

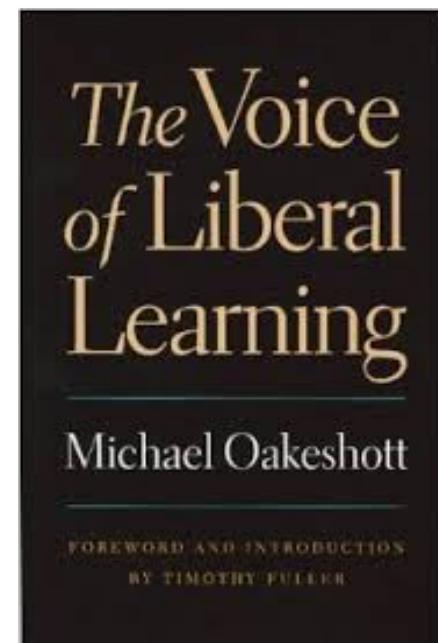
The Conversational Classroom.

Martin Robinson

preparing
young
people
for the
future
with
lessons
from the
past

Oakeshott:

liberal learning... above all else, is an education in imagination, an initiation into the art of this conversation...



The Conversational Classroom:

Oral language interventions consistently show positive benefits on learning, including oral language skills and reading comprehension. There is also evidence that cognitively-challenging classroom talk can lead to gains in language, mathematics and science.

EEF

The Conversational Classroom:

Improvements in oral language skills appear to lead directly to improvements in reading comprehension both in younger (Fricke et al., 2013) and older children Clarke et al., 2010). Such findings provide strong support... for the causal theory that the development of reading comprehension is dependent on underlying oral language skills.

Unpicking the Developmental Relationship Between Oral Language Skills and Reading Comprehension:
It's Simple, But Complex

Authors Arne Lervåg, Charles Hulme, Monica Melby-Lervåg June 2017

The Conversational Classroom:

Pupils' talk repertoire needs to be extended beyond providing recall or 'guess-what-the-teacher-is-thinking' answers. Pupils need, for both learning and life, not only to be able to provide relevant and focused answers but also to learn how to pose their own questions, and how to use talk to narrate, explain, speculate, imagine, hypothesise, explore, evaluate, discuss, argue, reason and justify.

Robin Alexander 2012 Seminar, DfE: IMPROVING ORACY AND CLASSROOM TALK IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

The Conversational Classroom:

Constraints include:

Teachers' anxiety that shy and under-confident pupils might struggle, or that pupils' behaviour will get worse.

Teachers prioritising other tasks and, in particular, pupils' writing.

Teachers' lack of confidence and expertise, exacerbated by a paucity of training.

Teachers' perception that oracy is only occasionally relevant when teaching, or relevant only in certain subjects such as English.

A lack of active support from school leadership.

Oracy: The State of Speaking in Our Schools Will Mallard and Loic Menzies LKMco 2016

Key Stage Three National Curriculum:

- use discussion in order to learn
- explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate
- Spoken language continues to underpin the development of pupils' reading and writing during key stage 3 and teachers should therefore ensure pupils' confidence and competence in this area continue to develop. Pupils should be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate, as well as continuing to develop their skills in working collaboratively with their peers to discuss reading, writing and speech across the curriculum.
- notes and polished scripts for talks and presentations
- a range of other narrative and non-narrative texts, including arguments, and personal and formal letters
- drawing on knowledge of literary and rhetorical devices from their reading and listening to enhance the impact of their writing

The Conversational Classroom:

Pair Work; Group Work; Circle Time; Project Based Learning; Discovery Learning; Drama in Education; Mantle of the Expert; Peer Assessment; P4C; Lolly sticks; Open Ended Questioning; Pair and share; Pose, Pause, Pounce and Bounce; Role play; Conscience Alley;

Proper Teaching

Endgame:

I use the words you taught me. If they don't mean anything any more, teach me others.

Or let me be silent.



The Conversational Classroom:

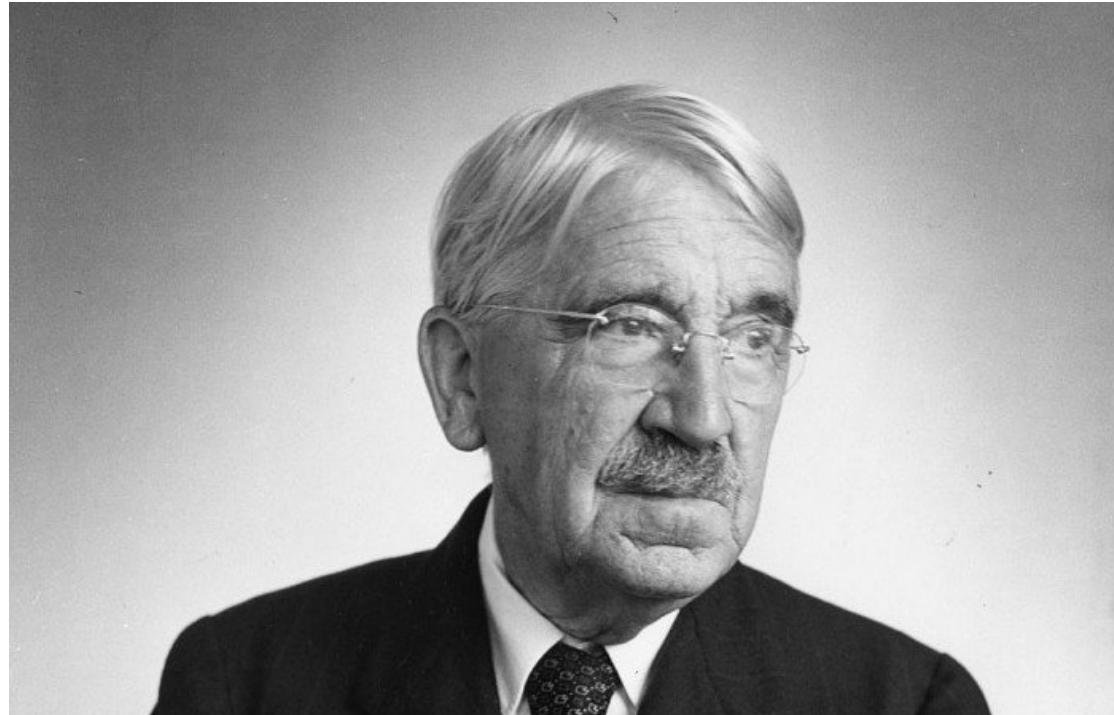
Socrates:

The word which is written with intelligence in the mind of the learner, which is able to defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom to be silent.

Plato: The first critique of writing; Phaedrus

John Dewey:

Conflict is the gadfly of thought... It shocks us out of sheep-like passivity...



Why Don't Students Like School?

Structuring a lesson plan around conflict can be a real aid to student learning.

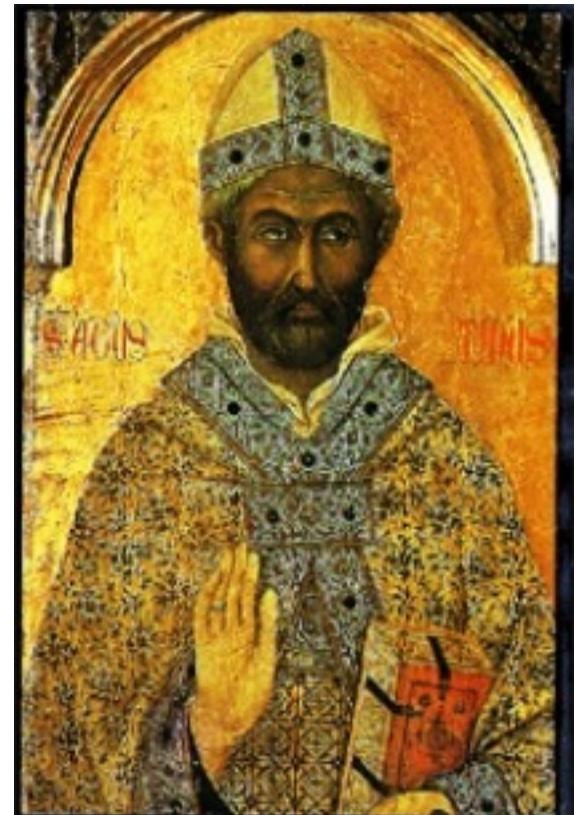
The advantage of being very clear about the conflict is that it yields a natural progression for topics.

Daniel T Willingham



St Augustine:

Who is so foolishly curious as to send his son to school to learn what the teacher thinks?



Dialectic

When there is a basic grasp of narration and evolution and a corresponding grasp of differing views of the same story... we have the practice of teaching by dialectics

Christopher Hitchens



Dialectic/Dialogic:

Dialectic and dialogic procedures offer two ways of practising a conversation, the one by play of contraries leading to agreement, the other by bouncing off views and experiences in an open-ended way

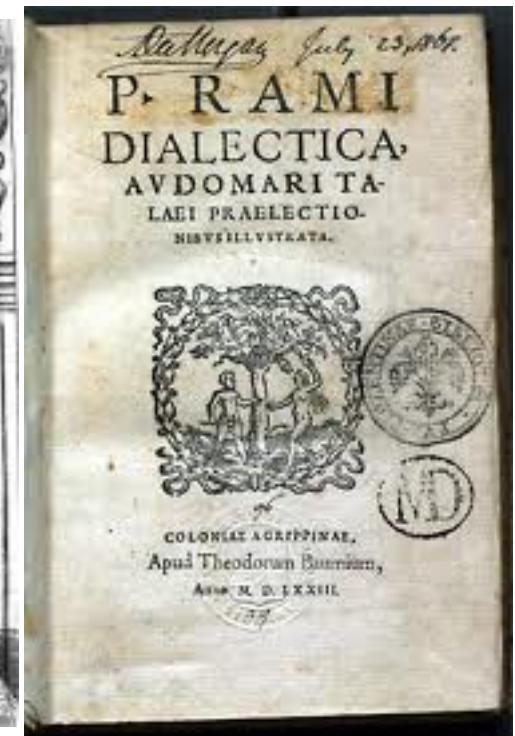
Richard Sennett



Dialectic:

Dialectica is the art of disputing well

Petrus Ramus: c1515-1572



Boethius & Capella's 7 Liberal Arts:

Four Calculating Arts: Arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy

Three Philological* Arts (*literary study, history, philosophy, linguistics):
grammar, dialectic, rhetoric

*Martianus Capella
and the
Seven Liberal Arts*

VOLUME 2
THE QUADRIVIUM OF MARTIANUS CAPELLA
EIGHT TRANSLATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

By William H. Westfall
With a Study of the Author
and His Latin Manuscripts
by Robert Johnson and E. L. Baugé

EDWARD VINCENT BOYD
NEW YORK AND LONDON

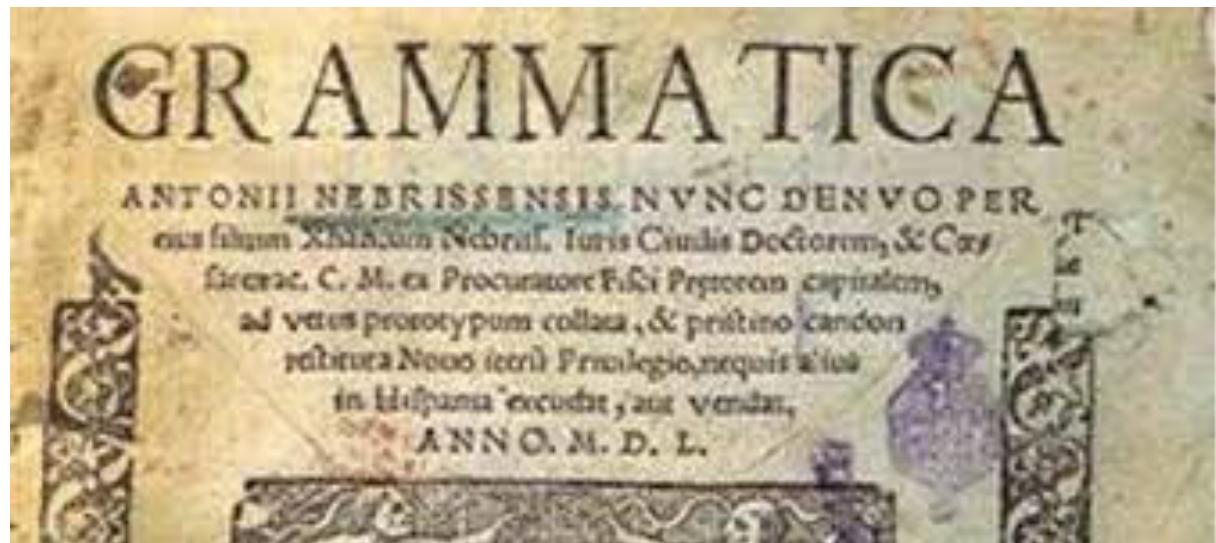


The Trivium is an Art in itself:

The Trivium, being the basis of the liberal arts, is open ended:

You start with knowledge, rules and precepts.

Grammar



The Trivium is an Art in itself:

You then develop your own thinking and ideas in collusion, collaboration, or conflict with the knowledge you are exploring.

Dialectic.



The Trivium is an Art in itself:

You then learn to express your ideas in a variety of ways.

Rhetoric.



Conversational Classroom:

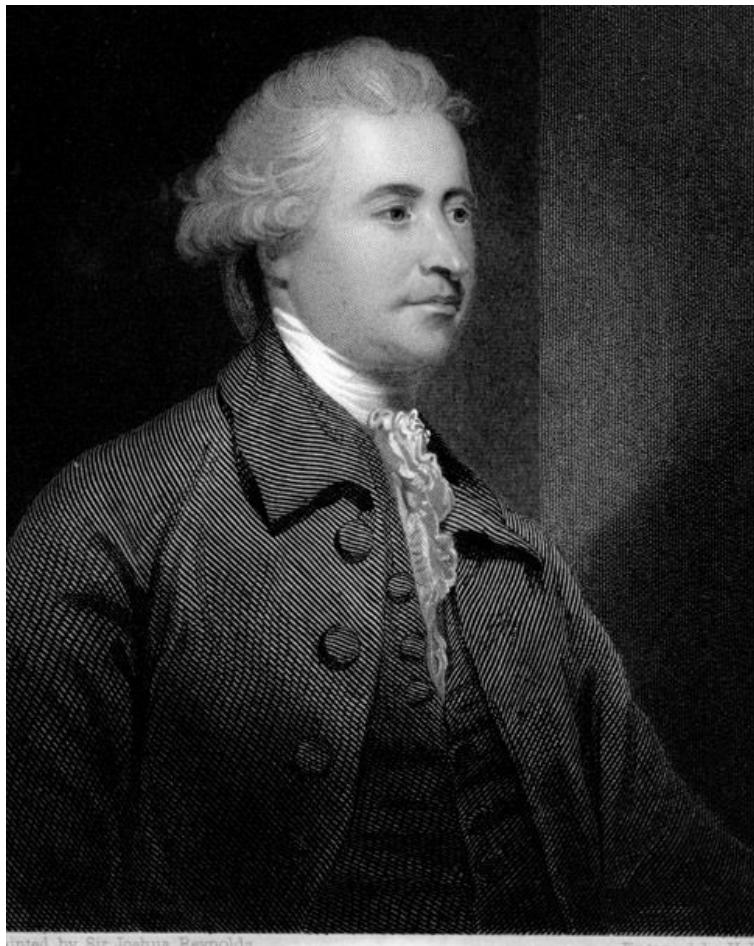


But we're not interested in
your opinion...

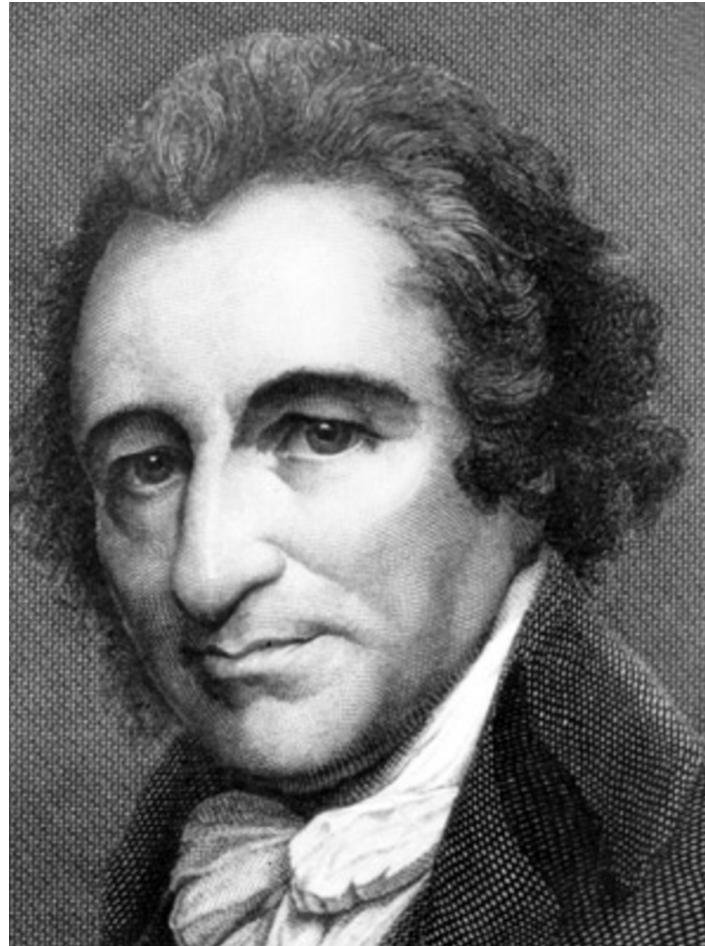
Yet...







Engraved by Sir Joshua Reynolds



Dissoi Logoi



Socratic Seminar:



Devil's Advocate:

A person who expresses a contentious opinion in order to provoke debate or test the strength of the opposing arguments:

Oxford Union:



Michael Meyer: Rhetoric, Language & Reason

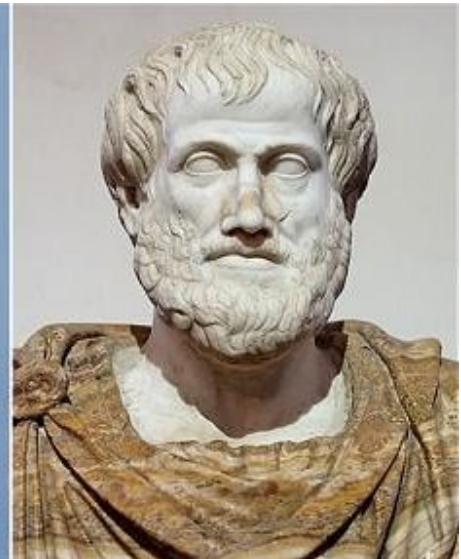
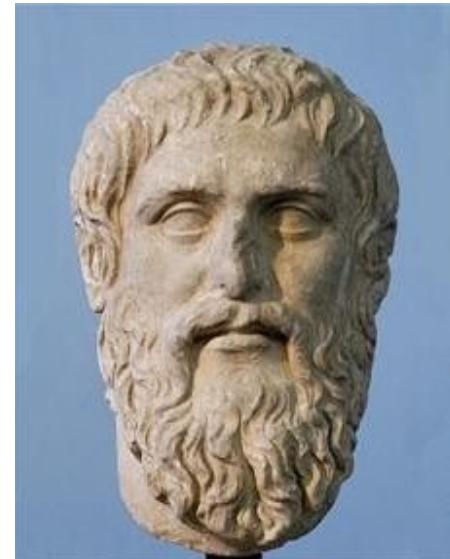
Rhetoric is better understood as a...
discourse in which one can hold opposite
judgments on the same question



Rhetoric

The Five Parts of Rhetoric:

1. Invention
2. Arrangement
3. Style
4. Memory
5. Delivery



Invention:

The content and drawing together of your ‘evidence’.

Ethos: your credibility.

Pathos: the shared emotion between you and the audience.

Logos: your use of reasoning and logic; models critical thinking.

Arrangement (The 6 parts of oratory):

1. **Exordium** (or ‘hook’): catches the attention and is central to your narrative.
2. **Prothesis**: you present the history of what you are talking about.
3. **Partitio**: you make the points which are uncontroversial and then the points which are contested.

Arrangement (the 6 parts of oratory):

4. **Confirmatio** or proof: you state your thinking.
5. **Confutatio** or refutation: you refute any opposing argument.
6. **Peroration**: You sum up the arguments.

Style:

Low style is 'down with the kids'

Medium - used most often - 'formal', subject specific language

Grand style of great oratory to lift the audience to a higher level.



Memory:

Sprezzatura: allow the thoughts & ideas to inhabit you so they spring fresh from your mind

Command: including arguments for or against

Techniques: Memory Palace, Movement memory

Delivery:

The Presentation of the 'ART' Model this and insist on the best from pupils:

Use of space, positioning, layouts

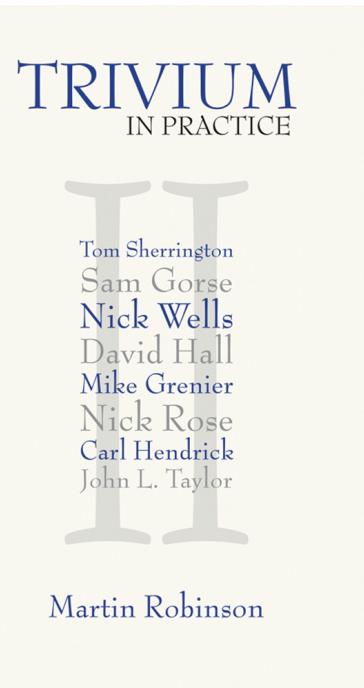
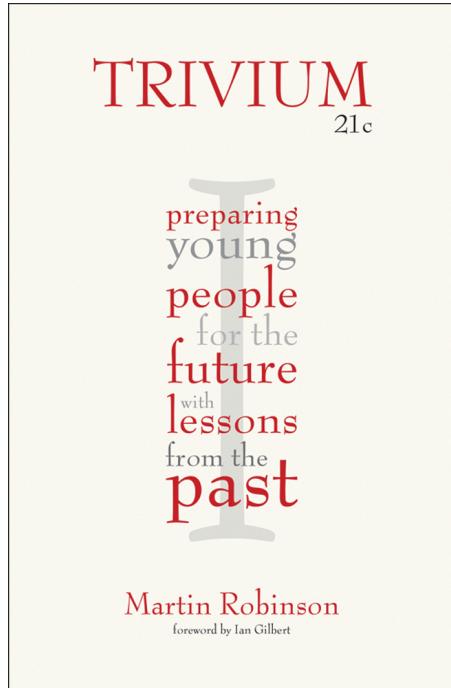
Classroom rituals - Socratic circles, debates etc.

Posture, Presence, Truth and Challenge

Gesture, Facial Expression, Signals

Voice: Volume, Pitch, Tempo, Pause, Richness, Vocabulary, Inflection...

Martin Robinson



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