

## **Spoken Word Project**

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In this paper we report on two elements of the Spoken Word Project – a collaboration between Kingston University, the Rose Theatre, and Royal Borough of Kingston. The Project aims to tackle the UK's 'crisis of communication skills'. Teachers cite high levels of inarticulacy among their students; business leaders are concerned by their employees' failure to argue effectively or present in a confident and clear manner.

The Spoken Word Project delivers bespoke workshops and training courses which examine how spoken word skills develop self-confidence and self-esteem in children and chief executives alike. The paper reports on a series of workshops conducted in the last year with 100 Year 5 students from four Kingston primary schools and with senior managers from Royal Borough of Kingston. In both series of workshops, improvements were observed in attendees' self-confidence and self-esteem through learning significant speaking and listening skills. The paper concludes with a discussion of future work proposed by the Spoken Word Project with relevance to the 2011-12 National Year of Speech, Language and Communication.