



Department  
for Education

Statutory guidance

# National curriculum in England: English programmes of study

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**Applies to England**

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## Purpose of study

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

## Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

## Spoken language

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others, and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to

adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the 6 years of primary education form part of the national curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

## Reading

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (ie unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

## Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these 2 dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

## Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

The 2 statutory appendices – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – give an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than 1 meaning. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included in the appendices.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. A non-statutory [glossary](#) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/238985/English\\_Glossary.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238985/English_Glossary.pdf)) is provided for teachers.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

## School curriculum

The programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2. The single year blocks at key stage 1 reflect the rapid pace of development in word reading during these 2 years. Schools are, however, only required to teach the relevant programme of study by the end of the key stage. Within each key stage, schools therefore have the flexibility to introduce content earlier or later than set out in the programme of study. In addition, schools can introduce key stage content during an earlier key stage if appropriate. All schools are also required to set out their school curriculum for English on a year-by-year basis and make this information available online.

## Attainment targets

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Schools are not required by law to teach the example content in [square brackets] or the content indicated as being 'non-statutory'.

## Spoken language – years 1 to 6

### Spoken language

Pupils should be taught to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

These statements apply to all years. The content should be taught at a level appropriate to the age of the pupils. Pupils should build on the oral language skills that have been taught in preceding years.

Pupils should be taught to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness of their communication across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. They should therefore have opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. Pupils should understand how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates.

Teachers should also pay attention to increasing pupils' vocabulary, ranging from describing their immediate world and feelings to developing a broader, deeper and

richer vocabulary to discuss abstract concepts and a wider range of topics, and enhancing their knowledge about language as a whole.

Pupils should receive constructive feedback on their spoken language and listening, not only to improve their knowledge and skills but also to establish secure foundations for effective spoken language in their studies at primary school, helping them to achieve in secondary education and beyond.

## Key stage 1 - year 1

During year 1, teachers should build on work from the early years foundation stage, making sure that pupils can sound and blend unfamiliar printed words quickly and accurately using the phonic knowledge and skills that they have already learnt. Teachers should also ensure that pupils continue to learn new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and revise and consolidate those learnt earlier. The understanding that the letter(s) on the page represent the sounds in spoken words should underpin pupils' reading and spelling of all words. This includes common words containing unusual GPCs. The term 'common exception words' is used throughout the programmes of study for such words.

Alongside this knowledge of GPCs, pupils need to develop the skill of blending the sounds into words for reading and establish the habit of applying this skill whenever they encounter new words. This will be supported by practice in reading books consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and skill and their knowledge of common exception words. At the same time they will need to hear, share and discuss a wide range of high-quality books to develop a love of reading and broaden their vocabulary.

Pupils should be helped to read words without overt sounding and blending after a few encounters. Those who are slow to develop this skill should have extra practice.

Pupils' writing during year 1 will generally develop at a slower pace than their reading. This is because they need to encode the sounds they hear in words (spelling skills), develop the physical skill needed for handwriting, and learn how to organise their ideas in writing.

Pupils entering year 1 who have not yet met the early learning goals for literacy should continue to follow their school's curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop their word reading, spelling and language skills. However, these pupils should follow the year 1 programme of study in terms of the books they listen to and discuss, so that they develop their vocabulary and understanding of grammar, as well as their knowledge more generally across the curriculum. If they are still struggling to decode and spell, they need to be taught to do this urgently through a rigorous and systematic phonics programme so that they catch up rapidly.

Teachers should ensure that their teaching develops pupils' oral vocabulary as well as their ability to understand and use a variety of grammatical structures, giving particular support to pupils whose oral language skills are insufficiently developed.

## Year 1 programme of study

## Reading - word reading

Pupils should be taught to:

- apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words
- respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all 40+ phonemes, including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes
- read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing GPCs that have been taught
- read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word
- read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings
- read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs
- read words with contractions [for example, I'm, I'll, we'll], and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s)
- read books aloud, accurately, that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words
- reread these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and consolidate the GPCs and the common exception words taught in reception year. As soon as they can read words comprising the year 1 GPCs accurately and speedily, they should move on to the year 2 programme of study for word reading.

The number, order and choice of exception words taught will vary according to the phonics programme being used. Ensuring that pupils are aware of the GPCs they contain, however unusual these are, supports spelling later.

Young readers encounter words that they have not seen before much more frequently than experienced readers do, and they may not know the meaning of some of these. Practice at reading such words by sounding and blending can provide opportunities not only for pupils to develop confidence in their decoding skills, but also for teachers to explain the meaning and thus develop pupils' vocabulary.

Pupils should be taught how to read words with suffixes by being helped to build on the root words that they can read already. Pupils' reading and rereading of books that are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge and knowledge of common exception words supports their fluency, as well as increasing their confidence in their reading skills. Fluent word reading greatly assists comprehension, especially when pupils come to read longer books.

## Reading - comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:
  - listening to and discussing a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently



- being encouraged to link what they read or hear to their own experiences
- becoming very familiar with key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, retelling them and considering their particular characteristics
- recognising and joining in with predictable phrases
- learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart
- discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to those already known
- understand both the books they can already read accurately and fluently and those they listen to by:
  - drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
  - checking that the text makes sense to them as they read, and correcting inaccurate reading
  - discussing the significance of the title and events
  - making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
  - predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
- participate in discussion about what is read to them, taking turns and listening to what others say
- explain clearly their understanding of what is read to them

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Pupils should have extensive experience of listening to, sharing and discussing a wide range of high-quality books with the teacher, other adults and each other to engender a love of reading at the same time as they are reading independently.

Pupils' vocabulary should be developed when they listen to books read aloud and when they discuss what they have heard. Such vocabulary can also feed into their writing. Knowing the meaning of more words increases pupils' chances of understanding when they read by themselves. The meaning of some new words should be introduced to pupils before they start to read on their own, so that these unknown words do not hold up their comprehension.

However, once pupils have already decoded words successfully, the meaning of those that are new to them can be discussed with them, thus contributing to developing their early skills of inference. By listening frequently to stories, poems and non-fiction that they cannot yet read for themselves, pupils begin to understand how written language can be structured in order, for example, to build surprise in narratives or to present facts in non-fiction. Listening to and discussing information books and other non-fiction establishes the foundations for their learning in other subjects. Pupils should be shown some of the processes for finding out information.

Through listening, pupils also start to learn how language sounds and increase their vocabulary and awareness of grammatical structures. In due course, they will be able to draw on such grammar in their own writing.

Rules for effective discussions should be agreed with and demonstrated for pupils. They should help to develop and evaluate them, with the expectation that everyone takes part. Pupils should be helped to consider the opinions of others.

Role play can help pupils to identify with and explore characters and to try out the language they have listened to.

## Writing - transcription

### Spelling - see [English appendix 1](#)

[\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](#)

Pupils should be taught to:

- spell:
  - words containing each of the 40+ phonemes already taught
  - common exception words
  - the days of the week
- name the letters of the alphabet:
  - naming the letters of the alphabet in order
  - using letter names to distinguish between alternative spellings of the same sound
- add prefixes and suffixes:
  - using the spelling rule for adding –s or –es as the plural marker for nouns and the third person singular marker for verbs
  - using the prefix un–
  - using –ing, –ed, –er and –est where no change is needed in the spelling of root words [for example, helping, helped, helper, eating, quicker, quickest]
- apply simple spelling rules and guidance, as listed in [English appendix 1](#) [\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](#)
- write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher that include words using the GPCs and common exception words taught so far

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Reading should be taught alongside spelling, so that pupils understand that they can read back words they have spelt.

Pupils should be shown how to segment spoken words into individual phonemes and then how to represent the phonemes by the appropriate grapheme(s). It is important to recognise that phoneme-grapheme correspondences (which underpin spelling) are more variable than grapheme-phoneme correspondences (which underpin reading). For this reason, pupils need to do much more word-specific rehearsal for spelling than for reading.

At this stage pupils will be spelling some words in a phonically plausible way, even if sometimes incorrectly. Misspellings of words that pupils have been taught to spell should be corrected; other misspelt words should be used to teach pupils about alternative ways of representing those sounds.

Writing simple dictated sentences that include words taught so far gives pupils opportunities to apply and practise their spelling.

### Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly

- begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.

Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

## **Writing - composition**

Pupils should be taught to:

- write sentences by:
  - saying out loud what they are going to write about
  - composing a sentence orally before writing it
  - sequencing sentences to form short narratives
  - re-reading what they have written to check that it makes sense
- discuss what they have written with the teacher or other pupils
- read their writing aloud, clearly enough to be heard by their peers and the teacher

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

At the beginning of year 1, not all pupils will have the spelling and handwriting skills they need to write down everything that they can compose out loud.

Pupils should understand, through demonstration, the skills and processes essential to writing: that is, thinking aloud as they collect ideas, drafting, and rereading to check their meaning is clear.

## **Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation**

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop their understanding of the concepts set out in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) by:
  - leaving spaces between words
  - joining words and joining clauses using 'and'

- beginning to punctuate sentences using a capital letter and a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark
- using a capital letter for names of people, places, the days of the week, and the personal pronoun 'I'
- learning the grammar for year 1 in [English appendix 2](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf))
- use the grammatical terminology in English [English appendix 2](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)) in discussing their writing

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be taught to recognise sentence boundaries in spoken sentences and to use the vocabulary listed in [English appendix 2](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)) ('Terminology for pupils') when their writing is discussed.

Pupils should begin to use some of the distinctive features of Standard English in their writing. 'Standard English' is defined in the [glossary](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238985/English_Glossary.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/238985/English\\_Glossary.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238985/English_Glossary.pdf)).

## Key stage 1 - year 2

By the beginning of year 2, pupils should be able to read all common graphemes. They should be able to read unfamiliar words containing these graphemes, accurately and without undue hesitation, by sounding them out in books that are matched closely to each pupil's level of word-reading knowledge. They should also be able to read many common words containing GPCs taught so far [for example, shout, hand, stop, or dream], without needing to blend the sounds out loud first. Pupils' reading of common exception words [for example, you, could, many, or people], should be secure. Pupils will increase their fluency by being able to read these words easily and automatically. Finally, pupils should be able to retell some familiar stories that have been read to and discussed with them or that they have acted out during year 1.

During year 2, teachers should continue to focus on establishing pupils' accurate and speedy word-reading skills. They should also make sure that pupils listen to and discuss a wide range of stories, poems, plays and information books; this should include whole books. The sooner that pupils can read well and do so frequently, the sooner they will be able to increase their vocabulary, comprehension and their knowledge across the wider curriculum.

In writing, pupils at the beginning of year 2 should be able to compose individual sentences orally and then write them down. They should be able to spell many of the words covered in year 1 correctly - see [English appendix 1](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf)). They should also be able to make phonically plausible attempts to spell words they have not yet learnt. Finally, they should be able to form individual letters correctly, establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.

It is important to recognise that pupils begin to meet extra challenges in terms of spelling during year 2. Increasingly, they should learn that there is not always an obvious connection between the way a word is said and the way it is spelt. Variations include different ways of spelling the same sound, the use of so-called silent letters and groups of letters in some words and, sometimes, spelling that has become separated from the way that words are now pronounced, such as the 'le' ending in table. Pupils' motor skills also need to be sufficiently advanced for them to write down ideas that they may be able to compose orally. In addition, writing is intrinsically harder than reading: pupils are likely to be able to read and understand more complex writing (in terms of its vocabulary and structure) than they are capable of producing themselves.

For pupils who do not have the phonic knowledge and skills they need for year 2, teachers should use the year 1 programmes of study for word reading and spelling so that pupils' word-reading skills catch up. However, teachers should use the year 2 programme of study for comprehension so that these pupils hear and talk about new books, poems, other writing, and vocabulary with the rest of the class.

## Year 2 programme of study

### Reading - word reading

Pupils should be taught to:

- continue to apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words until automatic decoding has become embedded and reading is fluent
- read accurately by blending the sounds in words that contain the graphemes taught so far, especially recognising alternative sounds for graphemes
- read accurately words of two or more syllables that contain the same graphemes as above
- read words containing common suffixes
- read further common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word
- read most words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending, when they have been frequently encountered
- read aloud books closely matched to their improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words accurately, automatically and without undue hesitation
- reread these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and consolidate the GPCs and the common exception words taught in year 1. The exception words taught will vary slightly, depending on the phonics programme being used. As soon as pupils can read words comprising the year 2 GPCs accurately and speedily, they should move on to the years 3 and 4 programme of study for word reading.

When pupils are taught how to read longer words, they should be shown syllable boundaries and how to read each syllable separately before they combine them to

read the word.

Pupils should be taught how to read suffixes by building on the root words that they have already learnt. The whole suffix should be taught as well as the letters that make it up.

Pupils who are still at the early stages of learning to read should have ample practice in reading books that are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge and knowledge of common exception words. As soon as the decoding of most regular words and common exception words is embedded fully, the range of books that pupils can read independently will expand rapidly. Pupils should have opportunities to exercise choice in selecting books and be taught how to do so.

## Reading - comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:
  - listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently
  - discussing the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related
  - becoming increasingly familiar with and retelling a wider range of stories, fairy stories and traditional tales
  - being introduced to non-fiction books that are structured in different ways
  - recognising simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry
  - discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
  - discussing their favourite words and phrases
  - continuing to build up a repertoire of poems learnt by heart, appreciating these and reciting some, with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear
- understand both the books that they can already read accurately and fluently and those that they listen to by:
  - drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
  - checking that the text makes sense to them as they read, and correcting inaccurate reading
  - making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
  - answering and asking questions
  - predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
- participate in discussion about books, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
- explain and discuss their understanding of books, poems and other material, both those that they listen to and those that they read for themselves

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be encouraged to read all the words in a sentence and to do this accurately, so that their understanding of what they read is not hindered by imprecise decoding (for example, by reading 'place' instead of 'palace').

Pupils should monitor what they read, checking that the word they have decoded fits in with what else they have read and makes sense in the context of what they already know about the topic.

The meaning of new words should be explained to pupils within the context of what they are reading, and they should be encouraged to use morphology (such as prefixes) to work out unknown words.

Pupils should learn about cause and effect in both narrative and non-fiction (for example, what has prompted a character's behaviour in a story; why certain dates are commemorated annually). 'Thinking aloud' when reading to pupils may help them to understand what skilled readers do.

Deliberate steps should be taken to increase pupils' vocabulary and their awareness of grammar so that they continue to understand the differences between spoken and written language.

Discussion should be demonstrated to pupils. They should be guided to participate in it and they should be helped to consider the opinions of others. They should receive feedback on their discussions.

Role play and other drama techniques can help pupils to identify with and explore characters. In these ways, they extend their understanding of what they read and have opportunities to try out the language they have listened to.

## Writing - transcription

### Spelling - see [English appendix 1](#)

([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf))

Pupils should be taught to:

- spell by:
  - segmenting spoken words into phonemes and representing these by graphemes, spelling many correctly
  - learning new ways of spelling phonemes for which 1 or more spellings are already known, and learn some words with each spelling, including a few common homophones
  - learning to spell common exception words
  - learning to spell more words with contracted forms
  - learning the possessive apostrophe (singular) [for example, the girl's book]
  - distinguishing between homophones and near-homophones
- add suffixes to spell longer words including –ment, –ness, –ful, –less, –ly
- apply spelling rules and guidance, as listed in [English appendix 1](#) ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf))

- write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher that include words using the GPCs, common exception words and punctuation taught so far

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

In year 2, pupils move towards more word-specific knowledge of spelling, including homophones. The process of spelling should be emphasised: that is, that spelling involves segmenting spoken words into phonemes and then representing all the phonemes by graphemes in the right order. Pupils should do this both for single-syllable and polysyllabic words.

At this stage, children's spelling should be phonically plausible, even if not always correct. Misspellings of words that pupils have been taught to spell should be corrected; other misspelt words can be used as an opportunity to teach pupils about alternative ways of representing those sounds.

Pupils should be encouraged to apply their knowledge of suffixes from their word reading to their spelling. They should also draw from and apply their growing knowledge of word and spelling structure, as well as their knowledge of root words.

## **Handwriting**

Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

## **Writing - composition**

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by:
  - writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional)
  - writing about real events
  - writing poetry
  - writing for different purposes
- consider what they are going to write before beginning by:
  - planning or saying out loud what they are going to write about
  - writing down ideas and/or key words, including new vocabulary
  - encapsulating what they want to say, sentence by sentence



- make simple additions, revisions and corrections to their own writing by:
  - evaluating their writing with the teacher and other pupils
  - rereading to check that their writing makes sense and that verbs to indicate time are used correctly and consistently, including verbs in the continuous form
  - proofreading to check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation (for example, ends of sentences punctuated correctly)
- read aloud what they have written with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Reading and listening to whole books, not simply extracts, helps pupils to increase their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, including their knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English. These activities also help them to understand how different types of writing, including narratives, are structured. All these can be drawn on for their writing.

Pupils should understand, through being shown these, the skills and processes essential to writing: that is, thinking aloud as they collect ideas, drafting, and rereading to check their meaning is clear.

Drama and role play can contribute to the quality of pupils' writing by providing opportunities for pupils to develop and order their ideas through playing roles and improvising scenes in various settings.

Pupils might draw on and use new vocabulary from their reading, their discussions about it (one-to-one and as a whole class) and from their wider experiences.

## Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop their understanding of the concepts set out in [English appendix 2](#) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)) by:
  - learning how to use both familiar and new punctuation correctly - see [English appendix 2](#) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)), including full stops, capital letters, exclamation marks, question marks, commas for lists and apostrophes for contracted forms and the possessive (singular)
  - learn how to use:
    - sentences with different forms: statement, question, exclamation, command
    - expanded noun phrases to describe and specify [for example, the blue butterfly]
    - the present and past tenses correctly and consistently, including the progressive form
    - subordination (using when, if, that, or because) and co-ordination (using or, and, or but)
  - the grammar for year 2 in [English appendix 2](#) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf))

[Vocabulary grammar and punctuation.pdf](#))

- some features of written Standard English
- use and understand the grammatical terminology in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](#) in discussing their writing

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

The terms for discussing language should be embedded for pupils in the course of discussing their writing with them. Their attention should be drawn to the technical terms they need to learn.

## Lower key stage 2 – years 3 and 4

By the beginning of year 3, pupils should be able to read books written at an age-appropriate interest level. They should be able to read them accurately and at a speed that is sufficient for them to focus on understanding what they read rather than on decoding individual words. They should be able to decode most new words outside their spoken vocabulary, making a good approximation to the word's pronunciation. As their decoding skills become increasingly secure, teaching should be directed more towards developing their vocabulary and the breadth and depth of their reading, making sure that they become independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers who read widely and frequently. They should be developing their understanding and enjoyment of stories, poetry, plays and non-fiction, and learning to read silently. They should also be developing their knowledge and skills in reading non-fiction about a wide range of subjects. They should be learning to justify their views about what they have read: with support at the start of year 3 and increasingly independently by the end of year 4.

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas with a reasonable degree of accuracy and with good sentence punctuation. Teachers should therefore be consolidating pupils' writing skills, their vocabulary, their grasp of sentence structure and their knowledge of linguistic terminology. Teaching them to develop as writers involves teaching them to enhance the effectiveness of what they write as well as increasing their competence. Teachers should make sure that pupils build on what they have learnt, particularly in terms of the range of their writing and the more varied grammar, vocabulary and narrative structures from which they can draw to express their ideas. Pupils should be beginning to understand how writing can be different from speech. Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.

Pupils' spelling of common words should be correct, including common exception words and other words that they have learnt - see [English appendix 1 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](#). Pupils should spell words as accurately as possible using their phonic knowledge and other knowledge of spelling, such as morphology and etymology.

Most pupils will not need further direct teaching of word reading skills: they are able to decode unfamiliar words accurately, and need very few repeated experiences of this before the word is stored in such a way that they can read it without overt sound-blending. They should demonstrate understanding of figurative language, distinguish shades of meaning among related words and use age-appropriate, academic vocabulary.

As in key stage 1, however, pupils who are still struggling to decode need to be taught to do this urgently through a rigorous and systematic phonics programme so that they catch up rapidly with their peers. If they cannot decode independently and fluently, they will find it increasingly difficult to understand what they read and to write down what they want to say. As far as possible, however, these pupils should follow the year 3 and 4 programme of study in terms of listening to new books, hearing and learning new vocabulary and grammatical structures, and discussing these.

Specific requirements for pupils to discuss what they are learning and to develop their wider skills in spoken language form part of this programme of study. In years 3 and 4, pupils should become more familiar with and confident in using language in a greater variety of situations, for a variety of audiences and purposes, including through drama, formal presentations and debate.

## Years 3 and 4 programme of study

### Reading - word reading

Pupils should be taught to:

- apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (etymology and morphology) as listed in - see [English appendix 1 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](#) , both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet
- read further exception words, noting the unusual correspondences between spelling and sound, and where these occur in the word

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

At this stage, teaching comprehension should be taking precedence over teaching word reading directly. Any focus on word reading should support the development of vocabulary.

When pupils are taught to read longer words, they should be supported to test out different pronunciations. They will attempt to match what they decode to words they may have already heard but may not have seen in print (for example, in reading technical, the pronunciation /tɛtʃnɪkəl/ ('tetchnical') might not sound familiar, but /tɛknɪkəl/ ('teknical') should).

### Reading - comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes to reading, and an understanding of what they read, by:

- listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
- reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
- using dictionaries to check the meaning of words that they have read
- increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally
- identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books
- preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
- discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
- recognising some different forms of poetry [for example, free verse, narrative poetry]
- understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
  - checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context
  - asking questions to improve their understanding of a text
  - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
  - predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
  - identifying main ideas drawn from more than 1 paragraph and summarising these
  - identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning
- retrieve and record information from non-fiction
- participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

The focus should continue to be on pupils' comprehension as a primary element in reading. The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are very similar at different ages. This is why the programmes of study for comprehension in years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are similar: the complexity of the writing increases the level of challenge.

Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, such as the triumph of good over evil or the use of magical devices in fairy stories and folk tales.

They should also learn the conventions of different types of writing (for example, the greeting in letters, a diary written in the first person or the use of presentational devices such as numbering and headings in instructions).

Pupils should be taught to use the skills they have learnt earlier and continue to apply these skills to read for different reasons, including for pleasure, or to find out information and the meaning of new words.

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to listen frequently to stories, poems, non-fiction and other writing, including whole books and not just extracts, so that they build on what was taught previously. In this way, they also meet books and authors that they might not choose themselves. Pupils should also have opportunities to exercise choice in selecting books and be taught how to do so, with teachers making use of any library services and expertise to support this.

Reading, re-reading, and rehearsing poems and plays for presentation and performance give pupils opportunities to discuss language, including vocabulary,

extending their interest in the meaning and origin of words. Pupils should be encouraged to use drama approaches to understand how to perform plays and poems to support their understanding of the meaning. These activities also provide them with an incentive to find out what expression is required, so feeding into comprehension.

In using non-fiction, pupils should know what information they need to look for before they begin and be clear about the task. They should be shown how to use contents pages and indexes to locate information.

Pupils should have guidance about the kinds of explanations and questions that are expected from them. They should help to develop, agree on, and evaluate rules for effective discussion. The expectation should be that all pupils take part.

## Writing - transcription

### Spelling - see [English appendix 1](#)

[\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf)

Pupils should be taught to:

- use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them - see [English appendix 1](#)  
[\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf)
- spell further homophones
- spell words that are often misspelt - see [English appendix 1](#)  
[\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf)
- place the possessive apostrophe accurately in words with regular plurals [for example, girls', boys'] and in words with irregular plurals [for example, children's]
- use the first 2 or 3 letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary
- write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should learn to spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them.

As in years 1 and 2, pupils should continue to be supported in understanding and applying the concepts of word structure - see [English appendix 2](#)  
[\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf).

Pupils need sufficient knowledge of spelling in order to use dictionaries efficiently.

## Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

## Writing - composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- plan their writing by:
  - discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar
  - discussing and recording ideas
- draft and write by:
  - composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures [English appendix 2](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)  
([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf))
  - organising paragraphs around a theme
  - in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot
  - in non-narrative material, using simple organisational devices [for example, headings and sub-headings]
- evaluate and edit by:
  - assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements
  - proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
- proofread for spelling and punctuation errors
- read their own writing aloud to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to write for a range of real purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum. These purposes and audiences should underpin the decisions about the form the writing should take, such as a narrative, an explanation or a description.

Pupils should understand, through being shown these, the skills and processes that are essential for writing: that is, thinking aloud to explore and collect ideas, drafting,

and rereading to check their meaning is clear, including doing so as the writing develops. Pupils should be taught to monitor whether their own writing makes sense in the same way that they monitor their reading, checking at different levels.

## Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop their understanding of the concepts set out in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) by:
  - extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including: when, if, because, although
  - using the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense
  - choosing nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition
  - using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause
  - using fronted adverbials
  - learning the grammar for years 3 and 4 in [[English appendix 2\]/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)
- indicate grammatical and other features by:
  - using commas after fronted adverbials
  - indicating possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns
  - using and punctuating direct speech
- use and understand the grammatical terminology in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) accurately and appropriately when discussing their writing and reading

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Grammar should be taught explicitly: pupils should be taught the terminology and concepts set out in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf), and be able to apply them correctly to examples of real language, such as their own writing or books that they have read.

At this stage, pupils should start to learn about some of the differences between Standard English and non-Standard English and begin to apply what they have learnt, for example, in writing dialogue for characters.

## Upper key stage 2 – years 5 and 6

By the beginning of year 5, pupils should be able to read aloud a wider range of poetry and books written at an age-appropriate interest level with accuracy and at a reasonable

speaking pace. They should be able to read most words effortlessly and to work out how to pronounce unfamiliar written words with increasing automaticity. If the pronunciation sounds unfamiliar, they should ask for help in determining both the meaning of the word and how to pronounce it correctly.

They should be able to prepare readings, with appropriate intonation to show their understanding, and should be able to summarise and present a familiar story in their own words. They should be reading widely and frequently, outside as well as in school, for pleasure and information. They should be able to read silently, with good understanding, inferring the meanings of unfamiliar words, and then discuss what they have read.

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas quickly. Their grammar and punctuation should be broadly accurate. Pupils' spelling of most words taught so far should be accurate and they should be able to spell words that they have not yet been taught by using what they have learnt about how spelling works in English.

During years 5 and 6, teachers should continue to emphasise pupils' enjoyment and understanding of language, especially vocabulary, to support their reading and writing. Pupils' knowledge of language, gained from stories, plays, poetry, non-fiction and textbooks, will support their increasing fluency as readers, their facility as writers, and their comprehension. As in years 3 and 4, pupils should be taught to enhance the effectiveness of their writing as well as their competence.

It is essential that pupils whose decoding skills are poor are taught through a rigorous and systematic phonics programme so that they catch up rapidly with their peers in terms of their decoding and spelling. However, as far as possible, these pupils should follow the upper key stage 2 programme of study in terms of listening to books and other writing that they have not come across before, hearing and learning new vocabulary and grammatical structures, and having a chance to talk about all of these.

By the end of year 6, pupils' reading and writing should be sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum in year 7, across all subjects and not just in English, but there will continue to be a need for pupils to learn subject-specific vocabulary. They should be able to reflect their understanding of the audience for and purpose of their writing by selecting appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Teachers should prepare pupils for secondary education by ensuring that they can consciously control sentence structure in their writing and understand why sentences are constructed as they are. Pupils should understand nuances in vocabulary choice and age-appropriate, academic vocabulary. This involves consolidation, practice and discussion of language.

Specific requirements for pupils to discuss what they are learning and to develop their wider skills in spoken language form part of this programme of study. In years 5 and 6, pupils' confidence, enjoyment and mastery of language should be extended through public speaking, performance and debate.

## **Years 5 and 6 programme of study**

### **Reading - word reading**



Pupils should be taught to:

- apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (morphology and etymology), as listed in [English appendix 1 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf), both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words that they meet

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

At this stage, there should be no need for further direct teaching of word-reading skills for almost all pupils. If pupils are struggling or failing in this, the reasons for this should be investigated. It is imperative that pupils are taught to read during their last two years at primary school if they enter year 5 not being able to do so.

Pupils should be encouraged to work out any unfamiliar word. They should focus on all the letters in a word so that they do not, for example, read 'invitation' for 'imitation' simply because they might be more familiar with the first word. Accurate reading of individual words, which might be key to the meaning of a sentence or paragraph, improves comprehension.

When teachers are reading with or to pupils, attention should be paid to new vocabulary – both a word's meaning(s) and its correct pronunciation.

## Reading - comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

- maintain positive attitudes to reading and an understanding of what they read by:
  - continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
  - reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
  - increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions
  - recommending books that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices
  - identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing
  - making comparisons within and across books
  - learning a wider range of poetry by heart
  - preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience
- understand what they read by:
  - checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context
  - asking questions to improve their understanding
  - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

- predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
- summarising the main ideas drawn from more than 1 paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas
- identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
- discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- distinguish between statements of fact and opinion
- retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction
- participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
- explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary
- provide reasoned justifications for their views

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Even though pupils can now read independently, reading aloud to them should include whole books so that they meet books and authors that they might not choose to read themselves.

The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are very similar at different ages. Pupils should continue to apply what they have already learnt to more complex writing.

Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, such as loss or heroism. They should have opportunities to compare characters, consider different accounts of the same event and discuss viewpoints (both of authors and of fictional characters), within a text and across more than 1 text.

They should continue to learn the conventions of different types of writing, such as the use of the first person in writing diaries and autobiographies.

Pupils should be taught the technical and other terms needed for discussing what they hear and read, such as metaphor, simile, analogy, imagery, style and effect.

In using reference books, pupils need to know what information they need to look for before they begin and need to understand the task. They should be shown how to use contents pages and indexes to locate information.

The skills of information retrieval that are taught should be applied, for example in reading history, geography and science textbooks, and in contexts where pupils are genuinely motivated to find out information [for example, reading information leaflets before a gallery or museum visit or reading a theatre programme or review]. Teachers should consider making use of any library services and expertise to support this.

Pupils should have guidance about and feedback on the quality of their explanations and contributions to discussions.

Pupils should be shown how to compare characters, settings, themes and other aspects of what they read.

## Writing - transcription

### Spelling - see [English appendix 1](#)

[\(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf\)]((/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf))

Pupils should be taught to:

- use further prefixes and suffixes and understand the guidance for adding them
- spell some words with 'silent' letters [for example, knight, psalm, solemn]
- continue to distinguish between homophones and other words which are often confused
- use knowledge of morphology and etymology in spelling and understand that the spelling of some words needs to be learnt specifically, as listed in [English appendix 1]((/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf))
- use dictionaries to check the spelling and meaning of words
- use the first 3 or 4 letters of a word to check spelling, meaning or both of these in a dictionary
- use a thesaurus

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

As in earlier years, pupils should continue to be taught to understand and apply the concepts of word structure so that they can draw on their knowledge of morphology and etymology to spell correctly.

## Handwriting and presentation

Pupils should be taught to:

- write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
  - choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
  - choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra, and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

## Writing - composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- plan their writing by:
  - identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own
  - noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary
  - in writing narratives, considering how authors have developed characters and settings in what pupils have read, listened to or seen performed
- draft and write by:
  - selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning
  - in narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance the action
  - précising longer passages
  - using a wide range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs
  - using further organisational and presentational devices to structure text and to guide the reader [for example, headings, bullet points, underlining]
- evaluate and edit by:
  - assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing
  - proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning
  - ensuring the consistent and correct use of tense throughout a piece of writing
  - ensuring correct subject and verb agreement when using singular and plural, distinguishing between the language of speech and writing and choosing the appropriate register
- proofread for spelling and punctuation errors
- perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Pupils should understand, through being shown, the skills and processes essential for writing: that is, thinking aloud to generate ideas, drafting, and rereading to check that the meaning is clear.

## **Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation**

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop their understanding of the concepts set out in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) by:
  - recognising vocabulary and structures that are appropriate for formal speech and writing, including subjunctive forms
  - using passive verbs to affect the presentation of information in a sentence
  - using the perfect form of verbs to mark relationships of time and cause
  - using expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely
  - using modal verbs or adverbs to indicate degrees of possibility

- using relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that or with an implied (ie omitted) relative pronoun
- learning the grammar for years 5 and 6 in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)
- indicate grammatical and other features by:
  - using commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity in writing
  - using hyphens to avoid ambiguity
  - using brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis
  - using semicolons, colons or dashes to mark boundaries between independent clauses
  - using a colon to introduce a list
  - punctuating bullet points consistently
- use and understand the grammatical terminology in [English appendix 2 \(/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf\)](https://government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) accurately and appropriately in discussing their writing and reading

### **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Pupils should continue to add to their knowledge of linguistic terms, including those to describe grammar, so that they can discuss their writing and reading.

## **Key stage 3**

### **Subject content**

#### **Reading**

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop an appreciation and love of reading, and read increasingly challenging material independently through:
  - reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, including in particular whole books, short stories, poems and plays with a wide coverage of genres, historical periods, forms and authors, including high-quality works from English literature, both pre-1914 and contemporary, including prose, poetry and drama; Shakespeare (2 plays) and seminal world literature
  - choosing and reading books independently for challenge, interest and enjoyment
  - rereading books encountered earlier to increase familiarity with them and provide a basis for making comparisons
- understand increasingly challenging texts through:
  - learning new vocabulary, relating it explicitly to known vocabulary and understanding it with the help of context and dictionaries
  - making inferences and referring to evidence in the text

- knowing the purpose, audience for and context of the writing and drawing on this knowledge to support comprehension
- checking their understanding to make sure that what they have read makes sense
- read critically through:
  - knowing how language, including figurative language, vocabulary choice, grammar, text structure and organisational features, presents meaning
  - recognising a range of poetic conventions and understanding how these have been used
  - studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these
  - understanding how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play
  - making critical comparisons across texts
  - studying a range of authors, including at least 2 authors in depth each year

## Writing

Pupils should be taught to:

- write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length for pleasure and information through:
  - writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences, including: well-structured formal expository and narrative essays; stories, scripts, poetry and other imaginative writing; notes and polished scripts for talks and presentations and a range of other narrative and non-narrative texts, including arguments, and personal and formal letters
  - summarising and organising material, and supporting ideas and arguments with any necessary factual detail
  - applying their growing knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and text structure to their writing and selecting the appropriate form
  - drawing on knowledge of literary and rhetorical devices from their reading and listening to enhance the impact of their writing
- plan, draft, edit and proofread through:
  - considering how their writing reflects the audiences and purposes for which it was intended
  - amending the vocabulary, grammar and structure of their writing to improve its coherence and overall effectiveness
  - paying attention to accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling; applying the spelling patterns and rules set out in [English appendix 1](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239784/English\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_Spelling.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf)) to the key stage 1 and 2 programmes of study for English

## Grammar and vocabulary

Pupils should be taught to:

- consolidate and build on their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary through:
  - extending and applying the grammatical knowledge set out in [English appendix 2](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf) ([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335190/English\\_Appendix\\_2\\_-\\_Vocabulary\\_grammar\\_and\\_punctuation.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf)) to the key stage 1 and 2 programmes of study to analyse more challenging texts
  - studying the effectiveness and impact of the grammatical features of the texts they read
  - drawing on new vocabulary and grammatical constructions from their reading and listening, and using these consciously in their writing and speech to achieve

particular effects

- knowing and understanding the differences between spoken and written language, including differences associated with formal and informal registers, and between Standard English and other varieties of English
- using Standard English confidently in their own writing and speech
- discussing reading, writing and spoken language with precise and confident use of linguistic and literary terminology\*

\*Teachers should refer to the [glossary](#)

([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/238985/English\\_Glossary.pdf](/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238985/English_Glossary.pdf)) that accompanies the programmes of study for English for their own information on the range of terms used within the programmes of study as a whole.

## Spoken English

Pupils should be taught to:

- speak confidently and effectively, including through:
  - using Standard English confidently in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion
  - giving short speeches and presentations, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point
  - participating in formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said
  - improvising, rehearsing and performing play scripts and poetry in order to generate languages and discuss language use and meaning, using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact

# Key stage 4

## Subject content

### Purpose of study

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

### Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and

written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

### **Spoken language**

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language continues to underpin the development of pupils' reading and writing during key stage 4 and teachers should therefore ensure pupils' confidence and competence in this area continue to develop. Pupils should be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate, as well as continuing to develop their skills in working collaboratively with their peers to discuss reading, writing and speech across the curriculum.

### **Reading and writing**

Reading at key stage 4 should be wide, varied and challenging. Pupils should be expected to read whole books, to read in depth and to read for pleasure and information.

Pupils should continue to develop their knowledge of and skills in writing, refining their drafting skills and developing resilience to write at length. They should be taught to write formal and academic essays as well as writing imaginatively. They should be taught to write for a variety of purposes and audiences across a range of contexts. This requires an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary will arise naturally from their reading and writing. Teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously, understand why sentences are constructed as they are and to use Standard English. They should understand and use age-appropriate vocabulary, including linguistic and literary terminology, for discussing their reading, writing and spoken language. This involves consolidation, practice and discussion of language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

Teachers should build on the knowledge and skills that pupils have been taught at key stage 3. Decisions about progression should be based on the security of pupils' linguistic knowledge, skills and understanding and their readiness to progress to the next stage. Pupils whose linguistic development is more advanced should be challenged through being offered opportunities for increased breadth and depth in reading and writing. Those



who are less fluent should consolidate their knowledge, understanding and skills, including through additional practice.

## Glossary

A non-statutory [glossary](#)

([/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/238985/English\\_Glossary.pdf](https://government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238985/English_Glossary.pdf)) is provided for teachers.

## Reading

Pupils should be taught to:

- read and appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage through:
  - reading a wide range of high-quality, challenging, classic literature and extended literary non-fiction, such as essays, reviews and journalism. This writing should include whole texts. The range will include:
    - at least one play by Shakespeare
    - works from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries
    - poetry since 1789, including representative Romantic poetry
  - re-reading literature and other writing as a basis for making comparisons
  - choosing and reading books independently for challenge, interest and enjoyment
- understand and critically evaluate texts through:
  - reading in different ways for different purposes, summarising and synthesising ideas and information, and evaluating their usefulness for particular purposes
  - drawing on knowledge of the purpose, audience for and context of the writing, including its social, historical and cultural context and the literary tradition to which it belongs, to inform evaluation
  - identifying and interpreting themes, ideas and information
  - exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings, the relationships between them and their effects
  - seeking evidence in the text to support a point of view, including justifying inferences with evidence
  - distinguishing between statements that are supported by evidence and those that are not, and identifying bias and misuse of evidence
  - analysing a writer's choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features, and evaluating their effectiveness and impact
  - making critical comparisons, referring to the contexts, themes, characterisation, style and literary quality of texts, and drawing on knowledge and skills from wider reading
- make an informed personal response, recognising that other responses to a text are possible and evaluating these

## Writing

Pupils should be taught to:

- write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length for pleasure and information through:
  - adapting their writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences: to describe, narrate, explain, instruct, give and respond to information, and argue
  - selecting and organising ideas, facts and key points, and citing evidence, details and quotation effectively and pertinently for support and emphasis

- selecting, and using judiciously, vocabulary, grammar, form, and structural and organisational features, including rhetorical devices, to reflect audience, purpose and context, and using Standard English where appropriate
- make notes, draft and write, including using information provided by others [e.g. writing a letter from key points provided; drawing on and using information from a presentation]
- revise, edit and proof-read through:
  - reflecting on whether their draft achieves the intended impact
  - restructuring their writing, and amending its grammar and vocabulary to improve coherence, consistency, clarity and overall effectiveness
  - paying attention to the accuracy and effectiveness of grammar, punctuation and spelling

## **Grammar and vocabulary**

Pupils should be taught to:

- consolidate and build on their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary through:
  - studying their effectiveness and impact in the texts they read
  - drawing on new vocabulary and grammatical constructions from their reading and listening, and using these consciously in their writing and speech to achieve particular effects
  - analysing some of the differences between spoken and written language, including differences associated with formal and informal registers, and between Standard English and other varieties of English
  - using linguistic and literary terminology accurately and confidently in discussing reading, writing and spoken language

## **Spoken English**

Pupils should be taught to:

- speak confidently, audibly and effectively, including through:
  - using Standard English when the context and audience require it
  - working effectively in groups of different sizes and taking on required roles, including leading and managing discussions, involving others productively, reviewing and summarising, and contributing to meeting goals/deadlines
  - listening to and building on the contributions of others, asking questions to clarify and inform, and challenging courteously when necessary
  - planning for different purposes and audiences, including selecting and organising information and ideas effectively and persuasively for formal spoken presentations and debates
  - listening and responding in a variety of different contexts, both formal and informal, and evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and aspects of presentation
  - improvising, rehearsing and performing play scripts and poetry in order to generate language and discuss language use and meaning, using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact

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