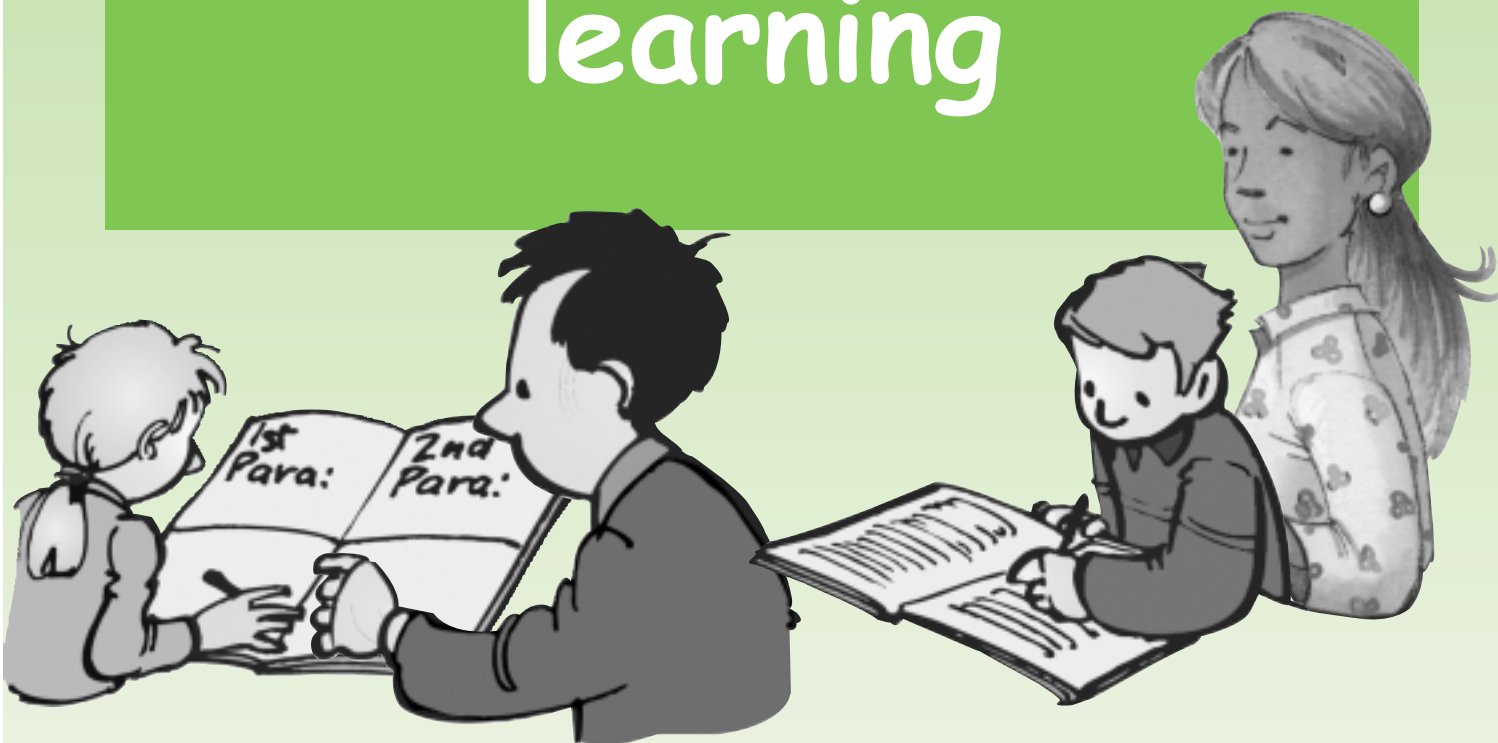


# Taking an active interest in your child's learning



Helping your child do better  
in school and in life

**W**e know that taking an active interest in your child's learning is one of the best ways you can help your child do better in school and in life. The interest parents/carers and families show in their children's schooling has a greater influence on the children's success than just about anything else.

Learning isn't just about what happens at school. Children are learning all the time, through what they see, hear and do. They are learning at home, and when they are out and about with family, friends and neighbours. Parents/carers are their children's first educators and remain their key educators throughout their school career. All parents/carers and families have different ways of interacting with their children and helping them to learn.

These materials are designed to support you and your child working together at home. We hope that you will find them a useful addition to what you do already. They complement the activities already provided by your child's school, for example homework and home reading. These notes provide information about the focus of each area of learning and the way your child will have heard that described in school.

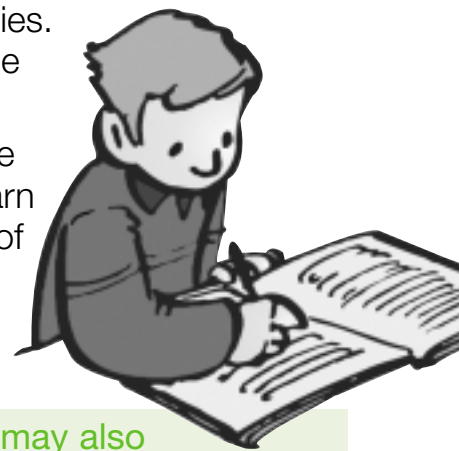
**This leaflet introduces some:**

- **key areas in literacy and mathematics that children will be working on in Year 2;**
- **related activities to support your child's learning with you at home;**
- **'I can' statements of targets for children to work towards, to help them understand better what they need to learn.**

The 'I can' statements indicate some of the things most children will be able to do by the end of Year 2 and the suggested activities will help children work towards these achievements. Children learn at different rates – some children will find these activities easy, other children will take longer to be able to do them.

You might wish to talk to your child's teacher about the activities. Don't forget that if your child is bilingual you can support these activities by talking about them in your home language.

When encouraging learning at home, a good approach is 'little and often'. Sometimes though it is useful to plan a time to learn together. We hope that you and your child enjoy using some of the activities in this leaflet, and that these activities will spark off ideas and approaches to learning that you can use together wherever and whenever you want to.



For further information visit [www.parentcentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentcentre.gov.uk). You may also find the following publications useful: *A little reading goes a long way* (ref: LRGLW), *It all adds up* (ref: IAAUMY2), *Learning Journey aged 3–7* (DfES 0122/2000), and *Learning Journey aged 7–11* (DfES 0023/2000). These and other relevant publications are available free from the Department for Education and Skills, telephone 0845 60 222 60. To order materials please go to the Primary National Strategy website: [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary)

## Year 2 Reading: Stories

**I can talk about the theme of a story and think about why things happen**

### *Notes for parents/carers:*

Stories follow a structure of a beginning, establishing some problem and then a series of events, which are resolved by the end. Stories usually include a key idea or message that is the theme.

## Reading activities

While watching a favourite video or TV programme encourage your child to talk about what is happening to the characters and how your child might feel in a similar situation.

After reading a story or watching a video encourage your child to draw a picture of an important event in the story and to tell you about it.

When sharing pictures in magazines or newspapers encourage your child to predict what happens to the people in the pictures. How does your child think they feel?

## Year 2 Reading: Stories

**I can talk about what I can see in my head when I am reading or hearing a story**

### *Notes for parents/carers:*

Writers choose words carefully so that we can picture in our heads different events in a story, e.g. to describe a place, to make us laugh or to scare us.

Pause a video or DVD while your child talks about how they feel. You might want to write words down to describe that feeling.

Provide your child with two or three objects, e.g. a plastic spider, a picture of a ghost and a torch. Ask them to begin a story using descriptive words to paint a picture in your mind. When reading with your child encourage them to talk about the pictures in the story or on the book cover.

When reading to your child focus on a particular incident or description and talk together about the mental picture that it gives you.

## Year 2 Reading: Information books

**I can use a contents list and index and tell a friend what a book might be about by looking at the cover, title and illustrations**

### *Notes for parents/carers:*

Information books are usually read to find something out. To check whether a book includes what you want to find out, look at the cover, title and pictures or contents page before you start reading.

Go on a non-fiction book hunt around your house to find recipe books, car manuals, etc. Looking at each book's front cover and title only, ask your child what they think the books might be about and why they think that.

Find a book about something your child is interested in, e.g. cars, dogs, and encourage your child to find out facts by using the index and to tell you about the subject.

Use a TV listings guide to choose programmes that you would like to watch together.



## Year 2 Writing: Stories

**I can write a story using interesting words and phrases, e.g. *One bright sunny morning the giant green fat caterpillar slithered along the road***

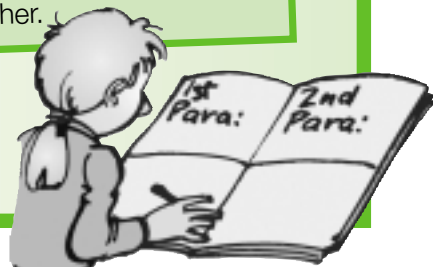
**Notes for parents/carers:** Children enjoy telling and writing stories, and using interesting words and phrases for descriptions in a story makes it easier to create a mental picture.

## Writing activities

Help your child to make a 'Wanted' poster for a character from a book including a description of the character.

Play a game to see how many different words you can find for:  
happy, sad, nice, big, little, good, bad.

Encourage your child to try writing their own story and read it together.



## Year 2 Writing: To inform

**I can begin to write an information text using connectives**

**Notes for parents/carers:** Information writing includes, for example, writing an account of a visit or a report about dinosaurs. Information writing often uses words such as *first, then, next*, to help the writing flow better. These words are called connectives.

When playing a game or getting your child dressed talk about the instructions together, e.g. What do we do first, next?

Talk to your child about something they are interested in. Encourage your child to organise what they know under different headings, e.g. Dogs: What they eat, What they look like, What they do.

Try writing about an event or trip that your child has enjoyed, e.g. shopping, visiting grandparents or a holiday.

## Year 2 Writing: Sentences

**I can write simple sentences and join some with connecting words like *and, but***

**Notes for parents/carers:** Children start writing using lots of sentences, e.g. *I got up. I went to the park.* As they become more familiar with writing you can help them to write longer and more interesting sentences by joining some with connectives, e.g. *I got up late but I got to school on time.*

Talk about food or drinks that family/friends like and make comparisons using *and* and *but*, e.g. *Mum likes coffee and Dad likes tea.*

Ask your child to think of and say two sentences describing what they did at school, then write a sentence combining the two ideas.

Write the beginning of a sentence and ask your child to write the end, e.g. *I was going to the park but ... a monkey took my shoe.*

Year 2 **Mathematics**: Multiplication

**Mathematics activities**

**I know that 5 added together 3 times is the same as  $5 + 5 + 5$  or  $5 \times 3$**

Put 5 objects, e.g. cups, in a box. Ask: if I had 3 such boxes, how many cups would I have? Can your child work this out by adding; then by multiplying?

**Notes for parents/carers:**  
When we multiply numbers, the second number operates on the first as in 5 is multiplied by the 3.

Here is a picture.  
Can your child write an addition number sentence, then a multiplication number sentence, to go with this picture?



Can your child make up a picture to go with this number sentence?:  $4 + 4 + 4 = 12$ .  
Can your child do the same problem using multiplying instead of adding?

Year 2 **Mathematics**: Division

**I can solve division problems by sharing equally or by making equal groups of objects and I know how to record them as a number sentence, e.g. 8 buttons shared equally between 4 people**

Find a bag of 12 items, e.g. grapes, toys. Ask your child to share them equally between 3 people, say how many grapes each will get and draw a picture to show this. Can your child make up more problems involving sharing equally? Can they draw a picture to go with each problem?

**Notes for parents/carers:**  
Sharing is when you divide a set of objects out one at a time to form equal groups, and grouping is when you form as many same-sized groups as you can.

Collect 20 pencils. Ask: if your child put them into boxes (groups) of 4 how many boxes (groups) will they need? Can your child draw a picture to show this?

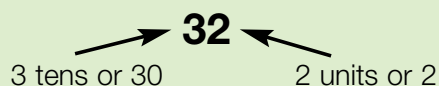
Here is a number sentence:  $15 \div 3 = 5$ .  
What pictures can your child draw to represent this? Repeat for  $16 \div 4$ ,  $21 \div 3$ ,  $20 \div 5$ , etc.

Year 2 **Mathematics**: Place value

**I know what each digit in a two-digit number represents**

Ask your child to fill in the empty box:  
 $85 = \square + 5$      $20 + \square = 25$      $\square + 8 = 38$   
Can they make up five more examples?

**Notes for parents/carers:**  
It is important to know how the position of the digit affects the value it represents, e.g.



Write 2, 3 and 4 on different pieces of paper. How many two-digit and three-digit numbers can your child make? (e.g. 42, 234)

Play 'How many tens and how many units' – in these numbers: 16, 34, 9, 57, 83, 267 (e.g. 17 is 1 ten and 7 units)

Year 2 **Mathematics:** Fractions

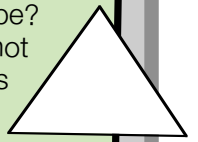
*Mathematics activities*

**I can use and understand *fraction, whole, half* and *quarter* to explain parts of a shape**

Find a bar of chocolate, which has 20 squares of chocolate. Ask: if I eat a quarter of the squares, how many squares will I have eaten? If we eat two quarters, how many squares are left? What is another way of representing two quarters?

**Notes for parents/carers:**  
A half and a quarter are parts or fractions of a whole.

Can your child shade half of this shape? Can they shade another part that is not half? Can they explain why this part is not half? Ask your child to draw another shape and shade half of it.



Find a straight-sided container that can be filled with water. Ask your child where the water would be if it were half or a quarter full. Together check the estimates by filling the container with water and comparing the quantities of water that reached the half and quarter-full estimates.

Year 2 **Mathematics:** Measuring

**I can estimate the lengths of different objects, compare their size and measure them, and compare their length**

Your child stands in a doorway in your house. Say that the doorway is roughly 2 m high. Ask your child how many things they can see that are taller/shorter than 2 m.

Find a 30 cm ruler. Ask your child to find things that are shorter than 30 cm. Can they write down what they are and measure them? Can they put them in size order?

**Notes for parents/carers:**  
It is useful to be able to make accurate estimates before measuring and comparing the lengths and sizes of objects.

Ask your child to estimate how many steps it would take to walk across the width and length of their bedroom. Check it by counting their steps. Repeat for the kitchen.

Year 2 **Mathematics:** Problem solving

**I can work out patterns in lists of numbers and find other examples that fit the rule**

Discuss with your child whether this statement is true: 'When I subtract 10 from a number, the unit number stays the same.' Try this out with: 27, 48, 56, 64, 15. Does it work for all numbers? Try it again with some other numbers.

**Notes for parents/carers:**  
By looking at patterns in numbers we can explain the pattern and check it with more numbers.

A cuboid has 6 faces. Look around your house and find as many different cuboids as possible. How many edges and corners have they got? Do the same for cubes.



Talk about whether this statement is true: 'When I multiply a number by 10 the units digit is zero.' Try this out with: 5, 7, 9, 6. Does it work for all numbers?