

## 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

#### Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (morphology and etymology), as listed in [English Appendix 1](#), 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

#### Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

maintain positive attitudes to reading and 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

## Statutory requirements

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 one 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 one 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

### Statutory requirements

#### Spelling (see [English Appendix 1](#))

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

use dictionaries to check the spelling and meaning of words

use the first three or four letters of a word to check spelling, meaning or both of these in a dictionary

use a thesaurus.

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

#### Spelling

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.

## Writing – handwriting and presentation

### Statutory requirements

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

### Statutory requirements

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

- precising 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

proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors

### **Statutory requirements**

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 re-reading to check that the meaning is clear.



## Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

develop their understanding of the concepts set out in [English Appendix 2](#) 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 (i.e. omitted) relative pronoun

- learning the grammar for years 5 and 6 in English Appendix 2

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 semi-colons, 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 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.

## Spelling – years 5 and 6

Revise work done in previous years

New work for years 5 and 6

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt –cious or –tious	<p>Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in <b>–ce</b>, the /ʃ/ sound is usually spelt as <b>c</b> – e.g. <i>vice</i> – <i>vicious</i>, <i>grace</i> – <i>gracious</i>, <i>space</i> – <i>spacious</i>, <i>malice</i> – <i>malicious</i>.</p> <p><b>Exception:</b> <i>anxious</i>.</p>	<p>vicious, precious, conscious, delicious, malicious, suspicious, ambitious, cautious, fictitious, infectious, nutritious</p>
Endings which sound like /ʃəl/	<p><b>–cial</b> is common after a vowel letter and <b>–tial</b> after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions.</p> <p><b>Exceptions:</b> initial, financial, commercial, provincial (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to <i>finance</i>, <i>commerce</i> and <i>province</i>).</p>	<p>official, special, artificial, partial, confidential, essential</p>
Words ending in –ant, –ance/–ancy, –ent, –ence/–ency	<p>Use <b>–ant</b> and <b>–ance/–ancy</b> if there is a related word with a /æ/ or /eɪ/ sound in the right position; <b>–ation</b> endings are often a clue.</p> <p>Use <b>–ent</b> and <b>–ence/–ency</b> after soft <b>c</b> (/s/ sound), soft <b>g</b> (/dʒ/ sound) and <b>qu</b>, or if there is a related word with a clear /ɛ/ sound in the right position.</p> <p>There are many words, however, where the above guidance does not help. These words just have to be learnt.</p>	<p>observant, observance, (observ<u>a</u>tion), expectant (expect<u>a</u>tion), hesitant, hesitancy (hesit<u>a</u>tion), tolerant, tolerance (toler<u>a</u>tion), substance (subst<u>a</u>ntial)</p> <p>innocent, innocence, decent, decency, frequent, frequency, confident, confidence (confid<u>e</u>ntial)</p> <p>assistant, assistance, obedient, obedience, independent, independ<u>e</u>nce</p>

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
<p>Words ending in –able and –ible</p> <p>Words ending in –ably and –ibly</p>	<p>The <b>–able/–ably</b> endings are far more common than the <b>–ible/–ibly</b> endings. As with <b>–ant</b> and <b>–ance/–ancy</b>, the <b>–able</b> ending is used if there is a related word ending in <b>–ation</b>.</p> <p>If the <b>–able</b> ending is added to a word ending in <b>–ce</b> or <b>–ge</b>, the <b>e</b> after the <b>c</b> or <b>g</b> must be kept as those letters would otherwise have their ‘hard’ sounds (as in <i>cap</i> and <i>gap</i>) before the <b>a</b> of the <b>–able</b> ending.</p> <p>The <b>–able</b> ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it, even if there is no related word ending in <b>–ation</b>. The first five examples opposite are obvious; in <i>reliable</i>, the complete word <i>rely</i> is heard, but the <b>y</b> changes to <b>i</b> in accordance with the rule.</p> <p>The <b>–ible</b> ending is common if a complete root word can’t be heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word <i>can</i> be heard (e.g. <i>sensible</i>).</p>	<p>adorable/adorably (adoration),  applicable/applicably (application),  considerable/considerably (consideration),  tolerable/tolerably (toleration)</p> <p>changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible</p> <p>dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable</p> <p>possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, terrible/terribly, visible/visibly, incredible/incredibly, sensible/sensibly</p>
<p>Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in –fer</p>	<p>The <b>r</b> is doubled if the <b>–fer</b> is still stressed when the ending is added.</p> <p>The <b>r</b> is not doubled if the <b>–fer</b> is no longer stressed.</p>	<p>referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring, transferred</p> <p>reference, referee, preference, transference</p>
<p>Use of the hyphen</p>	<p>Hyphens can be used to join a prefix to a root word, especially if the prefix ends in a vowel letter and the root word also begins with one.</p>	<p>co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own</p>

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Words with the /i:/ sound spelt ei after c	<p>The 'i before e except after c' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by <b>ei</b> is /i:/.</p> <p><b>Exceptions:</b> <i>protein, caffeine, seize</i> (and <i>either</i> and <i>neither</i> if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).</p>	deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling
Words containing the letter-string ough	<p><b>ough</b> is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.</p>	ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought rough, tough, enough cough though, although, dough through thorough, borough plough, bough
Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	<p>Some letters which are no longer sounded used to be sounded hundreds of years ago: e.g. in <i>knight</i>, there was a /k/ sound before the /n/, and the <b>gh</b> used to represent the sound that 'ch' now represents in the Scottish word <i>loch</i>.</p>	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
<p>Homophones and other words that are often confused</p>	<p>In the pairs of words opposite, nouns end <b>-ce</b> and verbs end <b>-se</b>. <i>Advice</i> and <i>advise</i> provide a useful clue as the word <i>advise</i> (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt <b>c</b>.</p> <p><u>More examples:</u></p> <p>aisle: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane).  isle: an island.  aloud: out loud.  allowed: permitted.  affect: usually a verb (e.g. <i>The weather may affect our plans</i>).  effect: usually a noun (e.g. <i>It may have an effect on our plans</i>). If a verb, it means ‘bring about’ (e.g. <i>He will effect changes in the running of the business</i>).  altar: a table-like piece of furniture in a church.  alter: to change.  ascent: the act of ascending (going up).  assent: to agree/agreement (verb and noun).  bridal: to do with a bride at a wedding.  bridle: reins etc. for controlling a horse.  cereal: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal).  serial: adjective from the noun <i>series</i> – a succession of things one after the other.  compliment: to make nice remarks about someone (verb) or the remark that is made (noun).  complement: related to the word <i>complete</i> – to make something complete or more complete (e.g. <i>her scarf complemented her outfit</i>).</p>	<p>advice/advise  device/devise  licence/license  practice/practise  prophecy/prophesy</p> <p>farther: further  father: a male parent  guessed: past tense of the verb <i>guess</i>  guest: visitor  heard: past tense of the verb <i>hear</i>  herd: a group of animals  led: past tense of the verb <i>lead</i>  lead: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (<i>as heavy as lead</i>)  morning: before noon  mourning: grieving for someone who has died  past: noun or adjective referring to a previous time (e.g. <i>In the past</i>) or preposition or adverb showing place (e.g. <i>he walked past me</i>)  passed: past tense of the verb ‘pass’ (e.g. <i>I passed him in the road</i>)  precede: go in front of or before  proceed: go on</p>

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
<p>Homophones and other words that are often confused (continued)</p>	<p>descent: the act of descending (going down).</p> <p>dissent: to disagree/disagreement (verb and noun).</p> <p>desert: as a noun – a barren place (stress on first syllable); as a verb – to abandon (stress on second syllable)</p> <p>dessert: (stress on second syllable) a sweet course after the main course of a meal.</p> <p>draft: noun – a first attempt at writing something; verb – to make the first attempt; also, to draw in someone (e.g. <i>to draft in extra help</i>)</p> <p>draught: a current of air.</p>	<p>principal: adjective – most important (e.g. <i>principal ballerina</i>) noun – important person (e.g. <i>principal of a college</i>)</p> <p>principle: basic truth or belief</p> <p>profit: money that is made in selling things</p> <p>prophet: someone who foretells the future</p> <p>stationary: not moving</p> <p>stationery: paper, envelopes etc.</p> <p>steal: take something that does not belong to you</p> <p>steel: metal</p> <p>wary: cautious</p> <p>weary: tired</p> <p>who's: contraction of <i>who is</i> or <i>who has</i></p> <p>whose: belonging to someone (e.g. <i>Whose jacket is that?</i>)</p>

## Word list – years 5 and 6

accommodate	embarrass	persuade
accompany	environment	physical
according	equip (–ped, –ment)	prejudice
achieve	especially	privilege
aggressive	exaggerate	profession
amateur	excellent	programme
ancient	existence	pronunciation
apparent	explanation	queue
appreciate	familiar	recognise
attached	foreign	recommend
available	forty	relevant
average	frequently	restaurant
awkward	government	rhyme
bargain	guarantee	rhythm
bruise	harass	sacrifice
category	hindrance	secretary
cemetery	identity	shoulder
committee	immediate(ly)	signature
communicate	individual	sincere(ly)
community	interfere	soldier
competition	interrupt	stomach
conscience*	language	sufficient
conscious*	leisure	suggest
controversy	lightning	symbol
convenience	marvellous	system
correspond	mischievous	temperature
criticise (critic + ise)	muscle	thorough
curiosity	necessary	twelfth
definite	neighbour	variety
desperate	nuisance	vegetable
determined	occupy	vehicle
develop	occur	yacht
dictionary	opportunity	
disastrous	parliament	

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Teachers should continue to emphasize to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. Once root words are learnt in this way, longer words can be spelt correctly if the rules and guidance for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known. Many of the words in the list above can be used for practice in adding suffixes.

Understanding the history of words and relationships between them can also help with spelling.

#### Examples:

*Conscience* and *conscious* are related to *science*: *conscience* is simply *science* with the prefix *con-* added. These words come from the Latin word *scio* meaning *I know*.

The word *desperate*, meaning 'without hope', is often pronounced in English as *desp'rate*, but the *-sper-* part comes from the Latin *spero*, meaning 'I hope', in which the **e** was clearly sounded.

*Familiar* is related to *family*, so the /ə/ sound in the first syllable of *familiar* is spelt as **a**.