

## GRADE 6: ORAL LANGUAGE

### ORAL DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION – HEROES AND IDOLS

#### PREVIOUS LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students have practised strategies for outlining arguments, points of view, paraphrasing, and asking clarifying questions.

#### CONTEXT

The teacher designed a unit, rich in oral language activities, that focussed on a topic of general interest: heroes, superheroes, and idols.

The teacher reviewed the skills of effective interaction and communication that had been taught, modelled, and practised during the year (e.g., appropriate ways to include and support others and to respond to others' feelings, using body language and words). The class also reviewed how to adjust voice and tone for various contexts. The teacher reminded students about good listening skills, including asking clarifying questions and paraphrasing the speaker's ideas.

#### DESCRIPTION

The teacher wrote the following on the chalkboard:

"I believe there is a hero inside each of us!"

Students responded to the statement. Then students discussed the following questions:

- What is the difference between a hero and an idol?
- What makes a hero? What makes an idol?
- What does the type of hero or idol tell you about people's values?
- Should sports figures be considered heroes or idols?
- What are some roles that superheroes play?
- What are your criteria for selecting a hero or an idol?

Students worked in pairs to talk about their views on heroes, superheroes, and idols. Then the pairs joined together, forming groups of four. The members of each group asked one another clarifying questions to sustain and extend the interactions. Each group summarized its perspectives and reported these to the larger group.

Following the initial discussion, students explored the idea of fictional superheroes. Students individually completed a chart outlining the qualities of familiar superheroes. They discussed their ideas and compared the qualities of superheroes with those of heroes and idols.

Students further refined their thinking by talking about people they admired as heroes and idols and by discussing the qualities that made them so. Based on this discussion, students developed a set of criteria as to what makes a hero or idol. They also generated questions they hoped each presentation would address.

Students then worked individually to develop oral presentations on a person they considered their personal hero or idol. Each student developed an outline of key ideas, including a timeline of the person's life, his or her admirable qualities, and why this person deserved to be a hero or idol. Based on these outlines, students developed their presentations.

Following each presentation, students asked the speaker questions to clarify meaning. For each presentation, students also noted the viewpoints and key ideas expressed. After the presentations, students reflected individually on their own participation and presentation, using a self-assessment sheet developed by the teacher.

**Criteria for Assessment****PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- A1 use speaking and listening to interact with others for the purposes of
- contributing to group success
  - discussing and comparing ideas and opinions (e.g., debating)
  - improving and deepening comprehension
  - discussing concerns and resolving problems
  - completing a variety of tasks
- A2 use speaking to explore, express, and present a range of ideas, information, and feelings for different purposes and audiences, by
- using prior knowledge and/or other sources of evidence
  - staying on topic in focussed discussions
  - presenting in a clear, focussed, organized, and effective manner
  - explaining and effectively supporting a viewpoint
- A4 select and use strategies when interacting with others, including
- accessing prior knowledge
  - making and sharing connections
  - asking questions for clarification and understanding
  - taking turns as speaker and listener
  - paraphrasing to clarify meaning
- A5 select and use strategies when expressing and presenting ideas, information, and feelings, including
- setting a purpose
  - accessing prior knowledge
  - generating ideas
  - making and sharing connections
  - asking questions to clarify and confirm meaning
  - organizing information
  - practising delivery
  - self-monitoring and self-correcting in response to feedback
- A6 select and use strategies when listening to make and clarify meaning, including
- accessing prior knowledge
  - making predictions about content before listening
  - focussing on the speaker
  - listening for specifics
  - generating questions
  - recalling, summarizing, and synthesizing
  - drawing inferences and conclusions
  - distinguishing between fact and opinion
  - visualizing
  - monitoring comprehension

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### Criteria for Assessment

#### SELECTED CRITERIA

The teacher developed assessment criteria from a variety of sources, including

- Grade 6 Rubric for Oral Language (see following example)
- Grade 6 Suggested Achievement Indicators (see Student Achievement section)
- Classroom discussion about appropriate criteria for an oral presentation

#### Assessment Criteria for this Activity

The student can

- use a range of appropriate words and expressions for responding to requests and supporting others
- use nonverbal cues to support others
- focus on speaker; maintain a listening posture
- check with others to ensure that own ideas or viewpoints are understood and supported
- ask relevant questions to sustain and extend interactions
- build on others' ideas
- approach oral language activities with confidence
- express a clear purpose
- keep generally focussed in a presentation
- provide substantive and relevant ideas
- provide information logically
- show awareness of listeners and audience
- present interesting and clear material
- speak clearly, and is easy to hear and understand
- use appropriate pacing
- present visual aids at appropriate times

#### STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

- I contributed relevant ideas to the discussions.
- I used appropriate behaviours to show that I was listening well.
- I included interesting ideas.
- I made an effort to appeal to the audience (e.g., with humour, personal examples).
- I paraphrased the speaker's ideas.
- I asked questions that extended the discussion.
- I set a goal for improvement.

**ASSESSMENT SAMPLES FOR GRADE 6 ORAL LANGUAGE:  
HEROES AND IDOLS**

*1. Teacher observation of presentations and interactions*

During the presentations and student responses, the teacher referred to the list of selected criteria to record anecdotal observations for each student on a class list. For one student, the teacher noted an overall lack of confidence, both in presenting and in speaking during discussions. It was difficult to judge the student’s overall oral language development because the presentation was delivered in a soft voice and was hard to follow.

*Teacher:* This student may need further support in

- approaching oral language with confidence
- providing information logically
- delivering a generally focussed presentation with a clear purpose
- providing substantive and relevant ideas

I’m not sure whether this student is having difficulty with organizing and expressing her ideas, or if she merely lacks confidence. I need more assessment information.

*2. Sample student self-assessment*

**SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ORAL PARTICIPATION:  
HEROES AND IDOLS**

Did I contribute relevant ideas to the discussion  Yes  Somewhat  No

What behaviours did I exhibit that told others I was listening well?

*I looked at the speaker and I asked a question.*

*Teacher:* This student is able to set a goal that is appropriate to the selected criteria.

Did my presentation contain interesting ideas and appeal to the audience?

Yes  Somewhat  No

Was I able to paraphrase the speaker’s ideas and ask questions that extended the discussion?

Yes  Somewhat  No

What goal(s) do I need to set for myself to improve my ability to discuss and dialogue with others?

*I need to share more ideas in the small group.  
I will try to speak up.*

### 3. Excerpt of conversation between teacher and student

Following the observations and review of the student's self-assessment, the teacher initiated a conversation to gain a deeper understanding of the student's oral language development. The conversation was part of a further activity in which students talked about people they admired and discussed the qualities that made them heroes or idols.

T: What are the characteristics that a hero has to have? What makes them different from other people?

S: There shouldn't be much of a difference. You can become a hero in your own school, the world, and in your family. You can run for breast cancer. You can become a hero but not famously but you can be other people's hero or your own hero or your grandma's hero. A hero to me is someone who has a goal and achieves that goal and that is inspirational to everybody else because they were determined.

T: Are there any people that you know that you would consider a hero?

S: I consider my uncle a hero.

T: Why is he a hero?

S: He is a hero to me because he got through some really rough times when his family wasn't accepting him for who he is because he is a dancer. And his dad wanted him to play hockey. He wasn't accepted by a lot of people in our family, or his friends. And he still got through that period of time and he is now dancing on Broadway. He's still trying to help me and it really inspires me how he got through all that and came to be himself.

T: What do you think are the characteristics that made him stick with it when everybody else thought that dancing was not a good thing for him to do?

S: One was determination. I know that he believes in himself. Probably not to care what other people think but just to go do what you love doing.

*Teacher:* Based on the combination of presentation, student conference and self-assessment, I believe this student fully meets expectations on the Grade 6 Rubric for Oral Language. In a more personal conversation, the student was able to provide substantive and relevant ideas, make logical connections, and speak clearly and with confidence. She needs further support to develop confidence when speaking in front of a larger audience.

4. Individual student profile based on observations, student self-assessment, and individual conference

QUICK SCALE: GRADE 6 ORAL LANGUAGE

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>STRATEGIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confirms that own ideas are understood</li> <li>asks questions to sustain and extend interactions</li> <li>builds on others' ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeats own ideas</li> <li>asks relevant questions, with teacher support</li> <li>builds on others' ideas, with teacher support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>restates own ideas to solicit understanding from others</li> <li>asks relevant questions</li> <li>occasionally builds on others' ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confirms that own ideas are understood</li> <li>asks relevant questions to sustain and extend interactions</li> <li>builds on others' ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confirms own ideas or viewpoints are understood and extends conversation</li> <li>asks a variety of questions to sustain and extend interactions, and find out others' views</li> <li>builds on others' ideas to deepen thinking</li> </ul>
<b>EXCHANGING IDEAS/ INFORMATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear focussed purpose and substantive and relevant ideas</li> <li>awareness of audience</li> <li>clear varied language</li> <li>expresses own views appropriately with supporting reasons</li> <li>appropriate pacing (does not rush)</li> <li>uses visual aids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>states purpose and offers few relevant ideas, with teacher support</li> <li>demonstrates awareness of audience, with teacher support</li> <li>uses simple repetitive language</li> <li>sometimes offers own views appropriately, often without reasons</li> <li>uses pacing, with teacher support</li> <li>uses visual aids, with teacher support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>states purpose and provides some relevant ideas</li> <li>generally expresses own views appropriately; gives few relevant reasons</li> <li>sometimes demonstrates awareness of audience</li> <li>language tends to be simple and often vague</li> <li>sometimes uses pacing appropriately</li> <li>uses visual aids inconsistently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides clear, focussed purpose and substantive and relevant ideas</li> <li>expresses own views appropriately, with some relevant reasons</li> <li>shows awareness of audience</li> <li>language is clear, with some variety</li> <li>pacing is appropriate</li> <li>presents visual aids at appropriate times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides focussed purpose and effective supporting reasons</li> <li>expresses own views effectively, with some convincing reasons</li> <li>makes connections with guidance and adjusts communication accordingly</li> <li>language is clear, varied; some precise language</li> <li>pacing is used artistically and effectively</li> <li>presents visual aids smoothly to enhance presentation</li> </ul>
<b>LISTENING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generates questions to make predictions accurately</li> <li>recalls key ideas and viewpoints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generates questions to make predictions, with teacher support</li> <li>recalls key ideas and viewpoints, with teacher support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generates some relevant questions to make predictions</li> <li>recalls some ideas and viewpoints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generates questions to make predictions</li> <li>accurately recalls key ideas and viewpoints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generates thoughtful questions to make predictions</li> <li>restates key ideas and viewpoints, explaining speaker's bias, if any</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responds critically to self-assessment criteria and makes suggestions for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responds to self-assessment criteria, with teacher support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responds to self-assessment criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responds critically to self-assessment criteria and makes suggestions for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responds critically to self-assessment criteria and develops a plan for improvement</li> </ul>