

Find all these resources [here](#).

1.1 Voice Definition Brief

We cannot overstate the importance of everyone within a school community having a common understanding of voice. The Voice Definition brief, along with the articles read ahead of sessions, are often discussed in PLC or other staff meetings. We challenge staff to consider where voice flourishes in their school and identify opportunities for growth. These considerations often lead teachers to reflect on the importance of their own voices. It is challenging for teachers to support and develop student voice if they feel their own voices are not valued.

1.2 Student Voice Action Plan Session #1

Change takes time and intention. Use this document to begin discussing voice related to changes with your colleagues. Commit to both short- and long-term actions with the goal of voice becoming a way of being in your school. We will also be using this document throughout the session.

1.3 Noise vs. Voice

To truly understand and support voice, it is imperative to be able to distinguish between true voice and noise. Complaints, demands, and commands are not voice—they are noise. (And more often than not, teachers are relieved to learn that!) Voice is thoughtful, respectful, and action-orientated. To help students and staff discern the difference, we recommend hanging two large pieces of chart paper, one titled noise and the other voice. Encourage participants to write examples they believe fall under each category. Utilizing your common understanding of voice, discuss and adjust the lists accordingly. This activity not only helps distinguish between voice and noise, but empowers teachers and students to discuss the positive impact of voice and identify ways to diminish noise.

1.4 a,b,c Student Voice Skills

Schools too often overlook the need to actively teach and practice student voice skills. Voice skills regularly align with other school-based skills (VCAA). We challenge schools to deliberately select which skills are being taught, practiced, reinforced, and mastered at each grade level. Students in secondary school may still require voice skills instruction and opportunities to practice these skills. Strengthening voice skills should be a goal for ALL students. Include adaptations and accommodations for students as necessary so that every student is able to develop their voice.

1.5 Supporting the Voices of Shy and Quiet Students

This resource has been developed by the Quaglia Institute, offering various strategies designed to assist teachers and schools. The links on the following pages are intended to support students by creating environments where students can feel comfortable with who they are, their surroundings, and their peers. The goal is to provide a positive place where students can express who they are without judgement, and ultimately to support them in understanding the power of their voice.

1.6 Voice Self-Assessment

This document is used to reflect on your current understanding of voice and related skills in order to understand your starting place. The real learning occurs in the questions that follow each self-assessment scale. Ideally, teachers have the opportunity to discuss ideas with other teachers in their building. The Quaglia Institute also provides a Student Self-Assessment tool.

1.7 a,b Primary and Secondary Voice Instructional Strategies

Voice is not an add-on or “yet another thing to do.” This document provides myriad ways for teachers to integrate and support voice in the classroom. Each idea has an active link to help explain the concept. While providing new strategies, this tool is also reassuring for teachers when they recognize a familiar instructional strategy and realize they already support voice. No matter how familiar some strategies are, the support for voice should always be intentional and tailored to current students. Teachers cannot simply claim, “We already do that.” Assistant principals can use this tool to actively coach and support teachers’ efforts to incorporate student voice in their instruction.

1.8 a,b Primary and Secondary Student Voice Resources

These resources are designed to engage students and help them understand the definition of voice. While the definition is the same for students of all ages, we encourage lower primary teachers to use language that their students will best understand. Even the youngest learners can understand the concept of voice. *Cay and Adlee Find Their Voice* was written for 4-7 year olds. Ideal for story time, the PowerPoint slide deck on the resources page provides a read aloud by the Quaglia Institute’s Director of International Programs, Dr. Lisa Lande!