Bedrock Learning

LEARNING THROUGH LITERACY

Ofsted's questions, answered.

How and why does your school use Bedrock Learning as part of its literacy strategy?

Q. Why do you use Bedrock Learning?

The National Curriculum states that **"fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects."** We know the importance of equipping our learners with the language they need to thrive across the curriculum.

We have partnered with Bedrock Learning to ensure we are explicitly teaching and assessing Tier 2 vocabulary, grammar and subject-specific Tier 3 vocabulary. This is part of our whole school literacy strategy.

The EEF's 'Reading House' shows that grammar and vocabulary underpin language comprehension. Proven to have a statistically significant impact on learners' vocabulary, Bedrock Learning improves the elements of language that are so crucial to reading comprehension and communication.

A wide base of academic and DfE research has highlighted poor vocabulary development as a key factor in low literacy levels and attainment. Sources have found this to be a result of many factors, including social factors, compounded by a lack of independent reading.

As a school, we also believe in the power of reading and how reading a wide range of texts can expand horizons and develop our learners into globally aware citizens.

Bedrock Learning makes it possible to ensure regular reading of culturally enriching texts, while also managing language acquisition and development in a coherent and consistent way.

> Knowledge of language, which includes linguistic knowledge like vocabulary and grammar, as well as knowledge of the world for comprehension, underpins progression in spoken language, reading and writing.
>
> Research review series:
> English, Ofsted '22

Q. What is Bedrock Learning?

Bedrock's core curriculum explicitly teaches Tier 2 vocabulary and curriculum-aligned grammar content through a range of fiction and nonfiction texts.

The curriculum is personalised for each learner.

- Vocabulary and grammar are learned best in the context of rich, authentic texts.
- The range of texts on the Bedrock platform makes sure that learners are regularly reading fiction and non-fiction and also growing their cultural capital from the wide selection of topics on offer.
- Multimodal learning sequences are designed following research and best practice in vocabulary and grammar teaching.

The system automatically generates and assigns learning content to students, marks the work produced and delivers personalized content based on results.

Through its **Mapper** resource, Bedrock allows us to map our Tier 3 vocabulary curriculum across the school and explicitly teach these key terms in a multimodal, data driven way. It shows us which words are being learned, in which subjects, when and by whom. It drives our approach to improving disciplinary literacy.

All Bedrock progress data is fed right back to the teacher's inbox and allows staff and leadership teams to meticulously track language acquisition and literacy improvement in their schools. The school's adoption of this challenging language curriculum forms one part of our whole school commitment to language and vocabulary growth for all learners.

> Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language
>
> EEF Recommendation 2 to improve Literacy

Q. How do you ensure effective transitions between the Key Stages?

Learners are able to access Bedrock Learning throughout their school career. Bedrock links with Wonde, a programme which securely connects our school's MIS system with educational applications. Wonde automatically updates a learner's class and teacher at the end of the school year, or if they move classes within the academic year.

This allows us to retain progress data regardless of school or class changes, so we can provide consistent and uninterrupted instruction, maintaining an explicit focus on vocabulary and grammar learning in all key stages.

The language that learners study gets progressively more challenging, as do the topics in each block, to ensure continual progression for learners.

Through Bedrock Mapper, we can clearly see the progression of language as the curriculum progresses. We can also use the tool to prepare our learners for the step up from KS3 to KS4 by explicitly teaching the complex academic vocabulary they will need to access curriculum texts.

Q. How is prior knowledge revisited and built upon?

Throughout Bedrock, a reteaching algorithm ensures newly acquired knowledge is re-served to each learner. This retrieval practice is a crucial step in long-term retention.

In the Grammar curriculum, where appropriate, lessons also include a recapping element which allows the learners to revisit the foundational knowledge already studied that they need to understand a new skill or grammar item. For instance, in a lesson teaching the difference between abstract and concrete nouns, learners will first recap what a noun is.

Q. Can you show me how this matches the National Curriculum?

The words taught in Bedrock's Tier 3-focused area are all curriculum aligned and exam board specific. Furthermore, as a school we sequence learning so that each learner is pre-taught the key terms prior to meeting them in class/taught the terms explicitly at the point they are exposed to them in class/just after they have learned them in class to leverage the power of retrieval practice. Each subject chooses to sequence in a slightly different way according to their own requirements.

For Tier 2 vocabulary and grammar, there are many references in the National Curriculum to the importance of vocabulary and reading a wide range of fiction and nonfiction. We have listed them below and explained how Bedrock supports these aims...

Key Stage 3: Reading
Pupils should:

- Read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction

- Know how language, including figurative language, vocabulary choice, grammar, text structure and organisational features, presents meaning.

   The first stage of every lesson on Bedrock Vocabulary begins with an aspirational and challenging piece of reading. These excerpts are human narrated for audio support. Through the fiction and nonfiction texts, learners might read about sailing alongside the Vikings, or the life of Alan Turing, or a story about a lion escaping from a zoo!

   The human narration helps learners pace their reading and models correct pronunciation. It also works to engage and support weaker readers. Close reading and information retrieval are checked in the next stage (nuanced comprehension questions), forcing learners to scrutinise the text and look a little closer.

Key Stage 3: Writing
Pupils should:

- Apply their growing knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and text structure to their writing and select the appropriate form

- Amend the vocabulary, grammar and structure of their writing to improve its coherence and overall effectiveness.

- Draw on new vocabulary and grammatical constructions from their reading and listening and use these consciously in their writing and speech to achieve particular effects.

In the Vocabulary curriculum, each multimodal Bedrock lesson ends with a writing task. These tasks encourage learners to use the newly learned language in their own writing. Pre-writing activities provide modelled scaffolding to every writing exercise. All content written by a learner appears in their digital 'knowledge organiser', which is accessible on each individual homepage.

Learners' work is also accessible to the teachers or parents linked to their account. These activities give learners practice using new language for themselves. This aids the transfer of new vocabulary items from a student's receptive vocabulary to their expressive vocabulary.

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In the Grammar curriculum, learners are explicitly taught about each grammar item, before moving through an interactive learning sequence designed to develop mastery of each concept. Learning activities move from basic understanding, identifying the grammatical item, correction of errors and on to analysing the effect of the grammatical item. Throughout each stage of this sequence, scaffolded writing activities enable learners to practice using these structures for themselves, in a low stakes environment.

Key Stage 4
Pupils should:

Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

Research (Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2002; Nagy, 1980 & 1986) suggests that to maintain pace with the increasing language demands of the curriculum, learners need to be adding around 3000 words to their vocabulary each year. We know that some of our learners will achieve this incidentally through oral interactions or independent reading, but many will not. Bedrock allows teachers to ensure learners are consistently exposed to new language, regularly reading challenging texts and growing their vocabulary. Further, it allows us to track this process.

Understand and use age-appropriate vocabulary, including linguistic and literary terminology, for discussing their reading, writing and spoken language. This involves consolidation, practice and discussion of language.

Each multimodal Bedrock lesson ends with a writing task. These tasks are well scaffolded and encourage learners to use the newly learned language in their own writing. All content that is written by the learner appears in their digital "knowledge organiser", accessible on every learner's homepage. Student writing is also visible to the teachers or parents linked to their account. Through these activities, learners practice using this language for themselves, aiding the transfer of new vocabulary items from their receptive vocabulary to their expressive vocabulary.

Q. Are there links across the curriculum?

The Tier 2 words we teach through Bedrock's vocabulary curriculum don't belong to a specific subject but are frequently used in an academic context. This is the sort of language learners will be meeting across the curriculum, especially in written tests. The UK has no statutory word list, but we have tried to match our topics to the National Curriculum where possible.

Importantly, Bedrock also teaches the most commonly occurring academic verbs, crucial for success in assessments and academic tasks across the curriculum.

A confident grasp of English grammar is necessary for success in reading and writing across the curriculum. In every subject area, accuracy and clarity of written expression is valued and Bedrock's grammar curriculum explicitly teaches learners the grammar they need to write with accuracy.

Bedrock's Tier 3 subject-specific vocabulary curriculum also allows us to map the language that learners need across every subject. It shows us where words appear in multiple subjects and how meaning is different in certain disciplines. For instance, 'evaluate' has a slightly different focus in Art, compared to in Maths.

By explicitly teaching the language of each subject area, learners are able to contrast and compare these different meanings and apply the language or knowledge accurately in each subject.

Equally, this tool allows teachers to see the links between different subject areas and the progression between different phases, years or key stages. How is our understanding of 'convection' from KS3 Science developed by our study of 'convection' as a cooking technique in GCSE Food tech? Or, in which other subject are my learners meeting the word 'genre'? It allows both teachers and their learners to clearly see those cross curriculum links.

# Q. How do you know learners have made progress?

Each teacher has access to a teacher dashboard. This presents live data to the class teacher, head of department, or senior leadership team.

It offers a broad suite of reporting options, allowing staff to monitor effort, attainment and progress made in any given time period. We even provide data right down to the granular detail: the words each student is learning that week, or the area of grammar that the learner is struggling with.

For instance, the word trends report shows the words that at least 50% of your class, year group or school is currently learning, informing the language you might like to revisit in class or in whole school assemblies/displays etc. We provide the data to inform the language environment in your school.

From understanding which words are taught in each subject to gaining insights into the progress made across the curriculum, Bedrock's Mapper tool promotes transparency, helping leaders visualise the extent and impact of disciplinary literacy teaching and learning in their school. It clearly shows which individuals have learned which words, informing classroom practice and interventions.

Parents can also access this data for their child, enabling them to track the progress of their child and support their language development at home.
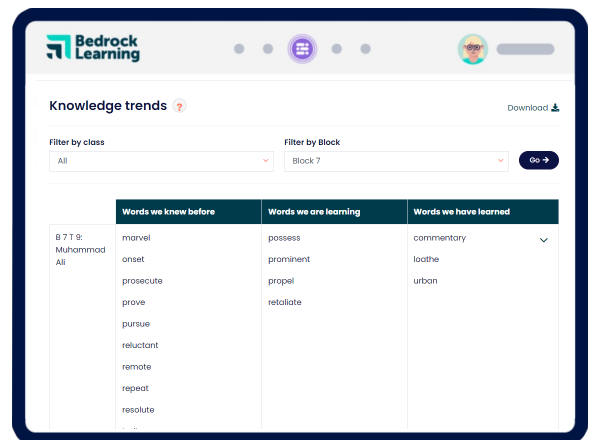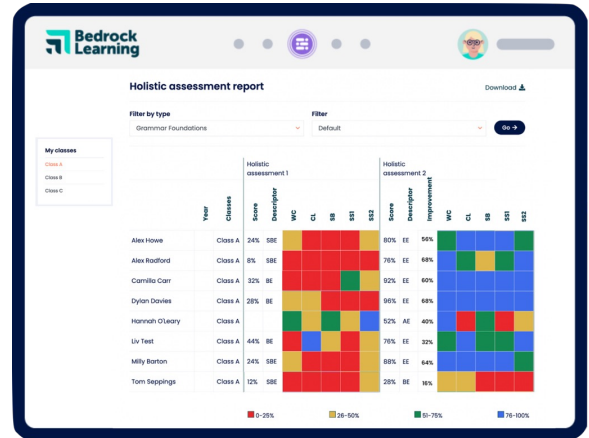
Explore (v.)

Theory (n.)

Flutter (v.)

Marvel (n.)

Integral (adj.)

Awestruck (adj.)

Beacon (n.)

Ingenious (adj.)

Value (n.)

Identity (n.)

Epic (adj.)

Wilderness (n.)

Conductive (adj.)

Evolve (v.)

Vibrant (adj.)

Conquer (v.)

Flabbergast (v.)

Grace (n.)