Oracy Strategy: Newtown Top Talkers, Top Writers

Good oracy, the skill of speaking successfully, is a crucial and necessary foundation for children to write well.

Children who can speak well have far greater chance of being able to write successfully. This is because children orally rehearse the sentences they want to write before they write them. This is something many of us as adults continue do when we write.

To support children's development of speaking skills we use the Newtown Top Talkers, Top Writers strategy. This strategy gives the children the opportunity to learn by heart and speak out loud important sentence structures.

The strategy provides opportunity to practice, recall and apply spoken sentences within their writing. By doing this we give the children a strong framework upon which they can develop their independence as writers.

We focus on children learning by heart the commonly used subordinating conjunctions. This gives children the chance to learn sentence structures that they will use often.

We to teach the sentences on a two-week rotation
Week 2
• Learning sentence structure by rote (send home for homework) • Writing sentence structures learnt from memory. • Changing words such as nouns and verbs.
Week 2
• Using the same sentence structure as week before, change the content: Eg: • **When** (plus subordinate clause), (Plus main clause) • (main clause) **when** (plus subordinate clause) • Application of these sentences into writing. Use planning, drafting and publishing lessons. Use the MSC grid to assess.

Rest of term: Then repeat using a new conjunction (2 weekly) but ensure children have the previous sentence structure on Working Wall and are still using this in their writing across all curriculum areas.

Other strategies that are important:

• Set the sentence type as homework alongside spellings each week. This week we are learning 'when' sentences. Provide the children with two structures where clause is in a different place to orally rehearse and learn off by heart.
• Intonation – exaggerated pauses to signal punctuation.
• Sentences to be linked to topic content being taught.
• Include the sentence type in the MSC grid.
• Daily oral rehearsal at least 3 x. At the beginning of every writing lesson and at some point every afternoon (could be when answering register).
• Sentences to be displayed on Working Walls – Top Writers title

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Main clause
Subordinating clause

Conjunction	Sentence examples	Purpose of conjunction
When	When they invaded other countries, the Romans were trying to expand their empire. The Romans were trying to expand their empire when they invaded other countries.	Subordinating *A conjunction of time meaning 'at the time that'.*
	When the visitor arrived, the children were very excited. The children were very excited when the visitor arrived.	
Where	Where the children had cooked their own food, there was lots of washing up. There was lots of washing up where the children had cooked their own food.	Subordinating *A conjunction of place. Where will it happen?*
	Where the climate is changing, the polar bears' habitats are in danger. The polar bears' habitats are in danger where the climate is changing.	
Whilst	Whilst the other half of the class were cooking, half the class were in the classroom. Half the class were in the classroom whilst the other half were cooking.	Subordinating *A conjunction of contrast used to compare two ideas.*
	Whilst we are on holiday, I am going to read a book. I am going to read a book **whilst** we are on holiday.	
With	With glowing eyes, the Iron Man stood on the cliff edge. The Iron Man stood on the cliff edge with glowing eyes.	Subordinating *A conjunction of comparison/ links to something else that is happening.*
	With his head in the clouds, the monster towered above the trees. The monster towered above the trees with his head in the clouds.	
Because	Because he had six large eyes, the monster could see through the wall. The monster could see through the wall because he had six large eyes.	Subordinating *Cause and effect/ a conjunction of reason*
	Because he could save them, the farmers decided to accept the Iron Man. The farmers decided to accept the Iron Man because he could save them.	
If	If they didn't know already, the people were about to find out the robot's powers! The people were about to find out the robot's powers if they didn't know already.	Subordinating *Conjunction of condition. Used to describe something that will happen if something else is true.*
	If snow arrives, the children will be excited. The children will be excited if snow arrives.	

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Main clause
Subordinating clause

Conjunction	Sentence examples	Purpose of conjunction
Although	Although we have foodies, we will still be learning about rivers. We will still be learning about rivers although we have foodies. Although we often call it rain, precipitation is water falling from the sky. Precipitation is water falling from the sky although we often call it rain.	Subordinating *A conjunction of contrast used to compare two ideas.*
So	So they were not in the flood, the family had to leave their house. The family had to leave their house, so they were not in the flood. So they didn't get ruined, the children carried boxes of their belongings. The children carried boxes of their belongings, so they didn't get ruined.	Coordinating *conjunction that links two clauses together.* *Cause and effect*
Since	Since the flood, the family watch the forecast every night. The family watch the forecast every night since the flood. Since practising at home, the children became more confident with their times tables. The children became more confident with their times tables since practising at home.	Subordinating *A conjunction of time when something has/ will/ might happen*
After	After the trees were cut down, some animals were left with no homes. Some animals were left with no homes after the trees were cut down. After finding a den, the children began to wonder if someone was around. The children began to wonder if someone was around after finding a den.	Subordinating *A conjunction of time when something has/ will/ might happen*
Before	Before she offered to help, Con was reluctant to get on the raft. Con was reluctant to get on the raft before she offered to help. Before I knew what it was, I was suspicious about the rustling noise. I was suspicious about the rustling noise before I knew what it was.	Subordinating *A conjunction of time when something has/ will/ might happen*
Until	Until it will be too late, some people are not acting on deforestation. Some people are not acting on deforestation until it will be too late. Until the teacher explained, the children didn't know what to do next. The children didn't know what to do next until the teacher explained.	Subordinating *A conjunction of time when something has/ will/ might happen*