

Written evidence

Members of the Oracy APPG will consider written, verbal and audio-visual evidence and oversee oral evidence sessions. All evidence will inform the final report.

The extended deadline for submitting written evidence is **20th September 2019**. We would appreciate if the submissions would follow the following guidelines:

- Be in a Word format
- No longer than 3000 words
- State clearly who the submission is from, and whether it is sent in a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation
- Begin with a short summary in bullet point form
- Have numbered paragraphs
- Where appropriate, provide references

Please write your evidence below and email the completed form via email to inquiry@oracyappg.org.uk with the subject line of 'Oracy APPG inquiry'

Christopher Williams

Full name:

Chatta

School or Organisation:

Founder

Role:

Written evidence:

I am a former teacher and founder of Chatta. Chatta is a teaching approach which was developed to support progress in early communication, language and literacy. The approach is entirely evidence informed and combines a number of powerful proven methods. Chatta is used in schools (primary/secondary/special) and families and the focus and objective is oral narrative competence.

With Chatta, children and young people speak confidently (no notes, no cards, no prompts) and articulately for a range of situations and purposes.

I have introduced Chatta into hundreds of schools both in the UK and overseas and Chatta has been named for the second year running as one of the worlds leading hundred education innovations.

Oracy is my passion and my life. I went to school on Orchard Park Estate in Hull. I am acutely aware of the power of education and how language development and oracy are critical to educational success. My work closes gaps. In the last year Chatta has been used by 500 families in the HU6 (Orchard Park) postcode of Hull. The proportion of children achieving or exceeding age related expectations in speaking has increased from 49% to 83% leading to a city wide roll out.

There are schools in Sheffield, Rochdale, Liverpool and Nottingham using our simple approach, as well as Finland, Malaysia, Spain and Brazil.

With all due respect to the APPG and all contributors, you don't know (yet) what you don't know. I will submit evidence and views below.

Additional guidance:

Value and impact

1 Given many teachers recognise the importance of oracy, why does spoken language not have the same status as reading and writing in our education system? Should it have the same status, and if so why

Teachers have pressures to show evidence of writing in books. Spoken language outcomes are not assessed formally in any key stage. This tells schools and teachers that Oracy doesn't matter. There is too much pressure for evidence of writing in books. Teachers are fearful of allowing talk to take the lead. But they should. Talk is the halfway house between thinking and writing.(Vygotsky)

2 What are the consequences if children and young people do not receive oracy education?

They fall behind in reading and writing. They don't fulfil their potential. They are at risk of being excluded from society's opportunities and can fall into crime and drugs. Oracy closes gaps in learning, literacy and understanding.

At least 60% of young people in the UK who are accessing youth justice services present with speech, language and communication difficulties which are largely unrecognised.

http://shura.shu.ac.uk/10341/2/Bryan%20-%20IJDL_C__paper_amends%20march%20%202015.pdf

3 What is the value and impact of quality oracy education at i) different life stages, ii) in different settings, and iii) on different types of pupils (for instance pupils from varied socioeconomic backgrounds or with special educational needs)?

Oracy can lead to social mobility. And a lack of it can lead to lifelong disadvantage, It is critical in nurseries, primary, secondary and special schools. It is critical for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. It can remove barriers for people with additional support needs. A strong focus on oracy can help people who speak English as an additional language.

Oral Narrative Competence unlocks everything.

4 How can it help deliver the wider curriculum at school?

Oracy exists in every single subject. Bar none. If pupils can access the language they can understand. They can explain. They can retain, and apply learning. Teachers need to value talk. Above anything else.

5 What is the impact of quality oracy education on future life chances? Specifically, how does it affect employment and what value do businesses give oracy?

Every job requires speaking and communication. Every social situation and challenges requires spoken communication. Children and young people who can communicate their thoughts, feelings, intentions and understanding will progress and succeed in all aspects of work and life.

In terms of business and employment: Even when presented with glowing qualifications employers for any job like to see people who can relate to others, communicate strongly. Any employer would prioritise spoken communication - it is central and critical to both teamwork and customer liaison.

6 What do children and young people at school and entering employment want to be able to access, what skills do they want to leave school with?

They want to be employable, They want their qualifications to appeal to employers. They want to feel comfortable and confident that they will be able to succeed in their jobs.

7 What is the value and impact of oracy education in relation to other key agendas such as social mobility and wellbeing/ mental health?

Oracy is critical for social mobility and mental health.

In the UK many children begin to learn to read and write too early. They are not developmentally ready. Language is essential for self-regulation, social development and oral narrative is an essential prerequisite to writing.

Oracy unlocks everything.

8 How can the ability to communicate effectively contribute to engaging more young people from all backgrounds to become active citizens, participating fully in social action and public life as adults.

Spoken language leads to success in all areas of education and a better qualified society. It helps people maintain happy and healthy relationships. It supports an inclusive society built on tolerance and respect. It allows young people to debate, discuss and compromise.

Provision and access

9 What should high quality oracy education look like?

High emphasis on spoken explanations, presentations and discussions in the majority of lessons. Teachers become skilled in using, modelling the language they expect their pupils to use.

The very highest expectations from teaching staff at all times.

On all occasions following the sequence: modelled language, oral rehearsal, writing. No exceptions. (this is very easy to do)

Frequent opportunities for spoken presentations, discussed and debates to and with a range of audiences.

Everyone in the school (and all parents) understanding the value of spoken language.

Teachers and school leaders experiencing less pressure to show evidence of writing in books.

I would like to invite the APPG to meet me and see the approach I have developed. It produces 'unbelievable' outcomes in spoken language with immediate links to writing. Please see this as an opportunity to make an irreversible and ground-breaking difference for outcomes in 'Oracy' (and everything it impacts on)

10 Can you provide evidence of how oracy education is being provided in different areas/education settings/extra-curricular provision, by teachers but also other practitioners that work with children?

The approach I have developed is used by school staff (primary/secondary/special), nursery staff, children's centre staff, health professionals and families.

In terms of evidence: there are lots of schools using the resources and methods I have developed. All report impact.

Between March 2019 in the HU6 area of Hull the % of 5 year olds increased from 49% to 69% across the postcode . For the 524 children using Chatta it increased to 83%

11 What are the views of teachers, school leaders and educational bodies regarding the current provision of oracy education?

I think the proportion of teachers that understand the value and importance of Oracy is low. It isn't measured or reported on and the emphasis is on attainment in reading, writing and maths in primaries and subject examination in secondaries. Practice isn't consistent. Some teachers don't value modelling language and providing opportunities for oral rehearsal. They prefer to 'just tell them' or try allow pupils to follow textbooks or copy notes from the board. The system won't recognise that a pupil could achieve high exam grades but struggling to think and communicate effectively with spoken words.

Children and young people need to be able to turn thoughts, ideas and concepts into spoken words skilfully.

12 Where can we identify good practice and can you give examples?

I have seen nothing more effective than Chatta for students of all ages:

The approach includes a simple transferable activity plan for whole class teaching or interventions. Following the activity, without fail, all pupils are able to produce strong spoken outcomes in a range of styles and genres. This language and understanding is retained. It also is used with families and with pupils in the home learning environment maximising exposure to and the profile of the content and increasing the amount of time experiencing high quality modelled language coupled with opportunities for oral rehearsal.

13 What factors create unequal access to oracy education (i.e. socio-economic, region, type of school, special needs)? How can these factors be overcome?

Ofsted lack of understanding and emphasis on value to high quality oracy.

League table pressures.

Lack of understanding from school leaders.

Lack of understanding in ITT.

Lack of understanding with teachers,

It isn't to do with social economic or region. It is the accountability system and a lack of shared understanding of what good practice looks like.

Chatta provides the very best practice , and is quickly scalable.

14 Relating to region more specifically, how should an oracy-focused approach be altered depending on the context?

Not at all. Why ? Our expectations should be the very highest and our methods the very best..

Barriers

15 What are the barriers that teachers face in providing quality oracy education, within the education system and beyond?

Lack of expectation from school leaders and regulators.

Poor practice 'hothousing' children in primary schools and exam factory secondary schools.

It crushes their potential.

Stakes are so high many schools will teach to the tests missing out essential oral skills.

It could be argued that 'good' data suggests everything is ok. This is not the case. Children and young people today can get good grades as they are spoon fed throughout school with success criteria- ie: include this for the top grade etc. Yet- they are not practising thinking and speaking in the 'here and now' and employers and society are keenly aware of this.

16 What support do teachers need to improve the delivery of oracy education?

Lots. They need understanding through training. It also needs to matter to the leaders of the school they work in.

17 What accountability is currently present in the system? How can we further incentivise teachers to deliver more oracy education to children and young people?

Should best practice be incentivised?

We should train teachers and help them develop their skills and understanding.

If there was a spoken assessment at the end of KS1 2 3 4 and 5 it may help but then if this was another measure to put pressure on schools it would be badly done and done for the wrong reasons.

You could provide access to every teacher for 'free' (it wouldnt cost a lot) and then charge the school full price if teachers fail to use it. (That reads badly and I don't agree with it. Just trying to answer the question)

18 What is the role of government and other bodies in creating greater incentives and how can this be realised?

Surely the government can fund things and make accountability systems conducive to best effective practice.

Could the government give schools accreditation for being oracy centres of excellence?

19 What is the role of assessment in increasing provision of oracy education? What is the most appropriate form of assessment of oracy skills?

We have an oracy scale with Chatta, Progression is obvious in lots of types and styles of speaking.

There are resources and scales of progression which link to progress in oracy.

With chatta we assess outcomes in spoken language every half term. We give students a subject to explain or discuss (no notes no prompts) and assess how well they can speak thinking and talking in real time. (this is crucial)

20 Are the speaking and listening elements of the current curriculum sufficient in order to deliver high quality oracy education?

No. Teachers don't know the best way to achieve the highest outcomes.

21 What is the best approach – more accountability within the system or a less prescriptive approach?

Chatta is the best way. I could convince everyone connected with your group in one day in 2 schools.

Are there examples of other educational pedagogies where provision has improved and we can draw parallels and learn lessons?

Chatta was made and designed in the UK. There is nothing close to it in terms of impact.