CARSHALTON BOYS SPORTS COLLEGE

English Faculty · Oracy

Year 9 Scheme of Work

ESB Level 2 Certificate in Speech (Grade 4)
Speech to Connect Pathway

Academic Year 2026–2027

Excellence • Character • Aspiration

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Part One: Curriculum Vision and Rationale

1.1 Subject Vision

Oracy at Carshalton Boys Sports College is built on a simple conviction: that every boy deserves to be heard, and that the confidence to speak well is one of the most powerful and transferable gifts a school can give. Through our Building Stronger Foundations, Oracy underpins our overriding focus on improving students' writing. The ability to speak, listen and communicate is directly transferable to their ability to write, whilst also shaping self-esteem, resilience, collaboration and a secure sense of identity. This is not merely an English priority: the statutory National Curriculum states that developing pupils' spoken language enables them to "clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing" — a connection that applies in every classroom, in every subject. This Year 9 course prepares pupils for the ESB Level 2 Certificate in Speech (Grade 4), an externally assessed, Ofqual-regulated qualification, taken through the Speech to Connect pathway.

By July of Year 9, every pupil on this course should be able to research and deliver a structured four-minute talk on a person who matters to them; perform a piece of poetry, prose or drama from memory; read aloud expressively and comment with insight on character; and hold their own in a formal group discussion — asking thoughtful questions and responding with substance. Above all, each pupil should leave the year believing that their voice carries weight and that speaking in front of others is something they can do well.

1.2 The Qualification

The ESB Level 2 Certificate in Speech (Grade 4) is a pathway-based, Ofqual-regulated qualification (Ofqual reference 603/5192/5) designed to promote clear, confident, effective spoken communication. It is assessed externally by an ESB-trained assessor, in small groups of six learners, with each pupil assessed individually while also interacting with the group. Pupils can achieve Unsuccessful, Pass, Good Pass, Merit, Merit Plus or Distinction, with Good Pass and Merit Plus being endorsed grades. The assessment is compensatory: strength in one criterion can offset weakness in another.

We deliver the Speech to Connect pathway, which is assessed across four sections. Section 1, the Biographical Talk, is worth 40% of the assessment and forms the spine of the course. Sections 2, 3 and 4 — Speaking by Heart, Commentary on a Prepared Reading, and Listening, Responding and Exchanging Views — are each worth 20%. The whole assessment lasts thirteen to fifteen minutes per pupil.

1.3 Rationale for the Year's Sequencing

The course is sequenced to move pupils from the building blocks of spoken language to the integrated demands of the live assessment. Term 1 begins with a Foundations unit that establishes the disciplines of oracy — voice and breath, Standard English, structure and active listening — before pupils attempt the most demanding component, the four-minute Biographical Talk, which carries the greatest weighting and therefore the most teaching time. Term 2 develops the two literary components: Speaking by Heart, which trains memory and interpretation, and Commentary on a Prepared Reading, which develops expressive reading aloud and analytical comment. Term 3 turns to the discussion component, before a final integration phase in which pupils rehearse all four sections together, complete a full mock, and sit the live ESB assessment.

Within every unit, learning is sequenced from simple to complex and from familiar to unfamiliar. In the Biographical Talk, pupils choose and research a subject before they are asked to structure and perform. In Speaking by Heart, pupils understand and interpret a piece before they commit it to memory. This deliberate ordering reduces cognitive load and ensures that performance always rests on secure preparation.

1.4 National Curriculum Mapping — Key Stage 3 English: Spoken Language

The course is mapped directly to the statutory Spoken Language requirements of the National Curriculum for English at Key Stage 3. The table below shows where each requirement is taught and assessed across the units. Note that the National Curriculum (§6.1) also places an obligation on every subject — not English alone — to develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary; see section 1.10 for the cross-curricular mapping.

KS3 Spoken Language Requirement (National Curriculum, English)	Where it is developed
Use Standard English confidently in formal and informal contexts as the situation requires	All units
Give short speeches and presentations, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point	Units 1, 2
Plan for different purposes and audiences; select and organise information and ideas effectively	Units 1, 2
Use role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact	Units 3, 4
Rehearse and perform play scripts and poetry to generate discussion of language use and meaning	Units 3, 4
Explore aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings and their effects	Unit 4
Participate in discussions — summarising, building on others, asking questions to clarify and challenging courteously	Units 1, 5
Listen and respond in a range of contexts, evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and presentation	Units 1, 5

1.5 How the Curriculum Spirals

This course deliberately revisits and deepens the spoken-language and reading work of Years 7 and 8. Reading aloud, first practised in earlier key-stage English lessons, returns at greater depth in the Commentary on a Prepared Reading. Poetry and performance, encountered through class study, are revisited through Speaking by Heart. Discussion skills, introduced in earlier English and form-time debate, are formalised in the discussion unit. The four strands of the Oracy Framework — physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional — recur in every unit, so that no skill is ever finished: pupils meet familiar ideas in new and more demanding contexts, strengthening retention through spaced, spiral practice.

1.6 Key Concepts — The Oracy Framework

Each unit is organised around the four strands of the Oracy Framework, which are named explicitly in lessons so that pupils can see what makes a strong speaker and can talk about their own development:

- Physical — voice and body: breath, projection, pace, pause, tone and vocal variety; eye contact, posture, gesture and facial expression.
- Linguistic — language and register: Standard English, tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary, rhetorical and literary devices, and choosing register for purpose and audience.
- Cognitive — content and thinking: research and selection of material, structuring extended talk, reasoning and use of evidence, audience awareness, and keeping to the point and to time.
- Social and Emotional — talking with others: active listening, turn-taking, building on and courteously challenging others, confidence and the management of nerves.

Three further ideas thread across all four strands: Standard English (intelligible spoken language, with no required accent), Audience (the listener always shapes the choices a speaker makes), and Purpose (to inform, to move, to perform or to persuade).

1.7 Skills Pupils Will Develop

- Vocal skills: breath control and projection; pace, pause and vocal variety; clear, audible delivery in Standard English.
- Composition and structure: planning a coherent introduction, body and conclusion; signposting; keeping to a strict time limit.
- Research and selection: gathering material from a range of sources, then processing and selecting it to support reasoned views with evidence.
- Performance: memorisation strategies; interpretation of metre, structure, mood and atmosphere; expressive reading aloud and characterisation.
- Interaction: active listening; asking relevant open and thought-provoking questions; offering developed, substantiated contributions to discussion.

1.8 Knowledge Pupils Will Gain

- Secure, researched knowledge of one significant or interesting person — their life, achievements and importance.
- Detailed knowledge of a chosen literary text and its author, including plot, characterisation and the qualities of the writing.
- An understanding of rhetorical and oratorical technique, and of how voice and body convey meaning.
- Knowledge of the conventions of formal discussion — how to question, build, challenge and summarise courteously.
- An understanding of what Standard English is, and of how register changes with purpose and audience.

1.9 Preparation for GCSE, Post-16 and Future Destinations

The course is strongly forward-facing. The four-minute talk directly prepares pupils for the Spoken Language endorsement of GCSE English Language, in which candidates plan and deliver a formal presentation and respond to questions. The memorisation and reading-aloud components support the use of memorised quotation and expressive reading in GCSE English Literature, while the discussion unit develops the seminar skills expected in the sixth form.

The ESB qualification itself sits on a clear progression ladder. Pupils achieving the Grade 4 Certificate can progress to Grade 5 at the same level, and onward to the Level 3 Graded Examinations (Grades 6 and 8), which carry UCAS Tariff points for university and college admission. Beyond examinations, the confidence to speak, listen and present is decisive at interview, in apprenticeships and in almost every workplace — the most transferable preparation this course offers for adult life.

1.10 Oracy Across the Curriculum: the National Curriculum Mandate

The statutory National Curriculum (§6.1) places a clear obligation on every subject teacher, not just English: “Teachers should develop pupils’ spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject.” Fluency in spoken English is described as “an essential foundation for success in all subjects.” This course therefore contributes to a whole-school entitlement, not merely an English qualification. The skills pupils develop here — structured explanation, academic vocabulary, justification with evidence, active listening and formal discussion — are the same skills demanded across the secondary curriculum.

Crucially, the National Curriculum (§6.2) identifies spoken language as the precursor to effective writing: pupils who are taught to “give well-structured descriptions and explanations” and to “clarify their thinking” through talk are simultaneously organising their ideas for writing. This course’s emphasis on structured talk, logical sequencing and precise vocabulary therefore has measurable

benefits for written outcomes across all subjects — the explicit rationale behind CBSC's Building Stronger Foundations priority.

The table below shows how the skills taught in this course align with the spoken language requirements embedded in the programmes of study for Mathematics, Science, History and Geography — subjects whose national curriculum statements explicitly describe spoken language as central to learning in their disciplines.

Subject (NC Programme of Study)	What the NC requires of spoken language in this subject	Skills from this course that transfer directly
Mathematics	The NC Mathematics programme of study states that "the quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are key factors in developing their mathematical vocabulary and presenting a mathematical justification, argument or proof." Teachers must use discussion to probe and remedy misconceptions.	Structuring an argument with evidence (Unit 2); using precise vocabulary for effect (Units 1–2); explaining reasoning to a group (Unit 5). The cognitive strand of the Oracy Framework — reasoning, sequencing and use of evidence — directly mirrors the mathematical reasoning aim.
Science	The NC Science programme of study states that spoken language is key to "articulating scientific concepts clearly and precisely" and that pupils must be "assisted in making their thinking clear, both to themselves and others" through discussion that probes and remedies misconceptions.	Giving well-structured spoken explanations using technical vocabulary (Units 1–2); using speculative and hypothetical language in group discussion (Unit 5); developing vocabulary actively through the tier 2/3 instruction embedded in every unit (Unit 1).
History	The NC History programme of study requires pupils to "ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments" and to create "structured accounts" — skills that depend on the ability to express reasoning aloud with clarity and to challenge others' interpretations courteously in discussion.	Building and challenging arguments in formal discussion using evidence (Unit 5); asking thought-provoking open questions (Unit 5); structuring an extended spoken account with a clear introduction, body and conclusion (Unit 2).
Geography	The NC Geography programme of study requires pupils to "communicate geographical information in a variety of ways," including through extended writing and oral presentation, and to "collect, analyse and communicate" findings gathered through fieldwork — all of which depend on confident, structured spoken communication.	Presenting researched material to an audience with audio-visual support (Unit 2); selecting and organising information for a specific purpose (Unit 2); communicating findings clearly using appropriate register and vocabulary (Units 1–2).
All subjects	Pupils "should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. They should learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication." (NC §6.2)	Every element of this course: Standard English and register (Unit 1); justifying ideas with reasons and evidence (Units 2, 5); asking and evaluating questions (Unit 5); vocabulary development (Units 1–5); negotiating and building on others in discussion (Units 1, 5).

The NC also establishes a direct relationship between spoken language and improved writing. Section 6.3 states that pupils' writing "should include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read." This is a two-way process: speaking well organises

thinking for writing; writing well deepens the ideas available for speech. The vocabulary instruction embedded in every unit of this course — explicitly teaching tier 2 and tier 3 words before pupils need them in performance — is therefore also vocabulary instruction for writing, in line with the NC (§6.4) mandate that “pupils’ acquisition and command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum.”

Part Two: Inclusion, Character and the Wider Curriculum

2.1 Supporting Pupils with SEND

Oracy is highly accessible when talk is well-scaffolded and the disciplines of speaking are taught explicitly rather than assumed. The following strategies are embedded across the year:

- Talk frames and sentence stems: extended responses and discussion contributions are supported with frames such as 'I would build on that by…', 'One reason… is that…', and 'This shows that…'.
- Chunked preparation: talks and performances are built in small, structured steps — choose, research, plan, rehearse — so that no pupil faces the whole task at once.
- Cue cards and prompts: the ESB assessment itself permits notes in the talk and up to three prompts in Speaking by Heart, so prompt cards are a legitimate, taught strategy rather than a crutch to be removed.
- Verbal rehearsal: paired and small-group rehearsal precedes every performance, allowing pupils to try out ideas aloud in a low-stakes setting.
- Recorded practice: pupils record and replay their own talks to self-assess against clear, visual success criteria.
- Reasonable adjustments: where the standard format is not accessible, adjustments are arranged through ESB's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations policy.
- Pre-taught vocabulary: tier 2 and 3 vocabulary lists will be used and pre-taught to support SEND students with any unfamiliar language.

2.2 Supporting Pupil Premium (PP) Pupils

Disadvantaged pupils are not a single group, but the following whole-class approaches carry the strongest evidence for closing gaps and are used consistently:

- Explicit vocabulary instruction: each unit front-loads the tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary pupils need, narrowing the word gap that can otherwise limit confident talk.
- Live modelling: every performance task is modelled by the teacher and dissected with the class before pupils attempt it, so success is shown, not just described.
- Protected rehearsal time: rehearsal happens in lessons, in school, removing any dependence on a quiet space or resources at home.
- Cultural capital by design: subjects, texts and figures are chosen to broaden the world picture pupils carry, with all materials and recording equipment provided in school.

2.3 Supporting EAL Pupils

Spoken-language work offers EAL learners genuine opportunities to demonstrate ability while developing academic English. Importantly, ESB requires only that spoken language is intelligible to the assessor and group — there is no required accent or pronunciation model, which removes a significant barrier.

- Sentence frames that model academic spoken English structures for talks, commentary and discussion.
- Pre-teaching of unit-critical vocabulary in advance of the lessons in which it is needed, with bilingual support where appropriate.
- Visual stimulus — images, objects and short film — that allow meaning-making without relying solely on text.

- Performance and memory components that allow pupils to succeed through expression and delivery as their fluency grows.

2.4 Stretching High Prior Attainers (HPA)

Every assessment task in this booklet specifies both a Securing standard (Pass / Good Pass) and an Exceeding standard (Merit Plus / Distinction). HPA pupils are explicitly directed to the Exceeding column and coached to:

- Bring originality and creative thinking to the structure of a talk, especially in the introduction and conclusion.
- Use intelligent, sensitive pause and pacing, delivering with authority and a confident command of material.
- Offer a sustained, personal and imaginative interpretation in Speaking by Heart, conveying a sense of spontaneity.
- Ask thought-provoking open questions in discussion that genuinely challenge thinking, and make unprompted, original contributions that develop the group's understanding.

Optional 'Gold' extensions are embedded for rapid finishers — more demanding texts, more ambitious subjects, and opportunities to lead and chair discussion.

2.5 Character Development

Few subjects develop character as directly as oracy. Across the year pupils develop:

- Confidence and resilience: public speaking is uncomfortable, and pupils are coached patiently through repeated rehearsal, feedback and redrafting until the discomfort becomes mastery.
- Empathy: the biographical study of another person's life, the group-based assessment, and the discipline of genuine listening all require pupils to attend closely to others.
- Integrity: forming and defending a view, and responding honestly when they do not know an answer, teach pupils to speak truthfully and think for themselves.
- Leadership: chairing discussion, supporting peers in rehearsal and modelling good listening build the quiet authority of a leader.

2.6 Cultural Capital

This course gives pupils a rich portfolio of cultural capital: encounter with significant figures from history, sport, science and the arts; engagement with poetry, prose and drama, both canonical and contemporary; an understanding of the long tradition of public speaking and rhetoric; and, above all, the disposition to stand and speak in public — a social and civic good that opens doors throughout life.

2.7 Careers Links

Confident oracy is among the most career-enabling skills a school can teach. Each unit links to real pathways in which spoken communication is decisive:

Unit	Career Pathways
Foundations of Oracy	Any role requiring presentation and teamwork — broadly transferable across every sector.
The Biographical Talk	Journalist, broadcaster, teacher, lecturer, museum curator, presenter, public-relations officer.
Speaking by Heart	Actor, theatre practitioner, voice artist, performance poet, drama teacher, audiobook narrator.
Commentary on a Prepared Reading	Editor, librarian, English teacher, literary critic, podcaster, audiobook producer.

Unit	Career Pathways
Listening, Responding & Exchanging Views	Barrister or advocate, politician, diplomat, mediator, negotiator, salesperson, team leader, manager.

Each unit closes with a short ‘Careers Spotlight’ — a practitioner profile with a Year-9-accessible account of what they do and the educational route into the role.

2.8 Curriculum Design Principles

- Knowledge-rich: substantive knowledge — of a person, a text, the conventions of discussion — is treated as the prerequisite for skilful performance, not an optional extra.
- Mastery: all pupils secure the core disciplines of each unit before extension is set; the PATHS cycle ensures targets are given, practised and revisited.
- Spiral: the four strands of the Oracy Framework return in new contexts across every unit, deepening understanding and retention.
- Concept-led: each unit is framed around the Oracy Framework strands rather than a list of tasks, giving pupils a stable scaffold for organising their learning.
- Assessment-literate: the ESB grade descriptors are taught explicitly, so that pupils understand exactly what Securing and Exceeding performance sound like.

Part Three: Assessment — The PATHS Methodology

3.1 Rationale

All formative assessment of spoken work on this course uses the PATHS framework — the whole-school marking and feedback model at CBSC, applied here to oracy. PATHS makes feedback a learning event rather than a grading event. Research consistently shows that pupils make less progress when given a mark alone, and least when given a mark and a comment together, than when they receive a clear, mark-less target they then act on. Because much oracy is fleeting, feedback is given against an observed or recorded performance, and the pupil response often takes the form of a re-rehearsal as well as a written reflection — closing the loop so that assessment genuinely drives improvement.

In line with the CBSC Marking and Feedback Policy, the Student Response (S) is mandatory: all pupils must engage with the feedback provided under the H element, dedicating curriculum time to completing a re-rehearsal, redraft or written reflection. The school policy requires that the student response is completed in green pen, signalling the closing of the gap, and teachers will carry out routine spot checks to ensure quality engagement rather than mere compliance. As an English/Oracy course at Key Stage 3, the minimum PATHS frequency is three formal feedback cycles per term — met by the assessment schedule below. Note that a PATHS response to a homework submission (such as a submitted self-recording) also counts towards this quota.

3.2 The PATHS Framework

	Stage	What it means in Year 9 Oracy
P	Positive Comment	Begin with a genuine, specific strength — not a hollow phrase. For example: ‘Your introduction to your talk on Marcus Rashford was original and immediately engaged the group, and you held eye contact throughout the opening.’
A	Attainment (Grade)	State clearly where the performance sits against the ESB descriptors, using the Securing / Exceeding language from this booklet. For example: ‘This is performing at Securing level (Good Pass). To reach Exceeding you need intelligent use of pause and audio-visual material that is well discussed, not just shown.’
T	Target to Improve	Give one specific, actionable target — never more than one. For example: ‘Your next step is to use deliberate pauses after each key point so the talk is unhurried and the audience can absorb your ideas.’
H	How-To Instructions	Give concrete, replicable steps. For example: ‘To do this: (1) mark three pause points in your notes; (2) count two beats silently at each; (3) make eye contact with a different member of the group during each pause.’
S	Student Response	The pupil acts on the feedback — re-rehearsing the targeted section and noting in writing what they changed and what they will do differently next time.

3.3 Assessment Schedule

The following assessment points are built into the year. All formative points use PATHS; the final assessment is the external ESB examination, delivered by an ESB-trained assessor in groups of six.

Unit	Assessment Type	Focus
1: Foundations	Baseline formative talk	A one- to two-minute self-introduction to establish a starting point.
2: Biographical Talk	PATHS formative (×2)	Full four-minute talk with audio-visual support (Lessons 7 and 8).

Unit	Assessment Type	Focus
3: Speaking by Heart	PATHS formative	Memorised performance of a chosen piece (Lesson 6).
4: Commentary on a Prepared Reading	PATHS formative	Character commentary and prepared reading (Lesson 6).
5: Listening, Responding & Exchanging Views	PATHS formative	Formal group discussion in sixes (Lesson 5).
6: Integration	Full mock assessment	Complete 13–15 minute mock across all four sections (Lesson 3).
6: Integration	Summative — external	Live ESB Level 2 Certificate in Speech assessment (Lesson 6).

Unit 1: Foundations of Oracy

Unit 1: Foundations of Oracy	Term: Term 1 (September)	Lessons: 5

Unit Rationale

This opening unit establishes the disciplines of spoken communication before any assessed component is attempted. Using the four strands of the Oracy Framework as its organising structure, it teaches pupils to control their voice and body, to choose Standard English and appropriate register, to structure what they say, and to listen and respond well to others. It also sets the ground rules for talk that will govern every subsequent lesson, and gives every pupil an early, low-stakes speaking experience so that confidence is built from the very first weeks.

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Targets

- The four strands of the Oracy Framework — physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional — and what each contributes to effective speaking.
- What Standard English is, and that intelligibility, not accent, is what matters.
- Breath control, projection, pace and pause, and how they make a voice clear and audible.
- The shape of effective talk: a clear introduction, body and conclusion, and the importance of keeping to time.
- The ground rules for discussion, including how to build on and courteously challenge others.

Homework

- Record and submit a one-minute spoken self-introduction (baseline).
- Vocal warm-up and breathing practice log.
- Tier 2 / tier 3 vocabulary collection task.
- Plan a short structured talk and gather topic ideas for the Biographical Talk.

National Curriculum Links

- Use Standard English confidently in formal and informal contexts as the situation requires.
- Give short speeches and presentations, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point.
- Participate in discussions, building on others and challenging courteously, and listen and respond appropriately.

Securing vs Exceeding Expectations

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Voice and Speech	Clear and audible voice with some hesitation; mostly Standard English.	Engaging, well-paced voice with effective pause; Standard English used confidently throughout.
Structure	A short talk with a recognisable beginning, middle and end.	A tightly structured talk that keeps precisely to time, with an original opening and close.
Listening and Response	Listens and gives a brief, appropriate response when prompted.	Listens closely and builds on or courteously challenges others without prompting.

Weekly Conceptual Sequence

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
1	The Oracy Framework & Why Voice Matters	L1: What is oracy? The four strands; ground rules for talk (Agree–Build–Challenge).	Explain the four strands of oracy; agree class ground rules; deliver a short self-introduction in Standard English.	Record 1-min self-introduction
2	Physical: Voice and Body	L2: Breath, projection, pace and pause; eye contact, posture and gesture.	Project an audible voice using breath control; use pause and eye contact deliberately.	Vocal warm-up log
3	Linguistic: Register & Standard English	L3: Standard English vs informal register; tier 2/3 vocabulary; an introduction to rhetorical devices.	Select register for audience and purpose; use accurate Standard English; deploy one rhetorical device.	Vocabulary collection task
4	Cognitive: Structuring Talk	L4: Introduction–body–conclusion; signposting; keeping to the point and to time.	Plan and deliver a structured 1–2 minute talk that keeps to time.	Plan a short talk
5	Social & Emotional: Listening & Confidence	L5: Active listening; building and challenging courteously; managing nerves.	Listen and respond appropriately; ask a relevant question; reflect on confidence strategies.	Gather Biographical Talk topic ideas

Careers Spotlight: the broadcaster — how a presenter trains the voice and structures live talk. (Routes: A-levels or T-levels in media; journalism or broadcasting degrees; entry apprenticeships.)

Unit 2: The Biographical Talk (Section 1, 40%)

Unit 2: The Biographical Talk	Term: Term 1 (October–December)	Lessons: 8

Unit Rationale

The Biographical Talk is the largest single component of the qualification, worth 40% of the assessment, and so receives the most teaching time. Pupils research and deliver a four-minute talk on an influential or interesting person — a sportsperson, an explorer, an entertainer or a personal role model — outlining the subject's achievements and importance and supporting the talk with well-chosen audio-visual material. The unit builds methodically from choice and research, through content and structure, to delivery, audio-visual support and audience awareness, culminating in rehearsal, PATHS feedback and a polished final performance. It is the central preparation for the GCSE English Language Spoken Language endorsement.

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Targets

- How to choose a worthwhile subject and gather material from a range of sources, not the internet alone.
- How to process and select researched material, and to support views with reasons and evidence.
- How to structure a four-minute talk with a clear, original introduction, body and conclusion, and keep to time.
- How to deliver naturally — using notes without reading from them — with vocal variety, pace and pause.
- How to select and discuss audio-visual material so that it furthers understanding, avoiding over- and under-reliance.
- How to sustain eye contact with the whole group and use appropriate body language.

Homework

- Subject choice and research notes from multiple sources.
- Draft of key points with supporting reasons and evidence.
- Full talk plan, timed; preparation of audio-visual support.
- Rehearsal with a peer audience; redraft in response to a PATHS target.

National Curriculum Links

- Plan for different purposes and audiences; select and organise information and ideas effectively.
- Give short speeches and presentations, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point.
- Use Standard English confidently; use intonation, tone, volume and pause to add impact.

Securing vs Exceeding Expectations

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Structure	Planned introduction, body and conclusion; runs within roughly 30–50 seconds of the time limit.	Effective planning and creative thinking, with originality, clarity and detail in the opening and close; adheres to the time limit.
Content	Evidence of research; appropriate content, partially explained, with brief reasons for one or more views.	Effective research and personal interest, with selective use of material

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
		and detailed, evidence-based reasons across the majority of views.
Voice and Speech	Clear, audible voice with some hesitation or some pause; mostly Standard English.	Engaging, well-paced delivery with intelligent use of pause and authority; Standard English used confidently throughout.
Audio-Visual Support	Basic use of material, with some over- or under-reliance.	Effective, accomplished use of well-chosen material that is well discussed, engages listeners and furthers understanding.
Audience Awareness	Some eye contact with the assessor and/or group.	Regular, confident eye contact with all of the group and consistent, confident body language.

Weekly Conceptual Sequence

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
1	Choosing a Subject & Researching	L1: Selecting an influential or interesting person; research skills; sourcing from beyond the internet.	Choose a worthwhile subject; gather and begin selecting researched material.	Research notes
2	From Research to Content	L2: Processing and digesting research; supporting views with reasons and evidence.	Explain points from own research; give reasons that support a view.	Draft key points
3	Structuring the Four-Minute Talk	L3: Introduction, body and conclusion; originality in opening and close; timing.	Structure a four-minute talk; craft an original introduction and conclusion.	Full talk plan
4	Voice and Delivery	L4: Pace, pause and vocal variety; delivering naturally rather than reading.	Deliver naturally with notes; use pause and pacing for effect.	Rehearse and time
5	Audio-Visual Support	L5: Selecting and discussing well-chosen material; the power of imagery; avoiding over/under-reliance.	Integrate and discuss audio-visual material so that it furthers understanding.	Prepare AV support
6	Audience Awareness	L6: Eye contact with the whole group; body language and facial expression.	Maintain regular eye contact; use appropriate body language throughout.	Rehearse with peer audience
7	Rehearsal & PATHS Feedback	L7: Deliver the full talk in groups of six; peer and teacher PATHS feedback.	Deliver a complete four-minute talk; respond to a single PATHS target.	Redraft against target
8	Polished Performance	L8: Final delivery and written student response; reflection.	Deliver an improved talk; complete a PATHS student response.	Select Speaking by Heart piece

Careers Spotlight: the museum curator — researching a life and telling its story to an audience. (Routes: history, English or arts degrees; heritage and museum-studies apprenticeships.)

Unit 3: Speaking by Heart (Section 2, 20%)

Unit 3: Speaking by Heart	Term: Term 2 (January–February)	Lessons: 6

Unit Rationale

In Speaking by Heart, pupils introduce and then perform from memory a piece of poetry, prose or drama on the theme of a place or a person. The unit trains two distinct disciplines: interpretation — understanding metre, structure, mood and atmosphere — and secure memorisation, supported in the assessment by up to three prompts at the Securing standard. Choices are made for genuine personal connection and for the scope they offer for vocal variety, and pupils learn to communicate meaning to an audience through voice, staging, gesture and facial expression. The unit deepens the performance work of Key Stage 3 English and supports the memorised quotation demanded by GCSE English Literature.

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Targets

- Criteria for selecting a worthwhile piece: substantial length, complexity of theme, and stylistic and linguistic variety.
- How to introduce a piece with title, author and thoughtful reasons for choice.
- How to interpret metre and/or structure and convey mood and atmosphere.
- Strategies for secure memorisation, working from sense as well as words.
- How to use inflection, emphasis, pace and pause, and how staging and gesture communicate meaning.

Homework

- Secure final choice of piece, with title and author.
- Annotate the piece for meaning, mood and emphasis.
- Memorise the piece section by section using spaced retrieval.
- Full rehearsal from memory ahead of performance.

National Curriculum Links

- Rehearse and perform poetry and play scripts to generate discussion of language use and meaning.
- Use role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact.
- Use Standard English confidently in a formal performance context.

Securing vs Exceeding Expectations

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Introduction	Brief introduction with title, author and a reason for choice.	A well-developed introduction with three or more thoughtful reasons, communicated enthusiastically to awaken interest.
Memory	Lines delivered mostly accurately with up to three prompts.	Words and sense entirely secure, with no prompts and at most minor hesitation.
Interpretation	Interpretation focuses on metre or structure; mood partially conveyed.	A sustained, personal and imaginative interpretation that conveys mood and

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
		atmosphere with a sense of spontaneity.
Voice and Audience	Clear, audible voice; meaning partly communicated through eye contact and/or staging.	Free, fluent and sensitively paced delivery; meaning fully communicated through confident, selective use of staging, gesture and expression.

Weekly Conceptual Sequence

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
1	Choosing a Piece	L1: Selection criteria (length, content, language; theme of place or person); personal connection.	Select a suitable piece and justify the choice with thoughtful reasons.	Secure final choice & author
2	Understanding & Interpretation	L2: Metre and structure; mood and atmosphere; what the piece means to me.	Explain the qualities of the piece and plan an interpretation.	Annotate the piece
3	Memorisation Strategies	L3: Chunking; spaced retrieval; working from sense, not only words.	Begin secure memorisation of the piece.	Memorise section by section
4	Vocal Interpretation	L4: Inflection, emphasis, pace and pause; creating mood through the voice.	Perform with vocal variety that conveys mood and atmosphere.	Rehearse with expression
5	Staging & Audience	L5: Eye contact, staging, gesture and facial expression.	Communicate meaning to the audience through eye contact and staging.	Full rehearsal from memory
6	Performance & PATHS	L6: Perform from memory; PATHS feedback; written student response.	Perform from memory; respond to a single PATHS target.	Begin selecting reading for Unit 4

Careers Spotlight: the actor — interpreting and memorising text for performance. (Routes: drama school, performing-arts qualifications, theatre apprenticeships.)

Unit 4: Commentary on a Prepared Reading (Section 3, 20%)

Unit 4: Commentary on a Prepared Reading	Term: Term 2 (March)	Lessons: 6

Unit Rationale

In this component pupils introduce a chosen reading by commenting on the characters and their place within the plot, then read aloud a prepared extract of about 150–200 words. The unit develops two complementary skills: analytical comment on character, which requires secure knowledge of the whole book; and expressive reading aloud, with a clear contrast between narrative and dialogue and characters brought to life through the voice. It builds directly on the close reading and characterisation work of Key Stage 3 English and rehearses the reading-aloud and characterisation skills valued in GCSE English Literature.

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Targets

- How to select a book and a suitable 150–200 word extract, and to know the whole plot well enough to comment with insight.
- How to move from describing characters to commenting on their roles within the plot.
- How to read aloud fluently, with attention to pace and timing.
- How to create a clear contrast between narrative and dialogue and bring characters to life through vocal variety.
- How to share the reading with the whole group through eye contact and expression.

Homework

- Read around the chosen book; select and confirm the extract.
- Draft the character commentary, moving from description to insight.
- Rehearse the extract for fluency and characterisation.
- Full rehearsal of commentary and reading together.

National Curriculum Links

- Explore aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings and their effects.
- Rehearse and perform to generate discussion of language use and meaning.
- Use role, intonation, tone, volume and pause to add impact in reading aloud.

Securing vs Exceeding Expectations

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Commentary	A brief commentary with title and author and a few partly developed comments on character.	A full commentary containing a mature analysis of characters and their roles, with interest aroused by genuine enthusiasm for the book.
Style (Reading Aloud)	Reads aloud fluently with some attention to pace and timing.	Reads fluently and expressively with sensitive pace and timing, bringing characters fully to life.
Voice and Speech	Clear, audible voice with some vocal variety.	A free, engaging delivery with sensitivity to the text and intelligent use of pause.

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Audience Awareness	Some eye contact at the beginning and end of the reading.	Regular, confident eye contact with the whole group and consistent, confident body language.

Weekly Conceptual Sequence

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
1	Choosing a Book & Extract	L1: Selecting a book; choosing a 150–200 word extract; knowing the whole plot.	Select a book and extract; summarise the plot accurately.	Read around the book
2	Commenting on Character	L2: Insight into characters and their roles in the plot; moving from description to analysis.	Comment on characters with insight into their roles.	Draft commentary
3	Reading Aloud Fluently	L3: Pace, timing and fluency; contrast between narrative and dialogue.	Read aloud fluently with a clear narrative–dialogue contrast.	Rehearse the extract
4	Bringing Characters to Life	L4: Vocal variety, characterisation and sensitivity to the text.	Bring characters to life through deliberate vocal choices.	Rehearse with characterisation
5	Audience & Eye Contact	L5: Sharing the reading with the group; eye contact and expression.	Engage the audience while reading aloud.	Full rehearsal
6	Performance & PATHS	L6: Deliver commentary and reading; PATHS feedback; student response.	Deliver the commentary and reading; respond to a single PATHS target.	Prepare discussion topics

Careers Spotlight: the audiobook narrator — reading aloud to bring a text to life for a listener. (Routes: drama, English or media study; voice-work and publishing apprenticeships.)

Unit 5: Listening, Responding & Exchanging Views (Section 4, 20%)

Unit 5: Listening, Responding & Exchanging Views	Term: Term 3 (April–May)	Lessons: 5

Unit Rationale

The final assessed component is a five-minute formal group discussion in which pupils respond to questions from the group and the assessor in relation to the first three activities, and actively contribute by asking questions and offering comments. This unit makes explicit the discipline of genuine listening, the difference between closed and open questions, and the value of full, substantiated responses. Pupils are taught to ask one thought-provoking question at a time, to develop the exchange of views with substance, and to make unprompted, original contributions that develop the group's understanding. It rehearses the seminar and debate skills expected at GCSE and in the sixth form.

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Targets

- How to listen actively and respond appropriately, building on and courteously challenging others.
- The difference between closed and open questions, and how to ask thought-provoking questions that challenge thinking.
- How to give full, developed responses, and how to admit uncertainty gracefully.
- How to make unprompted, detailed and original contributions that develop the group's understanding.
- The convention of asking one question at a time so that a speaker can respond clearly.

Homework

- Active-listening log from a discussion or broadcast.
- Prepare a set of open questions on peers' talks and performances.
- Anticipate likely questions on own work and plan full responses.
- Revise content across all four sections in preparation for the full mock.

National Curriculum Links

- Participate in discussions, summarising and building on what has been said, asking questions to clarify and inform, and challenging courteously.
- Listen and respond in a range of contexts, evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and presentation.
- Use Standard English confidently in a formal discussion.

Securing vs Exceeding Expectations

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Responding to Questions	Appropriate, brief or partly developed responses to questions.	Full, confident responses to all questions, with an exchange of views that has substance and develops understanding.
Asking Questions	One or more relevant but closed questions.	Relevant, open questions that are thought-provoking and challenge thinking.

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Contributing to Discussion	One or two brief contributions, sometimes when prompted.	Unprompted, detailed and original contributions that support and develop the group's understanding.

Weekly Conceptual Sequence

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
1	The Art of Listening	L1: Active listening; building on and challenging courteously.	Listen and respond appropriately within a discussion.	Active-listening log
2	Asking Good Questions	L2: Closed vs open questions; thought-provoking questions; one question at a time.	Ask relevant open questions that seek further information.	Prepare questions on peers' work
3	Responding with Substance	L3: Full, developed responses; admitting uncertainty gracefully.	Give full responses that develop the exchange of views.	Anticipate likely questions
4	Contributing to Discussion	L4: Unprompted, detailed and original contributions that develop understanding.	Contribute to discussion without prompting.	Revise across all four sections
5	Mock Discussion & PATHS	L5: Formal group discussion in sixes; PATHS feedback; student response.	Participate in a formal discussion; respond to a single PATHS target.	Prepare for the full mock

Careers Spotlight: the barrister — listening, questioning and arguing persuasively in a formal setting. (Routes: law degree or apprenticeship; Bar training; strong A-levels.)

Unit 6: Integration, Mock and Final Assessment

Unit 6: Integration, Mock and Final Assessment	Term: Term 3 (May–July)	Lessons: 7

Unit Rationale

The closing unit brings the four components together under the conditions of the live assessment. Pupils rehearse the sections back to back in groups of six, complete a full thirteen- to fifteen-minute mock observed in the style of an ESB assessor, and act on individual PATHS targets to strengthen their weakest section before the examination. The unit culminates in the live ESB assessment, delivered by an ESB-trained assessor, and closes with structured reflection and guidance on progression — to Grade 5, and onward to the UCAS-bearing Level 3 grades — so that pupils see this qualification as the first rung of a longer ladder.

Knowledge and Skill Acquisition Targets

- How to move smoothly between the four assessed sections within a single sitting.
- How to sustain voice, focus and audience awareness across a full assessment.
- How to interpret PATHS feedback and prioritise the single most valuable improvement.
- Strategies for managing nerves and performing reliably under assessment conditions.
- The progression routes beyond Grade 4 and what they make possible.

Homework

- Refine each section in response to run-through feedback.
- Act on individual PATHS targets from the mock.
- Final, full rehearsal ahead of the live assessment.

National Curriculum Links

- Use Standard English confidently across a range of formal speaking contexts.
- Give presentations, perform, read aloud and participate in discussion to a sustained standard.
- Plan, rehearse and evaluate spoken language for a real audience and purpose.

Securing vs Exceeding Expectations

Assessment Focus	Securing (Pass / Good Pass)	Exceeding (Merit Plus / Distinction)
Sustained Performance	Completes all four sections to a Securing standard within the time.	Sustains an Exceeding standard across all four sections, with confident command throughout.
Response to Feedback	Acts on the PATHS target with some improvement to the weakest section.	Acts decisively on feedback, transforming the weakest section to an Exceeding standard.
Assessment Readiness	Manages nerves and delivers reliably under mock conditions.	Performs with authority and apparent ease under full assessment conditions.

Weekly Conceptual Sequence

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
1	Full Run-Through I	L1: Sections 1 and 2 (talk and Speaking by Heart) back to back, in sixes.	Deliver the talk and memorised piece in sequence.	Refine per feedback

Wk	Key Concept / Focus	Lessons	Shared Outcomes	Homework
2	Full Run-Through II	L2: Sections 3 and 4 (reading and discussion), in sixes.	Deliver the reading and take part in discussion in sequence.	Refine per feedback
3	Whole Mock Assessment	L3: Full 13–15 minute mock in groups of six, observed assessor-style.	Complete a full mock across all four sections.	Act on PATHS targets
4	PATHS Feedback & Targets	L4: Individual targets; re-rehearse the weakest section.	Improve the weakest component against a single target.	Targeted practice
5	Final Polishing	L5: Dress rehearsal; assessment logistics; managing nerves.	Become assessment-ready and confident.	Final rehearsal
6	ESB Live Assessment	L6: ESB-trained assessor visits; live assessment in groups of six.	Complete the ESB Level 2 Certificate in Speech.	—
7	Reflection & Next Steps	L7: Reflection; progression to Grade 5 and Level 3; celebrating achievement.	Reflect on progress and plan next steps in oracy.	—

Careers Spotlight: the politician or diplomat — performing, persuading and negotiating in public life. (Routes: politics, law, international relations or PPE; debating and public-speaking experience.)

End of Year 9 Scheme of Work

This scheme of work has been designed to deliver a coherent, ambitious and assessment-literate Year 9 oracy curriculum that prepares pupils for the ESB Level 2 Certificate in Speech while developing them as confident, articulate and courteous young speakers. Feedback and amendments to this scheme should be directed to the Head of English for inclusion in the next annual review.