

Speaking like a Specialist



This resource is intended for teachers working with older primary school students and secondary school students



Speaking like a Specialist



Welcome to Oracy October 2022! This year's theme is 'Speaking like a Specialist' and explores what high-quality talk looks like in different subject disciplines. Across the month, you can enable your students to talk like subject experts, raising their understanding of oracy by challenging them to speak like specialists in different areas of the curriculum.

This October, we're asking you to consider what oracy means to different specialist subjects. What does it mean to speak like a scientist? How does this differ from speaking like a historian, or to the expectations of high-quality talk in English or maths? While most of our communication skills can be universally applied, talk in different subject areas and disciplines has varying purposes. Raising students' awareness of these differences enables them to embody each subject, becoming expert communicators.

Speaking like a Specialist has been designed to support you to develop different modes of expression in your students, encouraging them to consider the vocabulary, register and ways of speaking that a range of subject experts use. It has been inspired in part by 'Accountable Talk', a body of research and approach developed by Professor Resnick and colleagues at Pittsburgh Institute for Learning. For a useful summary of this research, take a look [here](#).

To get started, share the 'Speaking like a Specialist' poster (p.4) with your students. As the month progresses and students complete challenges, they can keep track of the different subject-specific oracy skills they are developing.

Alongside the poster, there are 7 challenges. Each asks students to consider the purpose of talk in specific subjects and encourages them to think about what that talk might look and sound like, before providing suggestions on how to practise this. Feel free to adapt these ideas and include your own subject material. The challenges could be completed in class, as part of your extracurricular offer, or set as home learning.

Share your students' progress on Twitter

Tag @voice21oracy with the hashtags #OracyOctober #speakinglikeaspecialist



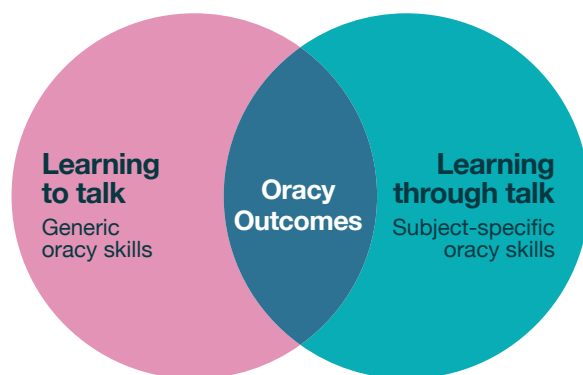
Speaking like a Specialist

Teacher Guidance

What does it mean to speak like a subject specialist?

Each subject discipline brings to bear different ways of speaking and listening. A maths classroom might be full of the sounds of reasoning and collaborative problem-solving. Down the corridor in the art studio, we might hear students engaging in critical analysis of each other's work.

So, when designing oracy tasks across the curriculum, consider what generic and subject-specific oracy skills that need to be explicitly taught might be.

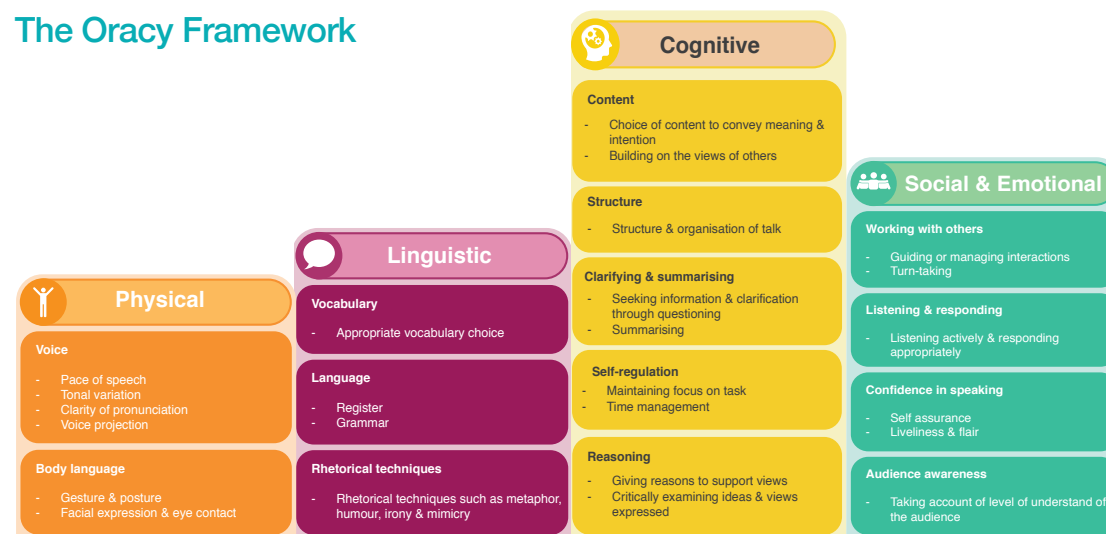


For each of the **Speaking like a Specialist challenges**, we've chosen one area of focus. For example, the **Speaking like a scientist** challenge asks students to present their findings as a scientific expert, while the **Speaking like a citizen** challenge asks students to campaign. For each challenge there are two possible outcomes. All of the outcomes have been designed to be suitable across age groups. However, the second outcome is more challenging and so may be more suitable for secondary students.

The mode of expression we've chosen for each subject isn't, of course, the only way people interact in that subject. Speaking like a scientist doesn't just mean presenting ideas: scientists also engage in verbal reasoning, have consensus-building discussions and interrogate their results collaboratively. We've chosen one aspect of subject-specific talk for each challenge and encourage you to continue to plan a broad offer of subject-specific oracy tasks and outcomes across your curriculum.

As you're assigning challenges to your students, use the Oracy Framework to consider the generic and subject specific oracy skills they might need to succeed. What is the specialist vocabulary they might need? Is there a specific register associated with the specific type of talk? How might their talk be best structured?

The Oracy Framework



The student-facing Oracy October challenge starts on the next page

Speaking like a Specialist

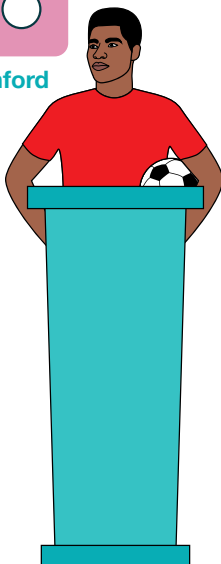
Your Oracy October challenges

You are challenged to follow in the footsteps of accomplished experts in their fields by using your voice to communicate your knowledge and expertise in different subjects.

Complete the **Speaking like a Specialist challenge** by carrying out 7 oracy challenges in the month of October and ticking them off as you go. ✓

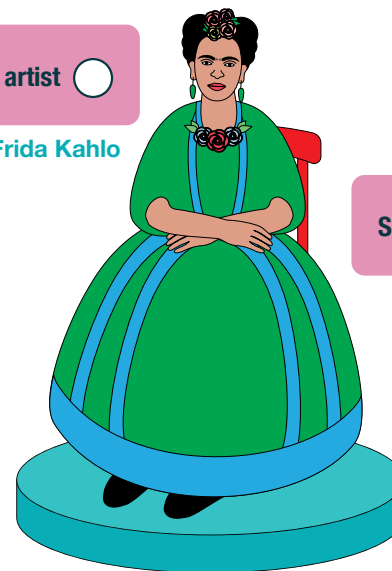
Speaking like a sportsperson ☐

Marcus Rashford



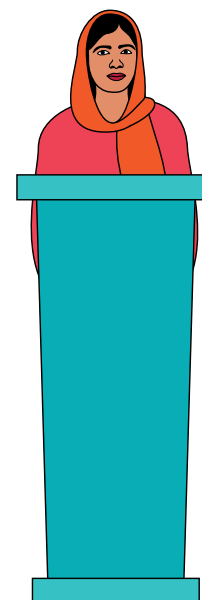
Speaking like an artist ☐

Frida Kahlo



Malala Yousafzai

Speaking like a citizen ☐



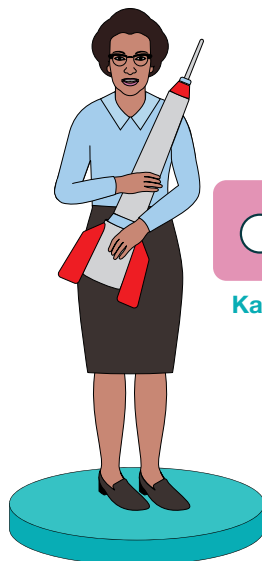
Stephen Hawking

Speaking like a scientist ☐



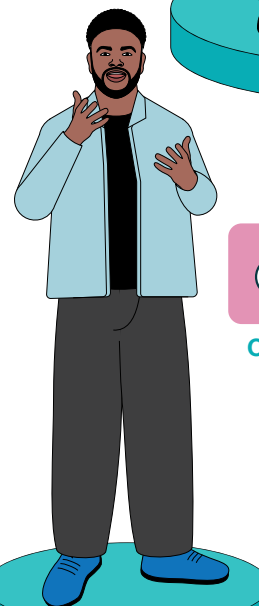
☐ Speaking like a mathematician

Katherine Johnson



Simon Schama

Speaking like a historian ☐



☐ Speaking like a poet





Casey Bailey

Speaking like a Specialist

Oracy Framework

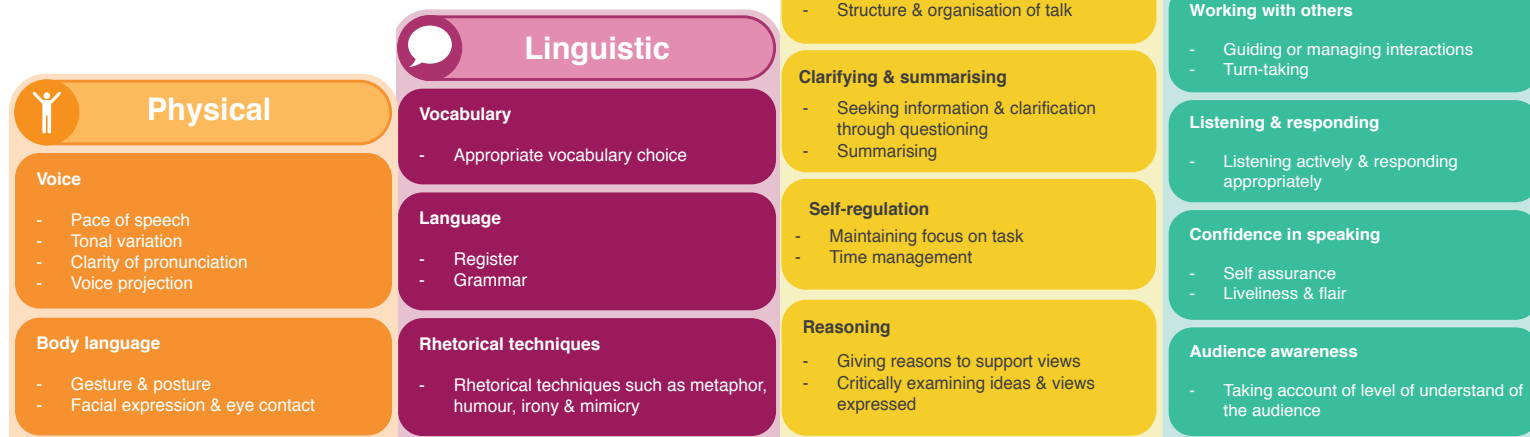
Use the Oracy Framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.

The Oracy Framework sets out the different skills needed to be an effective speaker and listener. It breaks oracy into four different strands:

-  **Physical** – how you use your voice, body language and facial expressions
-  **Linguistic** – the words you choose to use
-  **Cognitive** – the thinking behind what you are saying and the reasons you give
-  **Social and emotional** – the way you engage with, and listen to, others.

As you complete each **Speaking like a Specialist challenge**, take a look at the Oracy Framework to remind yourself of a couple of key areas you want to focus on. You could even ask a friend, teacher or someone at home to give you some feedback based on the Oracy Framework.

Oracy
Cambridge

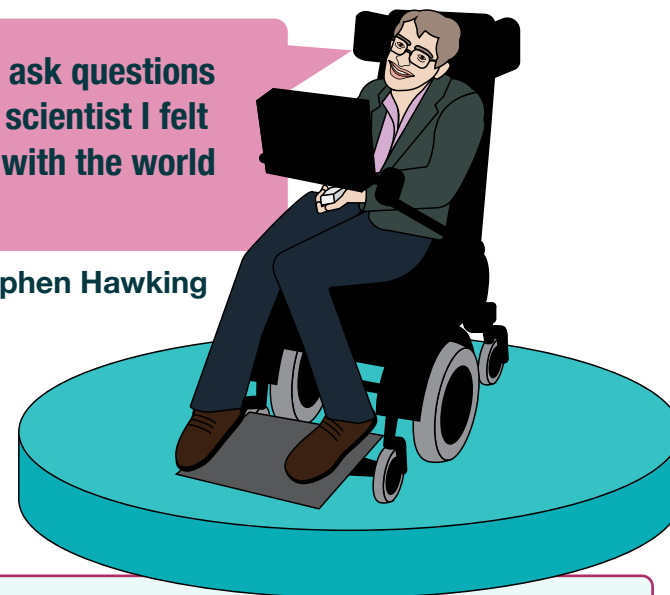


Speaking like a Specialist

Speaking like a scientist...

“Not only is it important to ask questions and find the answers, as a scientist I felt obligated to communicate with the world what we were learning.”

Stephen Hawking



Stephen Hawking, world-renowned physicist and cosmologist, dedicated his life to studying the universe. As a scientist, it's important to be able to take really complex ideas and theories and make them easily digestible for other people. As Stephen Hawking said, it's important that scientists feel confident explaining their findings and results with the world.

Guidelines for speaking like a scientist...

- **Speak concisely** (keep it short!) so that you explain complex ideas in a way that is easy for others to understand
- **Structure** your ideas clearly, making sure that you have fully explained your scientific enquiry
- Use **expert scientific vocabulary**, but make sure that your audience understands it too
- Ask probing and clarifying **questions** to challenge others and developing your reasoning

Challenge: Report on a scientific enquiry!

Conduct a scientific enquiry, in class or at home – there are lots of at home experiment examples at www.rigb.org/learning/activities-and-resources.

Then present your findings to your class, friends or family in the style of an expert talk.

Remember to consider the **Speaking like a scientist** guidelines, and think about:



What scientific vocabulary can you use?



How can you make sure you describe your results, clearly and concisely?



How will you make sure your audience stays engaged throughout?

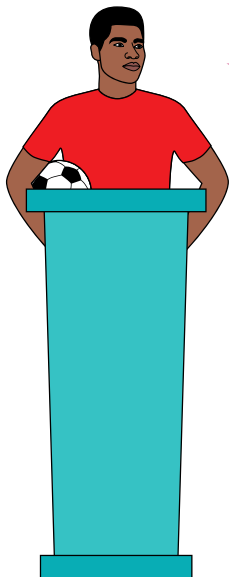


Present your findings to an audience of your peers or younger students.

or

Create a podcast where you educate your listeners on your chosen topic.





"I learn something new every game. Every game is always different, no matter how you try and think about it beforehand"

Marcus Rashford

Marcus Rashford is a professional footballer who is well-known not just for his skills on the pitch but his advocacy off the pitch too. He has campaigned against racism, homelessness and child hunger in the UK. And on the pitch, Marcus recognises how important it is to learn from each game or match we play or performance we give. Coaching is essential to success in sport, and so sportspeople must be able to listen to and give feedback, and communicate honestly and openly so that they can continue to improve their game.

Speaking like a sportsperson...

**Speaking
like a
Specialist**

Challenge: Coach like a sportsperson!

Watch your favourite sport on TV, online or on the playground. Before you watch, decide what you think the players need to do to give a great performance. What skills are you expecting to see? What distinguishes an average performance from a good one? As you're watching make a few notes of the skills you notice them doing well, and any you think they could improve. Then...

PRACTISE: Partner up with a friend, classmate or family member and role-play giving feedback to the sportsperson. One person can act as the player/ team you've just watched. And the other can act as the coach.

or

YOUR TURN: Join up with some friends or team mates and record yourselves playing your favourite sport. Afterwards reflect on your game or performance together. As a group reflect on your skills, and ask what you could do to improve next time.



Respond and adapt to how they might be feeling; be encouraging!



Ask questions to explore how you might do things differently next time.



Guidelines for speaking like a sportsperson...

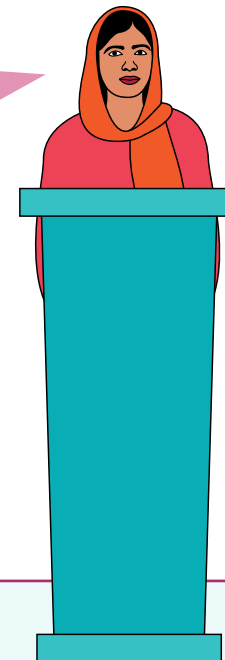
- Encourage your teammates and highlight the skills they performed well: "I was really impressed by your..."
- Ask open questions - how did they feel during the game? What do they think went well? And what could they improve on next time?
- Give them constructive feedback on specific skills they could improve next time E.g. "Next game, you could try..."
- Ask how you could help them to improve E.g. "Could we practise this skill together?"

Speaking like a Specialist

Speaking like a citizen...

"When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful"

Malala Yousafzai



Malala Yousafzai is an activist and has used her voice to fight for the rights of women and children. She has shown how important it is to speak up about causes and issues that need our attention, such as climate change and gender equality. Malala uses her voice to create positive change in the world. What's important to you? What would you like to see change in the world? What would you like to speak out about?

Guidelines for speaking like a citizen...

- **Share** the problem you'd like to be solved and explain how it affects your audience.
- Focus on **positive solutions** – what small steps can we all do now to change the outcome?
- Use **stories** to help the audience connect to what you're telling them
- Use **statistics** which might shock the audience to help them understand why we need to solve the problem

Challenge: Campaign for change!

Talk to your friends, classmates, teachers and family members, to find out what issues are affecting the people around you and what they want to change. Choose an issue that is important to you personally, whether that's women being paid the same as men in sport, recycling or anything else.

Then create a **campaign for change!** Remember to consider the Speaking like a citizen guidelines, and:



How can you appeal to your audience?



Can you use a story or statistic to help explain the problem and focus on positive solutions?



How can you respond and adapt what you are saying based on your listeners' reactions?



Persuade one person to join your cause. This could be a friend, family member or someone at school.

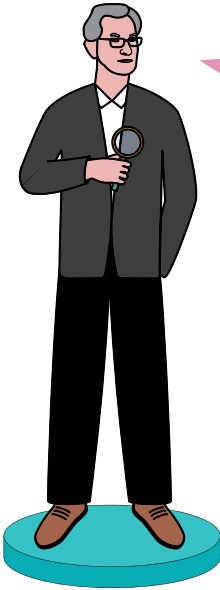
or

Form a group and organise a peaceful protest, sharing your message. Can you create simple slogans to help get your message across?



Speaking like a historian...

Speaking like a Specialist



“Histories never conclude...Their stories are, if they are truthful, untidy affairs, resistant to windings-up and sortings-out”

Simon Schama

Simon Schama is an English historian and academic. Historians review and analyse sources of history and use them to tell stories of what might have happened in the past. There are usually lots of different sources of historical events, giving different perspectives, and so it's up to historians to assemble and evaluate the evidence.

Challenge: Analyse like a historian!

How has your school or the area where you live changed over time? Gather 3-5 sources which will help you to answer this question. You might want to: speak to people who have memories of what has changed, or people who have been told about this; look at old photos, objects or news stories.

Can you work with a small group of friends or classmates to analyse your sources and use them to...



Agree as a group what have been the biggest changes. Why do you think they are the most significant?

or

Rank the sources you assembled in order of reliability, justifying your decisions as you go.

Remember to use the speaking like a historian guidelines to analyse your evidence!



Give reasons and use evidence from the sources to support your point of view



Make links between your different sources to build your argument



Guidelines for speaking like a historian...

- Bring together different sources to inform your account of the past
- Ground your views in the evidence
E.g. There is evidence to suggest that...
- Make connections between different bit of evidence
E.g. This links to...
- Evaluate the reliability of different pieces of evidence
E.g. I don't think this is a reliable source because...

Speaking like a Specialist

Speaking like a mathematician...

"I asked questions; I wanted to know why. They got used to me asking questions and being the only woman there"

Katherine Johnson



Katherine Johnson was a mathematician whose calculations led to the first American flights to space and the moon. She was known as a 'human computer' because of her impressive mathematical skill. As Katherine was calculating the trajectories and entry points of missions to space, she worked with many other mathematicians and used her voice to ask probing, clarifying and challenging questions so that she could reason and find the solutions needed.

Guidelines for speaking like a mathematician...

- Explain your understanding using examples and evidence
- Make **connections** to other subject areas. E.g. We've also learned about volume in science. The similarities are... differences are...
- Challenge others politely when you disagree with them by asking them to share their reasoning. E.g. "I've got a different answer, how did you find yours?"
- Ask for **proof** by asking probing and clarifying questions such as, "tell me how you know that..."

Challenge: Reason like a mathematician!

When we're given a maths problem, we might approach it in a very different way to the person sitting next to us! But understanding how somebody else thinks about a maths problem helps to develop our own mathematical **reasoning** skills.

Ask your teacher or an older sibling or family member to give you and a friend a tricky maths problem to work on together then:

Recorder / Solver

One person is the recorder and one person is the solver. The solver tells the recorder what to write down on paper to solve the problem. The recorder can ask lots of clarifying and probing questions to help understand their partners' thinking.

or

Incorrect!

If somebody was going to make a mistake solving your problem, what do you think it would be? Can you explain to your partner why somebody might make that mistake and why? Can they correct the mistake and explain their reasoning?

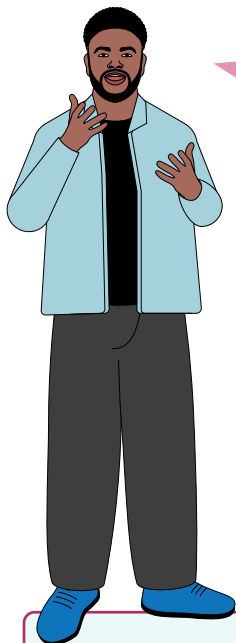


Ask for proof – 'how do you know ...?'



Check your partner's understanding as you go, and give further explanation if needed





“Clarity is everything. First you need to be clear about what you want to give to your audience, and then you need to make sure you deliver in a way they can receive it”

Casey Bailey

Casey Bailey is a writer, educator, performer and poet. He uses performance poetry to share stories and narratives with his audiences. So much of his performance comes from his body language and facial expression, guiding the audience through the stories he tells in his poetry. Casey writes and performs poetry that tells his story – what do you want to tell the world about yourself?

Speaking like a performance poet...

**Speaking
like a
Specialist**

Challenge: Perform like a poet

Watch Casey Bailey's poem, [Tap, Tap Tap](#). Casey shares his experience of ADHD, a condition that affects people's behaviour. What do you notice about his pace of speech, use of rhythm and repetition when he performs? How does this relate to the ideas in his poem?

Can you write and perform poetry about your experience at school? Tell a story of something that's happened to you at school through your poem and rehearse your performance. Practise reciting it, ready to share.



**Perform
your school
experience poetry
to an audience**

or

Casey recorded a video to accompany his poetry. Work with a small group of friends or classmates to add animation or live action to your poetry performance. How does each poet need to adapt their delivery to portray the emotion in the poem?



Experiment with your voice (pace, pitch, volume) and body language to convey your ideas



Choose your words to have maximum impact on your listeners

Guidelines for speaking like a performance poet...

- Use your **facial expression** to convey emotion and meaning
- Use **body language** and gesture to add flair and meaning to your recital
- Vary your **volume, pitch and speed**. Speaking more quickly indicates that part of the poem is urgent and important, whereas speaking slowly or pausing grabs the audience's attention
- Choose your words carefully. You might want to use repetition, like Casey has done, to emphasise an idea.

Speaking like a Specialist

Speaking like an artist...

"I paint my own reality. The only thing I know is that I paint because I need to, and I paint whatever passes through my head without any other consideration."

Frida Kahlo



Frida Kahlo was an artist famous for her self-portraits. Many people have described her paintings as 'fantasy' or 'magical'. Frida said that she painted whatever passed through her head – and her paintings often have a dream-like quality. Many people were drawn to her paintings and want to share the feelings they have when they look at them. A big part of being an artist is having your work critiqued or scrutinised. So, artists spend time looking at other artists' work and sharing their feelings about it. Can you remember a piece of art work that you really loved?

Guidelines for speaking like an artist...

- **Describe** what you see, the colours, the patterns, texture, shapes, lines etc.
- Share how the piece makes you feel
E.g. My first thought was...
It reminds me of...
It makes me feel...
- Ask questions about the piece of art... E.g. How was it made? Who owns the art work? Where is the artist from? When did they create this piece? What was happening in the world when this piece was created?

Challenge: Speak like an artist!

Find and appreciate a piece of art. If you can, visit a gallery, virtually or in person, for example The [Tate Modern](#) has online galleries. Choose a piece of art that you are interested in, and sit in front of it for a few minutes. Sketch the art work and jot down your observations – what questions do you have about the piece of art? Why do you think you were drawn to that one? Share your opinions and observations in one of following challenges:

Get together with some friends and recreate the pieces of art work you were interested in, using a different medium (paint, pencil, oil pastel, chalk, clay, collage etc). Once you're finished, share your final pieces and discuss why you chose that piece. What was it that interested you about it?

or

Plan, draft and perform a 2 minute, no-notes speech, describing the art work and the impact that it had on you. Remember to share your observations and reflections with your audience.



Show your feelings about your piece when you talk about it!



Add as much description as you can



Speaking like a Specialist

Now that you have completed your challenge and followed in the footsteps of accomplished subject specialists, reflect on how your oracy skills have developed!

- Which challenge did you choose?
- What oracy skills did you practise?
- Are there skills you'd like to develop further?
- How confident did you feel completing each challenge?

Speaking like a sportsperson

Speaking like a mathematician

Speaking like an artist

Speaking like a citizen

Speaking like a scientist

Speaking like a historian

Speaking like a poet



Speaking like a Specialist



This certificate is presented to

for successfully completing
Oracy October 2022

