

English in Year 6

In upper Key Stage 2, your child will increasingly meet a wider range of texts and types of writing, and will be encouraged to use their skills in a broader range of contexts. Their knowledge of grammar will also increase as they prepare for the National Curriculum Tests to be taken in the summer term of Year 6.

Year 6 children will take a reading test of about one hour, a grammar and punctuation test of about forty-five minutes, and a spelling test of twenty words. These will be sent away for marking, with the results coming back before the end of the year. Your child's teacher will also make an assessment of whether or not your child has reached the expected standard by the end of the Key Stage.

Speaking and Listening

The Spoken Language objectives are set out for the whole of primary school, and teachers will cover many of them every year as children's spoken language skills develop. In Years 5 and 6, some focuses may include:

Speak clearly in a range of contexts, using Standard English where appropriate

Monitor the reactions of listeners and react accordingly

Consider different viewpoints, listening to others and responding with relevant views

Use appropriate language, tone and vocabulary for different purposes

Reading Skills

Read a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, plays and reference books

Learn a range of poetry by heart

Perform plays and poems using tone, volume and intonation to convey meaning

Use knowledge of spelling patterns and related words to read aloud and understand new words

Make comparisons between different books, or parts of the same book

Read a range of modern fiction, classic fiction and books from other cultures and

Traditions

Identify and discuss themes and conventions across a wide range of writing

Discuss understanding of texts, including exploring the meaning of words in context

Ask questions to improve understanding of texts

Summarise ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details

Predict future events from details either written in a text or by 'reading between the lines'

Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning

Discuss how authors use language, including figurative language, to affect the reader

Make book recommendations, giving reasons for choices

Participate in discussions about books, building on and challenging ideas

Explain and discuss understanding of reading

Participate in formal presentations and debates about reading

Parent Tip

As children get older, they will increasingly take responsibility for their own work and homework tasks. That's not to say that parents can't help though. Encourage your child to work independently on their homework, but also take the opportunity to discuss it with them and to have them explain their understanding to you.

Provide reasoned justifications for views

Figurative language includes metaphorical phrases such as 'raining cats and dogs' or 'an iron fist', as well as using language to convey meaning, for example by describing the Sun as 'gazing down' upon a scene.

Themes & Conventions

As children's experience of a range of texts broadens, they may begin to notice conventions, such as the use of first person for diary-writing, or themes

such as heroism or quests.

Writing Skills

Write with increasing speed, maintaining legibility and style

Spell some words with silent letters, such as knight and solemn

Recognise and use spellings for homophones and other often-confused words from the Y5/6 list

Use a dictionary to check spelling and meaning

Identify the audience and purpose before writing, and adapt accordingly

Select appropriate grammar and vocabulary to change or enhance meaning

Develop setting, atmosphere and character, including through dialogue

Write a summary of longer passages of writing

Use a range of cohesive devices

Use advanced organisational and presentational devices, such as bullet points

Use the correct tense consistently throughout a piece of writing

Ensure correct subject and verb agreement

Perform compositions using appropriate intonation, volume and movement

Use a thesaurus

Use expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely

Use modal verbs or adverbs to indicate degrees of possibility

Use relative clauses

Recognise vocabulary and structures that are appropriate for formal use

Use passive verbs to affect the presentation of information

Use the perfect form of verbs to mark relationships of time and cause

Recognise the difference in informal and formal language

Use grammatical connections and adverbials for cohesion

Use ellipses, commas, brackets and dashes in writing

Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity

Use semi-colons, colons and dashes between independent clauses

Use a colon to introduce a list

Punctuate bullet points consistently

Cohesive devices are words or phrases used to link different parts of writing together. These may be pronouns such as 'he' or 'it' to avoid repeating a name, or phrases such as 'After that...' or 'Meanwhile' to guide the reader through the text.

Grammar Help

For many parents, the grammatical terminology used in schools may not be familiar. Here are some useful reminders of some of the terms used:

Noun phrase: a group of words which takes the place of a single noun.
Example: The big brown dog with the fluffy ears.

Modal verb: a verb that indicates possibility. These are often used alongside other verbs. Example: will, may, should, can.

Relative clause: a clause which adds extra information or detail. Example: The boy who was holding the golden ticket won the prize.

Passive verb: a form of verb that implies an action being done to, rather than by, the subject. Example: The boy was bitten by the dog.

Perfect form: a form of verb that implies that an action is completed. Example: The boy has walked home.