

HELPFUL HINTS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD TO READ AND WRITE BETTER Year 2 & 3 Parents meeting - November 2022

Learning to read and write in English is not easy! Only 45% of words can be read using phonetics and there are so many exceptions to the rules!

Look at the single letter <o> which appears in '*on, only, once, other, woman, women, who*'.

Now look at <ea> - (treat – great, threat, theatre, create).

<ou> (shout – should, touch, soul, soup)

<o-e> (home - come, move)

<oo> (food – good, flood)

<oa> (road – broad).

How about <ough> The rough dough-faced plough boy coughed as he walked through the drought stricken farm. He sought a thoroughly good draught of ale.

You may have learnt the “i before e” spelling rule which often works, except:

when your foreign neighbour Keith receives eight counterfeit beige sleighs from feisty caffeinated weight lifters – weird!!

Also difficult, are words that have the same sound but a different way of spelling it eg my, tie, high, time, icicle (5 different ways to spell the same sound!)

HOWEVER, we try to simplify English for the children so that they learn to read and write and gradually build up the complexity!

PHONICS

During Reception, Year 1 and 2 children have been learning phonics. See complex sounds chart to see the sounds children learn and the many ways there are to spell the same sound eg f for flower, ff in huff and puff and ph for phone. Digraphs are two letters put together to make one sound eg ch, th, sh, ay, ou etc. Trigraphs are three letters making one sound eg igh.

It's helpful for children to learn families of words that have the same phonemes (see phonic families sheet). Throughout Year 3 onwards, they will refer to phonics with reference to how we spell words.

Spellings

Please continue to practise spellings at home and keep going over ones from previous weeks. The children need to LOOK COVER WRITE CHECK. Try making up mnemonics, for example the spelling of the word “said” could be “silly apples in ditch”. “should” can be remembered by learning the phrase “o u lucky duck!”

We focus on one spelling pattern each week (e.g. prefixes, suffixes, digraphs, trigraphs), plus a few 'bonus' words from the list of spellings on the handout (see separate sheets for Year 2 and 3). Each class does a weekly dictation. The children need to show that they can use the words within a sentence. Dictations also give them a chance to show their understanding of different punctuation depending on what type of sentence the teachers read out.

By reading-reading-reading – ie seeing words in print very frequently, children will learn to see correct spellings and when they come to do their own writing, they will notice when they have misspelt a word “because it doesn't look right”.

Writing

Handwriting

It is really important that the children are writing each letter correctly. Remind the children not to take their pencil/pen off the page when writing each letter. Look carefully while your child is writing and check they are forming each letter properly – if they're not, practise as much as possible! It is really important that they do form the letters correctly so that they can learn joined handwriting correctly. It is very hard to join the letters if you're not writing each individual letter properly. The English curriculum requires joined writing and so children cannot meet the ARE if they are not joining letters

by Year 6. They would not be graded *above* age related expectations (ARE) in Year 2 if they cannot join their handwriting.

Independent Creative Writing

See the list of expectations that the teachers have to assess to judge children's writing.

Reading

Your child *may* have a RWI (Read Write Inc) book which is purely to support their reading through phonics. All children will also have a colour banded book which develops all reading skills. By the end of Year 2 we want the children to be reading at gold or white band. By the end of Year 3 the expectation is that they are reading at lime band.

As the children become more fluent readers, the focus is very much more on comprehension. See the handout "pawsome gang" which explains the five reading skills we teach (VIPRS). Inference is the most difficult skill and requires maturity and a good range of vocabulary to understand. Children who are still trying to decode the actual words may struggle with comprehension until they become more fluent readers (as so much energy is spent trying to work out what the word says, they're not sure what a whole passage was about).

Fluency is very important.

Children are taught to read in English lessons. The children are also heard reading individually by the staff or volunteers. There are lots of opportunities for the children to read in every lesson all through the week. Reading is the key to accessing all curriculum areas! Please read every night at home – listen to your child read and read to them!

Assessment

Children are continually assessed in every lesson. Who answers questions in class? What does written work show? etc. They will have a "big write" every half term which is assessed. Reading is assessed using PM Benchmarking, Star assessments (on a computer) and also reading comprehension tests. In Year 2 there are SATS which are test papers which the children do during May with as little disruption as possible and absolutely no stress placed on the children. The teachers combine test scores with their usual class work to reach an overall assessment. This is reported to you in the end of year report. There is test for reading, another for SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) and also for maths. The writing is assessed through the normal big writes. The teachers mark all the papers and the children are not told they are being tested – it's "special work" they do in small groups with their teacher.

In conclusion...

So, the children have been on a journey from Reception onwards and will continue with this as they progress through the school.

Each child will learn at a different rate and find some parts easier or harder. It is important not to compare your child's progress with someone else. At the Parents' meeting in November and March the teacher will tell you what sort of progress your child is making. On reports you will see comments like "expected" or "above/below expected". We want as many children as possible to be at the expected level for their year group.

Difficulties with reading, spelling or handwriting can be developmental and your child may well find it easier when they are a bit older. Sometimes however, there is a specific learning difficulty. If there are any concerns, your child's teacher will discuss it with you. Equally, if you are concerned, please make an appointment to see your child's teacher.

If you read this far – well done and thank you for your support!!
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