |
|               | 4. <b>Modeling fluent oral reading</b>                  |
| <b>During</b> | 5. <b>Reading with animation and expression</b>         |
|               | 6. <b>Discussing the text</b>                           |
| <b>After</b>  | 7. <b>Connecting to independent reading and writing</b> |

© 2013 Deanna Callender





Interactive  
Read-Aloud



## Video

This video is an example of dialogic reading strategies using a video story. The same strategies can be used with a traditional story book.

© 2013 Deanna Callender



Interactive  
Read-Aloud

## PEER

## CROWD

Pause and Prompt  
Evaluate  
Expand  
Repeat

### Types of Prompts:

Completion  
Recall  
Open-ended  
Wh - prompts  
Distancing

© 2013 Deanna Callender

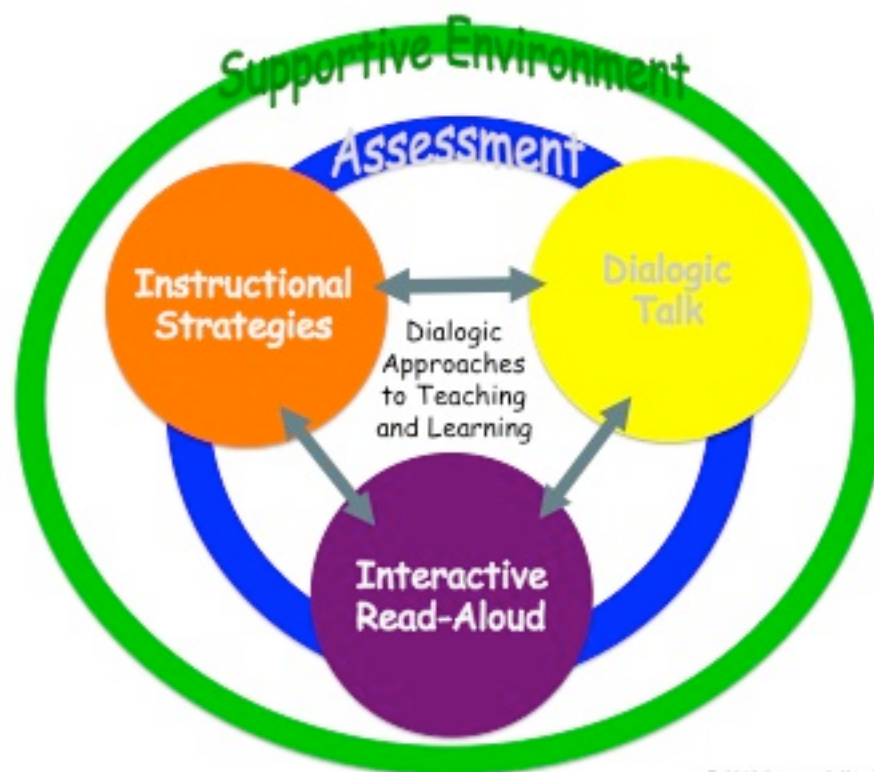
## Interactive Read-Aloud

### Research Findings for Interactive Read-Alouds

- Students demonstrated enhanced higher-order thinking and the expansion and development of more complex ideas
- Students effectively shared their understandings to create meaning
- Read-alouds increased student engagement and academic performance
- Students performed better on both receptive and expressive measures of language, also demonstrating vocabulary and expressive book vocabulary gains
- Improvement on production and retelling of fictional narrative

Anizpe & Styles, 2003; Blom-Hoffman, O'Neil-Pirozzi, Volpe, Cutting & Bissinger, 2007; Greene-Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Lever & Senechal, 2011; Pantaleo, 2007; Sipe, 2002; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Wiseman, 2011.

© 2013 Deanna Callender



© 2013 Deanna Callender





© 2013 Deanna Callender

Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
A8 connect what is already known with new experiences during speaking and listening activities	A9 use speaking and listening in group activities (including creative exploration and play) to develop thinking by identifying relationships and acquiring new ideas	A9 use speaking and listening to develop thinking, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– acquiring new ideas</li> <li>– making connections</li> <li>– inquiring</li> <li>– comparing and contrasting</li> <li>– summarizing</li> </ul>	A9 use speaking and listening to extend thinking, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– acquiring new ideas</li> <li>– making connections</li> <li>– inquiring</li> <li>– comparing and contrasting</li> <li>– summarizing</li> </ul>
A9 ask questions to construct and clarify meaning	A10 reflect on their speaking and listening to identify their strengths and to discuss attributes of good speakers and listeners	A10 reflect on and assess their speaking and listening, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– referring to class-generated criteria</li> <li>– setting a goal for improvement</li> <li>– making a simple plan to work on their goal</li> </ul>	A10 reflect on and assess their speaking and listening, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– referring to class-generated criteria</li> <li>– reflecting on and discussing peer and adult feedback</li> <li>– setting goals and creating a plan for improvement</li> <li>– taking steps toward achieving goals</li> </ul>
A11 speak clearly enough to be understood by peers and adults			

© 2013 Deanna Callender

Teacher DIT Tool

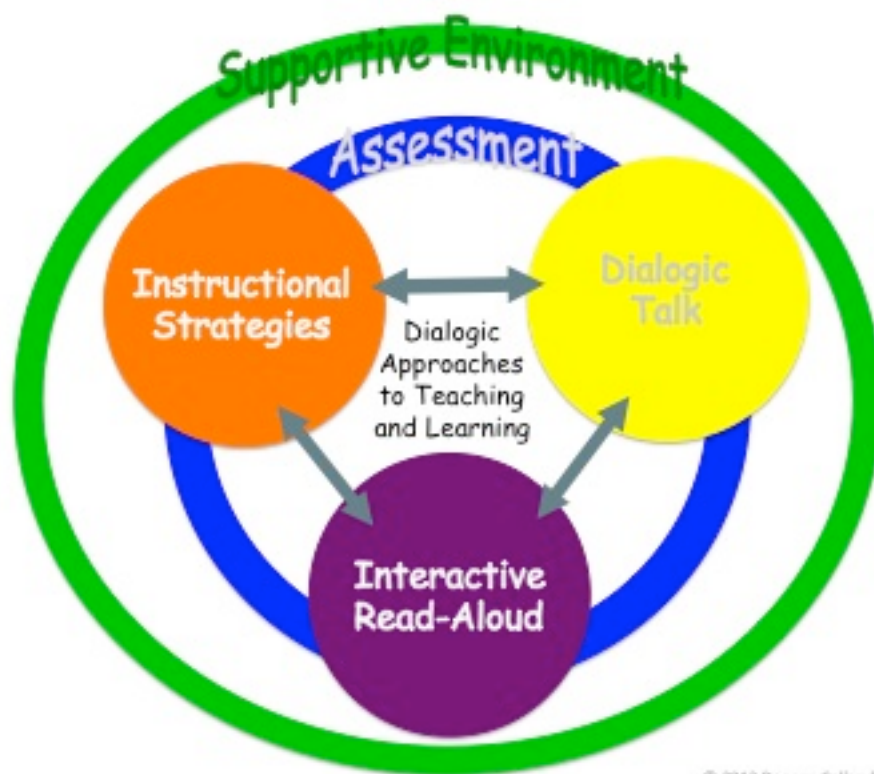
Self-assessment Tool



Group Assessment Tool

Checklist

© 2013 Deanna Callender



© 2013 Deanna Callender

A thought to end the day...



*"Real education is about understanding ideas, not just learning how to repeat them, and understanding requires dialogic relations" (Wegerif, 2010, p. 28).*

So.... *"If we want children to talk to learn - as well as learn to talk - then what they say probably matters more than what teachers say" (Alexander, 2006, p. 26).*



© 2013 Deanna Callender

Selected DIT Indicators

Indicator	Rating		
	Monologic 1-2	1-4	Dialogic 5-6
1. Authority	The teacher has exclusive control over discussion content and processes. She or he nominates students, asks questions, initiates topical shifts, and evaluates the answers.	There are occasional opportunities for students to freely engage in the discussion. There are rare and involve only a few students. Most of the time, the teacher controls turn-taking, prescribes topic choice, and reshapes the discussion to align with specific fixed content.	Students share major responsibility for the process and substance of the discussion. They manage turns, ask questions, react to each other's ideas, suggest topical shifts, and propose procedural changes.
2. Questions	Teacher questions target recall of specific facts from the story. There are simple "yes" questions with one right or wrong answer known from the story or other sources.	The teacher asks questions of mixed quality, including complex, open-ended questions. Open questions are often designed to "lead" students to a narrow range of interpretations of the text deemed acceptable by the teacher.	The discussion centers on truly open and cognitively challenging questions. The questions target higher order thinking, involving students in critical evaluation and analysis.
3. Feedback	The teacher uses short, formulaic, or ambiguous feedback. The feedback does not invite students to further develop their answers (e.g., "Umhm, OK, Tracy?").	The quality of teacher follow-up is mixed. The teacher often listens to and works with student responses, but occasionally misses important opportunities to help the group to advance their inquiry further.	The teacher consistently works with student answers to inspire further exploration. He or she probes or questions the process of reasoning, not the conclusions (e.g., "That looks a convincing difference from being?").
4. Meta-level Reflection: Connecting student ideas	The teacher does not relate student answers to each other.	The teacher sometimes misses opportunities to connect students' ideas.	The teacher does not miss opportunities to make visible the connections among student ideas and prompt students to relate their ideas to what's been said by others. He or she often attributes student ideas and questions to specific speakers (e.g., "Bill, do you want to respond to Kim's example?").
5. Explanation	Students do not explain what they think and why. Their responses are local and factual, consisting of a word or a phrase.	Students occasionally share opinions and provide good justification for them. Longer student responses may represent simple retelling of events from the story.	Students take personal positions on the issue (e.g., "I think", "I believe", "I feel") and suggest them with reasons and examples. They make elaborate, lengthy contributions, explaining their thinking to others.
6. Collaboration	Student responses are short, disjointed, and unrelated to each other. Students primarily "report" about established, known facts.	Students occasionally build on each other's ideas. The collaboration often involves sharing of similar experiences, rather than a critical analysis of each other's ideas (e.g., "This happened to me, too! I was visiting my aunt in Berlin...").	Students engage in critical and collaborative "reconstruction of ideas". Their responses are "chained together", as they react to each other's ideas.

Source: Keritskaya, A. (2012). Dialogic teaching: Rethinking language use during literature discussions. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(7), 446-456.



© 2013 Deanna Callender

Name: _____		Start Date: _____			
Talk Box Lesson Numbers					
Talk Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
I talked to the whole class					
I talked in a group					
I asked a question					
I answered a question					
I gave a reason					
I said what I thought					
I listened carefully					
My group talked well					
We could not agree					
We decided together					

Source: Dawes, L. & Sama, C. (2004). *Talk box: Speaking and listening activities for learning at key stage 1*. London, UK: David Fulton.



© 2013 Deanna Callender

#### Rating Scale for Evaluating Group Discussions

Rating	Descriptor
	Quality and Quantity of Information
4	<i>Very elaborate</i> comments, opinions, solutions, or replies. Includes category 3 below with greater elaboration of reason, solution (eg., weighing the alternatives, pro and cons).
3	<i>Elaborated</i> comments, opinions, solutions, or replies; i.e., opinions with reason(s), solution with detail or explanation, generalization with reason(s), comments with details.
2	<i>Simple</i> comments, opinions, solutions, or replies; not necessarily a complete sentence. In general, these are remarks or ideas, with no supporting evidence, examples, details, or illustrations.
1	<i>Irrelevant</i> comments having nothing or little to do with the discussion or introduced into the discussion without context or explanation; may be complete or incomplete sentences or one or two words.

Source: Butler, F., & Stevens, R. (1997). Oral language assessment in the classroom. *Theory into Practice*, 36(4), 214-219.



© 2013 Deanna Callender

## Checklist for Dialogic Talk

When engaging in talk, the student:

- ✓ uses exploratory phrases (I think, because, if, why) when sharing and discussing ideas with others
- ✓ provides reasoning for ideas and responses
- ✓ listens attentively using whole-body listening
- ✓ listens carefully to and accepts others' opinions and ideas (and negotiates viewpoints when necessary)
- ✓ uses appropriate conversational skills (i.e., turn taking)
- ✓ engages in uptake during discussions (building on others' ideas)
- ✓ uses various types of talk for different audiences and purposes
- ✓ describes their discussions and sets personal and group goals for talk
- ✓ asks higher level thinking questions



## Appendix B

### Script

Appendix B contains the Script to accompany the PowerPoint workshop “Dialogic Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Primary Grades.”

#### Slide 1: Title page

#### Slide 2: Context: What do we know about children learning language?

Script	<p>The development of children’s oral language skills is critical to both their social and academic success.</p> <p>Before discussing dialogic approaches to teaching and learning, we need to set a context for learning, looking at what we already know about how children learn language and why that’s important.</p> <p>Language learning is a social process and the more children practice with language, the better they become at using language. Children need opportunities to practice using talk with those who have more developed skills and experience with the discourse so they can see the language skills modeled correctly and assimilate them into use through language socialization. As described by Vygotsky, optimal learning occurs when children are working within their zone of proximal development. Such an opportunity can be provided when children interact with another person or people whose oral language skills are at a slightly higher level of development than their own.</p> <p>And as we all know, language affects cognition (socially through oral language) so emphasizing the importance of talk and focusing on making improvements to talk in the classroom will ultimately improve cognition.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	By providing a background of what is known and setting the stage for talk, I provide a basis for developing the dialogic approaches to teaching and learning.

#### Slides 3/4: Context: What do we know about children learning language?

Script	It cannot be assumed that children come to school with the skills needed to be good speakers and good listeners. Therefore, teachers need to explicitly teach some of these skills in both small groups and whole-class settings to build students’ linguistic competence, which means their understanding and use of language, as well as their communicative competence. Communicative competence is when children are able to
--------	--

	<p>use their language skills effectively with a variety of people, for a variety of purposes. It involves the use of real talk for relevant and multiple purposes.</p> <p>Lev Vygotsky stressed the importance of supported interactions and scaffolding to support learners through the social process of language learning.</p> <p>In school we want to provide students with opportunities to engage in exploratory talk. Douglas Barnes uses the term exploratory talk, in contrast with presentational talk, to describe talk that is hesitant and incomplete as speakers try out new ideas and create new knowledge through active construction of meanings with their peers.</p> <p>Neil Mercer identifies talk phrases such as: “I think,” “because,” “if,” and “why” to indicate the use of exploratory talk.</p> <p>Presentational talk is when a speaker presents information to an audience. Students are often required to engage in presentational talk through oral presentations, giving directions, book reviews, etc. There needs to be opportunities for exploratory talk where students can use prior knowledge in discussions and create new sources of information.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	These slides expand participants’ background knowledge.

### Slide 5: Context: What do we know about teacher talk in classrooms?

Script	<p>How much time do you think children spend listening each day? (ask for a few responses)</p> <p>Many of you may be surprised to know that children spend almost half of their day listening to us talk. With that in mind, consider how often we explicitly teach children <i>how</i> to listen.</p> <p>Typical classroom discourse often involves traditional Initiation-Response-Feedback questioning with the primary focus on eliciting brief answers and little attention allocated to the formation of connections and meanings. Even when our intentions are focused on making connections, we don’t always use the best teaching approaches to engage our students in talk most effectively.</p> <p>Today’s session is about how we can shift the teaching and the learning in our classrooms into a more dialogic realm.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	Statistics on typical whole-class discourse and the time children spend listening provides a baseline for educators to see what is currently happening and encourages the shift into the dialogic realm.

**Slides 6/7: Dialogic Definition**

Script	<p>Many of you may not realize that you already use various forms of dialogic teaching and learning in your classroom routines. The word dialogic resembles the word dialogue because this form of teaching is based around speech and talk.</p> <p>Through dialogic teaching students are encouraged to assume a more active role in their learning, to agree or disagree and to explain their ideas and reasoning, while working together with peers and teachers. Throughout this workshop, we will use these dialogic approaches to experience and learn about how best to implement them into our classrooms. Participant participation is expected, just as it would be within your classroom.</p> <p>Dialogic talk provides opportunities for teachers and students to listen to and share ideas with each other supportively, including the consideration of alternate perspectives. The simple use of dialogue in education does not make learning dialogic; dialogue is not only the means of education, but also an end. Teachers teach both for dialogue and through dialogue.</p> <p>Overall, dialogic teaching is student-focused, collaborative, active and engaging, and involves purposeful and intentional talk for extended periods of time.</p> <p>Please note that dialogic teaching can be used with individual or small group instruction, and in whole-class settings. Once the children have learned the fundamental elements, they should transfer smoothly into AB partner talk and small group discussions.</p> <p>Some of you may be concerned and thinking “this approach is too much work”, “my kids are too young for this type of teaching and learning” or “I don’t want to lose control of my classroom.” These concerns are all valid and will be addressed throughout the workshop, I want to reassure you that I have used these approaches with Kindergarten and Grade 1 children and they are capable. These approaches are not onerous for the teacher – it is more a shift in philosophical thinking and slight changes to the daily practice. Lastly, when looking at sharing authority with students, the latter does not mean that you are passing over the reins completely and watching chaos ensue. Overall, the teacher still retains</p>
--------	--




	control, but adapts to that of a collaborative guide and facilitator. I hope these few statements have eased some of your initial concerns and as I said previously, these concerns will be addressed further during the workshop.
Activity	None
Justification	Introduction to dialogic teaching. Sets the purpose, defines dialogic teaching and explains some of the how and what participants will learn during the presentation. Addressing some concerns that teachers may have up front provides them with a clear mind and a sense of security for the remainder of the workshop.

### Slide 8: Visual

Script	Here is the visual organizer I have developed to represent the fundamental concepts of dialogic teaching in the primary classroom. This visual took some time to develop, as I wanted to ensure that the placement of each element was symbolic of its influence on the overall process. Each element of the visual organizer is connected in a non-linear way and assessment underlies and is ongoing and connected with each aspect. For this workshop I will focus on each element of the visual organizer separately and examine it in depth providing activities and examples.  The supportive environment surrounds/underlies all of the other elements and is needed in order for dialogic learning to take place. It is the first element we will explore.
Activity	None
Justification	Explains how and why I made the visual organizer and where we will start. The visual organizer is the anchor and will be revisited at various times throughout the presentation.

### Slides 9/10: Supportive Environment

Script	Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning are not a program like spelling or math, but a philosophy of teaching. Incorporating dialogic approaches may appear a bit chaotic when first embarking on this journey into a more talk-based classroom, because both students and teachers need to experience and reflect on the processes involved.  Dialogic teaching begins as a fundamental philosophical belief in how children can and should learn through oral language. Referring again to the social nature of cognition, dialogic teaching involves a shift in
--------	---

	thinking of how and why you would use these approaches, along with the ability to share the authority of knowledge with your students.
Activity 	Using the provided T-chart (in your handout), take 2 minutes to fill in scenarios when you felt comfortable sharing in a group situation and those times when you felt uncomfortable sharing in a group.  Share these with a partner. Have a few people share out to the larger group.
Justification	Having participants recall previously experienced scenarios that were positive and negative will help them to identify elements of positive environments.  By having participants contribute to the discussion, the authority of knowledge is shared with myself and the participants.


### Slide 11: Potentiating Environment

Script	<p>Many of you have identified common elements of environments where you felt comfortable and those where you did not.</p> <p>In your handout, I describe four types of classroom environments described by Claxton and Carr (2010): prohibiting, affording, inviting and potentiating. A potentiating environment is considered the most ideal for dialogic approaches to teaching and learning to take place. A potentiating environment provides and develops individual expression through participation in shared activities where both students and teachers take responsibility for sharing the power to lead and learn (p. 92).</p> <p>Take a moment to consider how the characteristics you previously identified fit with the description of a potentiating environment.</p> <p>In a potentiating environment, the teacher becomes a learner with the students and maintains 4 main jobs: to explain, orchestrate, commentate and model.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	Participants are encouraged to connect their feelings and experiences with current research. Participants are also provided with opportunities to share and observe commonalities among the group.

### Slide 12: Key Elements for Developing a Supportive Environment


1. Provide small group opportunities for talk before whole-class discussions
2. Seek justifications and explanations of answers

3. Encourage children to nominate others
4. Model the language you expect to see from your students
5. Negotiate classroom expectations collectively

Script	<p>Here is a short list of basic elements for developing a supportive environment. Take a minute to look at them.</p> <p>Please note that Neil Mercer uses the term “ground rules” in his discussions, but the word “rules” holds authority and negative connotations, so I have decided to change this terminology to “expectations” to express a more collaborative process.</p> <p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>Please note that “uptake” and “questioning” are also important strategies, and they are defined and discussed in more depth within an upcoming section.</p>
<p>Activity</p> 	<p>Using your list, choose one of these strategies that you best connect with? Think about why.</p> <p>Share with a partner. Provide participants with the following sentence stem that they can use if they would prefer.</p> <p>Model the connection – use a sentence stem for sharing.      “I connected the most with _____ because _____”</p> <p>Share out some responses from partners to small table groups and then to the larger group. Once a group has shared, ask them to nominate another group to share, either using names or a talking stick/object to pass.</p> <p>What is one element of a potentiating environment that you feel you use well already? And one that you want to try next? Share with your partner.</p>
Justification	<p>Participants can use their experiences to connect the strategies that were useful to them in the past. Using the basic strategies listed above, the activities provide opportunities for participants to experience small group to whole-group discussion opportunities. Participants are also prompted to provide justifications for their answers and to nominate others to speak. I have modeled the language I expect them to use and I am explicitly teaching them using the approaches that I am advocating that they use with their students.</p>

**Slide 13: Classroom Expectations**

Script	<p>The last strategy we just talked about was negotiating classroom expectations collectively. Most of the time we find ourselves telling our students the rules. By negotiating expectations with the students and not telling them what to do, we remove teacher authority and open the environment to provide more opportunities for dialogic talk.</p> <p>ACTIVITY # 1</p> <p>We have now set a purpose for talk and discussed the classroom expectations. This important step is fundamental for you to take with your class when creating a supportive environment. Remember to take small steps – you can always add to your expectations later on when students become more proficient</p> <p>Start small – try out the expectations in partner talk, then in small groups and reflect on them as a class – what worked, how did they feel, etc.</p> <p>Once the expectations have been negotiated in your classroom you can also have the children write their names at the bottom to form a collective agreement that can be posted within the classroom and used as a visual reminder and referred back to at various times. I have found this technique to be quite useful with children of all ages.</p> <p><i>An example of expectations set collectively (if needed):</i> One person talks at a time, but everyone gets a turn to speak. Use whole-body listening. Use nice words, even if you don't agree you can still be respectful. Give people time to think.</p> <p>These elements can facilitate the development of what Neil Mercer (2000) describes as “interthinking.” Mercer (2000) explains interthinking as “the joint, co-ordinated intellectual activity which people regularly accomplish using language” (p. 16). Interthinking involves the collective engagement with others’ ideas through the use of oral language (Pantaleo, 2007) and plays a pivotal role when developing an environment for dialogic talk.</p> <p>ACTIVITY # 2</p>
--------	--

	<p>Personal story – I tried having children talk in AB partners and then put the partners into groups of 4 to share their previously discussed ideas without explicit instructions. After I asked the groups to explain what happened? How did it feel for them? What can we do? And this was with kindergarten children. Very eye-opening!</p>
<p>Activity</p> 	<p># 1- At your table, create some basic classroom expectations that can be used today and within your classroom. Use the chart “looks like/sounds like/feels like” to record your thinking.</p> <p>Have participants share out to the whole group and list all expectations on chart paper as they are shared. Once ideas have been shared, discuss with the group which expectations they believe are necessary and which they think can be deleted (suggestions need to come with justifications)</p> <p>Decide whether slide on Whole-Body Listening is necessary (depending on richness of response)</p> <p>#2 - Reflect on the process of collectively negotiating classroom expectations – how did it make you feel? What was helpful?</p>
Justification	<p>Creating expectations with participants demonstrates how to create them with their students. By writing down all ideas and then getting the participants to negotiate and decide which are most important, I am providing an example of how teachers can work through this process with their students. The process itself also involves basic dialogic strategies and approaches and helps to create the supportive environment we are discussing.</p>

#### Slide 14: Classroom Expectations

Script	<p>Activity</p> <p>As you will see, the PLOs support the use of classroom-generated expectations. Using your classroom-generated expectations along with scaffolding and a gradual release of responsibility model, students can feel successful as they practice their new skills.</p>
--------	---

	Examples of explicit teaching and reflection opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role Play</li> <li>- Fish Bowl</li> </ul>
Activity	Take a look at the PLOs in your handout for each grade. What connections can you make in the curriculum document to support the use of classroom-generated criteria for expectations?
Justification	Making a clear connection to the PLOs provides teachers with confidence and support when implementing new practices. The examples of explicit teaching and reflection opportunities provide them an easy place to start.

### Slide 15: Whole-Body Listening


Script	Here is a poster resource for Whole-Body Listening (WBL). I have also connected WBL with some of the Criteria for a Good Speaker and Listener chart from the curriculum document (p. 105) and some learning outcomes from each grade that focus on listening. A completed chart can be found in your handout. When engaging in whole-body listening, we use our eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, body, brain and heart. Whole-body listening is important for children to understand and use when engaging in dialogic talk.
Activity	None
Justification	Extra support for those who have not been previously exposed to whole-body listening. Re-enforcing the connection to the learning outcomes/curriculum document.

### Slide 16: Visual

Script	Let's come back to the visual organizer. We are going to start looking at the three circles, starting with an overview of Dialogic Talk.
Activity	None
Justification	Re-connects the learning to the whole and prepares listeners to move to the next section.

### Slides 17/18/19: Dialogic Talk

Script	Slide 17: Before we discuss dialogic talk, we should take a moment to define monologic talk and its role within the dialogic realm. Monologic talk involves one person talking, usually the teacher, for most of the teaching time. Students can partake in monologic talk, but it is not interactive and usually more informative or presentational in nature.
--------	---

	<p>That being said, monologic talk has an important role within dialogic classrooms. In 2013, Wegerif stated that monologic talk “should not be simply rejected but engaged in the dialogue at a higher level” (p. 30). <i>Monologic talk is foundational to dialogic talk; therefore, students’ dialogic talk is better when they become better at monologic talk.</i> (repeat this sentence twice for emphasis).</p> <p>Dialogic talk doesn’t mean that we are talking all of the time. We still have times for silence, but when we are talking, it means that talk is engaged and purposeful.</p> <p>Slide 18: Dialogic talk is best known by the work of Robin Alexander. Alexander and his research are discussed in further detail in your handout. He is well known for his creation of the 5 Principles of Dialogic Teaching (2006). (click each to appear as you discuss it on the slide)</p> <p>Collective – teacher and students address learning tasks together  Reciprocal – everyone listens to each other, shares ideas and considers alternative viewpoints  Supportive – once a supportive learning environment has been created everyone can express their ideas freely and work together to reach common understandings  Cumulative – teachers and students build on the ideas and answers of each other, creating clear paths of understanding  Purposeful – talk is planned and structured around specific learning goals</p> <p>The first three principles describe the learning context, while the last two principles are more about the content and process of talk.  All of these principles play a key role when implementing dialogic approaches to teaching and learning.</p> <p>ACTIVITY – slide 19</p>
<p>Activity</p> 	<p>Think of an activity you do in your classroom that involves the use of intentional talk. By intentional talk I mean having the children talk together (partners or small groups) with a clear purpose about a specific topic. Using the 5 principles of dialogic teaching, see how many of these principles you implement.</p> <p>Example: On Monday mornings when we come to the carpet I instruct my students to “turn to your neighbour and tell them about your</p>

	<p>weekend.” We take turns talking and asking questions and then switch partners 2 or 3 times. After talking, students share information about what their classmates did on the weekend. This intentional talk is reciprocal, supportive, and purposeful.</p> <p>With a partner, discuss your previous thinking and lesson/activity. Work together to decide what steps you can take to incorporate the remaining principles into your lesson/activity.</p> <p>Back to my example: If I set a learning goal for talk before asking them to engage with each other, I could make the task more collective. If I asked them to build on each other’s ideas more when talking (e.g., Who else went camping? Who can make a connection?) the task could become more cumulative.</p>
Justification	Using a lesson that teachers already use for connection to the 5 principles provides a familiar context and will provide a richer basis of discussion in the second step when they are thinking about ways to incorporate more of the principles.

### Slides 20/21: Contexts and Positive Effects

Script	<p>Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning are not just for language arts lessons. Research has shown that dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have been used effectively to teach Science, during interactive read-alouds, with wikis for collaborative writing, during philosophical discussions (using programs such as Philosophy for Children), during inquiry-focused learning, and basically anytime children are engaging in discussion.</p> <p>Positive effects from using a dialogic approach include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased student engagement and focus</li> <li>• Extended and in-depth analysis and discussion</li> <li>• Decrease in off-task behaviours</li> <li>• Development of metacognitive awareness</li> <li>• Building of self-confidence</li> <li>• Increased understanding of concepts</li> <li>• Increased ownership of and excitement for learning</li> </ul>
Activity	None
Justification	By widening the context of dialogic talk in the classroom, participants are able to better understand the flexibility and adaptability of these approaches across various curricular areas.



**Slide 22/23: Instructional Strategies**

Script	<p>A large focus in dialogic talk is on the types of questions we ask and teacher strategies. Now we are going to look at some instructional strategies that you can use in your classroom.</p> <p>Do Activity # 1 FIRST (before text on slide)</p> <p>IRE/IRF are closed questions often asked in classrooms consisting of an Initiation – Response – Evaluation/Feedback. For example, “Who knows the capital city of British Columbia?” “Victoria” “Good”. These types of questions do not allow for students to expand their answers and do not provide opportunities for students to build upon the answers of others.</p> <p>There are different types of questions and today we will look at two other types of questions besides IRE/IRF: Open-ended questions and authentic questions.</p> <p>Open-ended questions require a more in depth answer than yes or no. They provide opportunities for multiple answers and extended responses.</p> <p>Authentic questions are questions that are asked without a preconceived answer, where there may be multiple right answers or no answer at all, but they provide opportunities for inquiry.</p> <p>What type of questions should we ask in the classroom? Should we always use one type over the others or a mix?</p> <p>Activity # 2 – Changing questions</p>
Activity	<p># 1 - Ask several questions, mostly IRF with a few open ended questions mixed in (some questions can build on other people’s answers)</p> <p>Ask participants how they felt when being asked the questions? What was different about the questions?</p> <p># 2 – Display the list of closed questions and instruct participants at tables to work together to either change these questions into more open-ended questions or create a list of their own.</p> <p>Provide example question “Would you like vanilla ice cream?” and an</p>

	<p>option of how it could be changed “What is your favourite flavour of ice cream and why?”</p> <p>Examples are provided of what they could change.</p> <p>When finished, with your table, create 2 or 3 authentic questions that you could use in your primary classroom.</p>
Justification	<p>By exposing the participants to various types of questioning, they can experience first hand how children may feel.</p> <p>When participants take closed questions and re-formulate them to make them more open-ended or authentic, it provides them with a trial of this exercise and immediate feedback of an easy modification they can each make to their own teaching practices.</p>

#### Slide 24: Quote

Script	<p>It’s startling to look at the power of a question.</p> <p>Wells (2006) claims, “The single most important action a teacher can take to shift the interaction from monologic to dialogic is to ask questions to which there are multiple possible answers” (p. 414).</p> <p>As we just witnessed with the previous activities, he is right and we can do it.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	Motivation and reinforcement of the information that was just presented on asking questions.

#### Slide 25: Uptake

Script	<p>Activity # 1</p> <p>After discussion ask:</p> <p>What did your discussion look like? Did everyone talk at once? Who nominated people to speak? Did anyone in your group build on another person’s answer or did each person just share their own unconnected idea?</p> <p>Let’s think about why the discussion occurred this way and how it happened without anyone discussing it before you discussed the question?</p> <p>Uptake is the incorporation of another person’s ideas into your own (building on each other’s ideas)</p> <p>Many of you used uptake without being told to do so.</p>
--------	---

	How can we foster students engaging in uptake and incorporate uptake into our classrooms? (talking stick, ball, etc.) Ask for other ideas.  Personal Story – “I think what Suzy is trying to say is....”
Activity	# 1- Ask question <b>What is the importance of structured talk in the classroom?</b> and give 5 minutes for people to discuss answers in their table groups.
Justification	By discussing and then deconstructing the process of discussion it affords participants with opportunities for developing their metacognitive awareness about talk. With an understanding of the discussion process, participants can then discuss ideas of how they can try metacognitive awareness strategies in their classroom. Sharing my personal experience with participants illustrates that young children can tell you if something worked or not and sometimes even why.

### Slide 26: Interactive Read-Aloud

Script	I mentioned previously that dialogic approaches could be used in various contexts. Next I am going to discuss interactive read-alouds, which are one example of an activity in which you could incorporate dialogic approaches to teaching and learning. Interactive read-alouds are a great activity to incorporate the use of uptake in a semi-controlled environment. As children become more familiar with the use of uptake, they will naturally transfer its use to various learning situations. Interactive read-alouds involve the engaging use of questions and talk throughout a read-aloud to enhance understanding and explicitly demonstrate reading strategies. As students engage in interthinking, they collectively engage with each other’s ideas using dialogic talk. When we read picturebooks to children and engage in talk throughout the story we engage in interactive read-alouds.
Activity	None
Justification	Definition of an interactive read-aloud.

### Slide 27: Interactive Read-Aloud

Script	Fisher, Flood, Lapp and Frey (2004) observed the read-aloud practices of expert teachers and identified seven components of an effective interactive read-aloud: 1. Selecting text 2. Previewing and practicing of reading text 3. Establishing a clear purpose for reading 4. Modeling of fluent oral reading 5. Reading with animation and expression 6. Discussing the text 7. Connecting to independent reading and writing
--------	---

	As you can see by the colour of text, the 7 components can be organized into Before, During and After activities, although #6 could also be done after the reading and #7 does not always need to occur.
Activity	None
Justification	Providing research and justification for why these practices are important validates teachers' choices and encourages change.

### Slide 28: Video

Script	Next we are going to view a video. This video is an example of dialogic reading strategies using a video story. The same strategies can be used with a traditional picturebook. Although the video depicts children and adults in a one-on-one situation, these children are preschool aged and the same strategies can be used with primary children in small group or whole-class settings.
Activity	Watch video (9 minutes)
Justification	The video presentation breaks up the presentation and allows the participants to view the strategies in action. The video explains the PEER and CROWD strategies as well, which participants can use when reading or showing stories in their classrooms.

### Slide 29: PEER/CROWD

Script	In the video we just watched, we saw demonstrations of the PEER and CROWD strategies during a video story. Here are the strategies one more time and you will also find them in your handout for future reference.
Activity	None
Justification	Reviewing the main strategies that were discussed in the video.

### Slide 30: Interactive Read-Aloud Research

Script	<p>Several studies have explored the use of interactive read-alouds in classrooms. Some of the main findings from these studies include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrated enhanced higher-order thinking because the interaction allows for the expansion and development of more complex ideas</li> <li>• Students effectively shared their understandings to create meaning</li> <li>• Read-alouds increased student engagement and academic performance</li> </ul>
--------	---


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students performed better on both receptive and expressive measures of language, also demonstrating vocabulary gains and expressive book vocabulary gains</li> <li>• Students demonstrated an improvement on their production and retelling of fictional narratives</li> </ul>
Activity	None
Justification	Presentation of research findings to support interactive read-alouds continues to reassure participants that dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have been tested and used effectively in classrooms.

### Slide 31: Visual

Script	<p>Coming back to the foundational visual organizer, we can now see the interconnections among dialogic talk, instructional strategies and interactive read-alouds.</p> <p>The next element we are going to look at is assessment. As is evident, assessment occurs within the supportive environment, and is foundational to all of the talk we just discussed. Various types of assessment underlie our teaching practices and we are going to look into the effects of assessment with dialogic approaches more closely.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	Placement of assessment was essential in this visual organizer and explanation of where it was placed is important for participants to understand, as it is foundational to the approach as a whole.

### Slide 32: Assessment

Script	<p>In relation to dialogic teaching and learning we are going to discuss dynamic and formative assessment. As you are aware, our curriculum document discusses the use of dynamic and formative assessment.</p> <p>Vygotsky discussed dynamic assessment as allowing us to view the child's potential level of development by providing a prospective measure of performance, indicating abilities that are developing. Dynamic assessment is interactive and includes interventions to help us predict how the child will perform independently in the future. The most typical type of dynamic assessment involves a pretest, an intervention and a posttest.</p> <p>Formative assessment occurs during the learning process to provide teachers with a type of feedback so they can modify and enhance learning opportunities as needed for optimal student success. Formative</p>
--------	---


	<p>assessment also provides students with opportunities to solidify their understandings and build upon their ideas.</p> <p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>Assessment in the visual organizer is represented by a circle, a cyclical shape with no beginning and no end, but a sense of constant movement.</p> <p>Why is it important for assessment to be ongoing? (provide some time for people to talk and report out about this)</p> <p>Although we are required to officially report on students' progress at various times throughout the year, our assessment should be an ongoing process. Reports are only a snapshot of progress.</p>
<p>Activity</p> 	<p>At your table, brainstorm forms of assessment that you use with your class for oracy that are dynamic and/or formative.</p> <p>Negotiate with your group and choose the two most effective forms of assessment and discuss why they are effective. Prepare to share them with the group. Share out ideas from each table.</p>
Justification	<p>Knowing how and why we assess our students is important. Various types of assessments are used for various purposes and it's important to understand the types of assessment that connect best with dialogic approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers often want to know "how can I make sure they learned something?" and this discussion will help them to answer that question while reinforcing the importance of ongoing and continuous assessment.</p>

### Slide 33: Assessment connections to PLOs

Script	<p>This slide presents the primary outcomes for oral language that focus on Strategies for Oral Language (Kindergarten) and Thinking about Oral Language (Grades 1-3). Again, these PLOs show us how students are not only required to use oral language, but also to reflect on their use of language, especially in reference to class-generated criteria. Right from Grade 1, metacognition is clearly important (as you will see from outcome A10) and as students progress through the grades, expectations for metacognitive awareness and self-reflection increase.</p>
Activity	None
Justification	<p>Provides a reminder of the PLOs and highlights the metacognitive connection of oral language.</p>

**Slide 34: Assessment Tools**

Script	<p>One of the challenges some people experience with new approaches to teaching and learning is assessing the effectiveness of the approaches. I encountered this problem myself when I began to implement dialogic approaches within my classroom. How did I know if I was correctly incorporating dialogic approaches to teaching and learning? How could I assess whether or not what I was trying was successful?</p> <p>At the time I relied heavily on observation and anecdotal notes. However, I have now learned more about assessment tools that teachers can use to assess the dialogic talk that is taking place. We are going to look at 4 different assessment tools as a place to start. First, a teacher Dialogic Inquiry Tool created by Reznitskaya in 2012. This tool can be quite helpful for teachers to become more cognizant of their teaching practices along a monologic-dialogic continuum. These indicators are useful for examining discourse patterns and the quality of talk within a classroom. Using this tool, teachers can analyze the nature of their talk and set clear goals for improvement. Examination of discourse is usually done through a video recording of oneself or by having a colleague come in and observe. The article from which I obtained the DIT is available for those who are interested (via email).</p> <p>ACTIVITY # 1 – if time permits</p> <p>The next assessment tool is a self-assessment tool for students. This tool is a Talk Diary and comes from the UK program Talk Box by Lyn Dawes and Claire Sams. The Talk Diary format is flexible and this format is only one suggested structure among many. It can be adapted as needed for each classroom. Talk Diaries allow students to assess their own talk and examine their progress through subsequent talk sessions. Assessment can be done at the end of each session, day or week (my suggestion is that you do it either at the end of each session or day so their memory is accurate). Through the use of this tool and explicit teaching and modeling of the criteria, students can clearly see their progress and set personal goals for themselves for upcoming sessions/days. Talk criteria can be changed. With younger classes, for example, you may decide to focus on 3 or 4 criteria over 5 sessions and then change to something different.</p> <p>Assessment tool # 3 is a rating scale for evaluating group discussions.</p>
--------	---

	<p>Using this tool, teachers can efficiently keep track of group contributions. This tool could also be used formatively to identify where certain groups needed extra support with their discussions.</p> <p>Assessment tool # 4 is a comprehensive checklist for teachers that I created using various sources. It contains 9 elements that teachers can assess when students are engaging in talk. This checklist is intended for use as both a formative and an ongoing assessment tool so teachers can assess students' strengths and areas of need with talk and their progress over time. Using this tool, teachers can create intentional groups for skill building or group various students depending on their strengths. The descriptors can also be directly used to report to parents or administrators about a student's achievements.</p> <p>All 4 of these assessment tools support the implementation of dialogic approaches to teaching and learning in primary classrooms, both through teacher/student self-awareness and ongoing teacher assessment of individual and group talk. Please be aware that as stated before, these are not the only ways to assess yourself and your students, but just a sample of what is currently available. All assessment tools should be used and developed on an individual basis, but these tools provide you with a good place to start.</p>
<p>Activity</p> 	<p>If time permits (may not be possible for shorter workshops)</p> <p>#1 - Have teachers use the DIT and a highlighter to self-assess themselves using the scale. They can then take their assessment back to their classrooms and re-evaluate with a video recording of their teaching or at a later date/time.</p>
<p>Justification</p>	<p>Teachers need to be aware of their own dialogic discourse and teaching practices so they can create a clear path of where to go next. Providing examples of assessment tools gives teachers who are experimenting with dialogic approaches a place to start and makes the task less daunting. Each of these assessment tools has a different use and can be adapted to suit the needs of the teacher and students.</p>

### Slide 35: Visual

<p>Script</p>	<p>So we return to the foundational visual organizer. Hopefully you have developed a good understanding of each element as well as developed an appreciation of the interrelations among the elements that are</p>
---------------	--



	involved when incorporating dialogic approaches to teaching and learning in the primary grades.  Questions? Comments?
Activity	Have participants set a goal: Two things I plan to try next week ... One long term goal ... Share with a partner and then (if time) share out at table.
Justification	Returning to the original visual organizer will ideally enable people to see the elements holistically. Revisiting and synthesizing new information is another example of what we do with our students. Once teachers have taught new information, they usually ask students to use that information to set a learning goal. Setting a goal provides opportunity for synthesis of information and puts into action a plan for new learning to occur.

### Slide 36: Conclusion/Take home message

Script	I have presented a lot of information today - some of the concepts and ideas will have been new and some will have reinforced or modified your current teaching practices. We have set goals and reflected on our own learning throughout the day. To close, I wanted to share two quotes that guided my journey in developing this workshop for dialogic teaching and learning for my Master's project. "Real education is about understanding ideas, not just learning how to repeat them, and understanding requires dialogic relations" (Wegerif, 2010, p. 28). So, "If we want children to talk to learn – as well as learn to talk – then what they say probably matters more than what teachers say" (Alexander, 2006, p. 26). It's up to you and me. I have presented you with the tools to get started and now you can witness the transformation that can occur with a dialogic shift in thinking.
Activity	None
Justification	Ending with powerful quotes by Wegerif and Alexander reinforces all of the day's learning and hopefully motivates teachers to take their new learning back into their classrooms to personally experience what kind of differences it can make.

**Slides 37-40: Assessment Tool Examples**