

Supporting Your Child in Year 6



Spring Term 2021

Happy New Year! I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas and that Santa was good to you all. Thank you to yourselves and the children for making the first term as enjoyable as it could be. The spring term is an extremely important term where plenty of work will be taking place but the hard work and effort that the children put in last term fills me with confidence that they will have a fantastic term.

English

In English this term, we will be starting off by taking a look at some poetry with a particular focus on Shakespeare and rhyming couplets. In the other areas of writing we will cover, there will be a particular focus on the grammar and punctuation side of the curriculum, applying this to our writing in order to develop the cohesion of our writing within the English lessons. We will be exploring these grammatical features along with the structural features through the use of Talk4Writing. The main grammatical focus will be on effective descriptions of characters and settings, the use of dialogue to advance action and the use of some of the more sophisticated features such as passive voice transitioning between verb tenses accurately and the use of figurative language.

We will be using Michelle Paver's book 'Wolf Brother' during the first half term for a lot of our reading and English lessons. In addition to this, we will be doing a lot of cross curricular writing based on The Ancient Civilisation of the Mayans within our topic lessons: producing balanced arguments, taking part in debates, writing non-chronological reports and diary entries about daily life from the point of view of a variety of members of the Mayan civilisation and creating presentations to explain our knowledge to our parents and peers. The following half term, towards Easter we will be using a Philip Reeve's book 'Mortal Engines' within a lot of our writing.

Useful resources to get your children reading and writing

- Topmarks provides children with a lot of games to practice different elements of the grammar and punctuation. <http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/7-11-years/spelling-and-grammar>
- The Literacy Shed is a fantastic website with a range of different stimulus to encourage children to write. Let your child explore and write a range of different genres. <http://www.literacyshed.com/>
- I also would advise using films that your children enjoy watching. Get them to re-write the story from a different characters point of view, write a diary entry based on one of the events, or even create a movie trailer, using ipads and other technology (something which I am sure a lot of children could do quicker than any of us adults)

- Play games where children tell a story sentence by sentence, swapping with someone each time to make a silly story
- <https://www.teachwrite.co.uk/karaokecomprehension> is an excellent website to develop reading comprehension skills through the use of songs that the children will enjoy listening to.
- <http://www.satspapers.org.uk/Page.aspx?TId=5> is an excellent website where you can find previous SATs papers. This will enable the children to revisit the styles of question and texts they will come across in May.
- Play games where children tell a story sentence by sentence, swapping with someone each time to make a silly story

For SEND children

- Write parts of sentences onto different cards then discuss the different word types e.g. verbs, adjectives etc.
- Rainbow sentences are great. Write each sentence in a different colour. This allows children to see where and when punctuation is needed
- Cross words and hangman are a good way to practice spelling the year 3 and 4 spelling words, or the 5 and 6 spelling words.
- In literacy lessons it is important for the children to explore a wide range of sentence structures in class this is supported by the staff in the classroom. We use a variety of word mats, sentence scaffolding and pictorial stimuli to encourage the children to be creative with their writing. Please encourage the children to write simple sentences, which link together with each other.

For Greater Depth children

- Work on proof reading and editing skills by editing parts of a text using synonyms to maintain the mood or antonyms to alter the mood of the writing
- Improve simple sentences by adding a range of clauses in different positions: manipulate these to find the most cohesive way of writing.
- Begin using the full range of punctuation taught in KS2 for their different purposes and write explanations of how these should be used accurately.
- Write in a range of genres considering the vocabulary selected for formal and informal text types.
- It is important for these more confident writers to ensure that they are able to write longer passages of writing using all of the grammatical features expected of Year 6 children. To enable them to do so please visit:
- <http://www.pobble365.com/> this website will provide picture stimulus for the children to write creatively. It also has questions and activities to support children with writing in a variety of genres.

In addition to this, we will be continuing to work on whole class comprehension skills using book talk and VIPERS. Our main focus will be on gaining further marks in our comprehension questions so we will be having a real emphasis on inference, P.E.E (explain) and summarise.

We ask that you continue to support us by listening to your child read whenever possible as this will help support the comprehension work in class. This includes questioning the children as they read to you. There are a variety of different question types you can ask: -

- Open ended questions – encourage children to give a range of responses and shows their deeper level of understanding.
- Literal questions – encourage children to recall facts or make simple comprehension where the answer is clearly stated in the text.
- Higher order questions – are excellent to challenge and move able readers on. They encourage children to think beyond what is written in the text.

Vocabulary

Find and explain the meaning of words in context

Example questions

- What do the words and suggest about the character, setting and mood?
- Which word tells you that....?
- Which keyword tells you about the character/setting/mood?
- Find one word in the text which means.....
- Find and highlight the word that is closest in meaning to.....
- Find a word or phrase which shows/suggests that.....

Infer

Make and justify inferences using evidence from the text

Example questions

- Find and copy a group of words which show that...
- How do these words make the reader feel? How does this paragraph suggest this?
- How do the descriptions of show that they are
- How can you tell that.....
- What impression of do you get from these paragraphs?
- What voice might these characters use?
- What was thinking when.....
- Who is telling the story?

Predict

Predict what might happen from the details given and implied.

Example questions

- From the cover what do you think this text is going to be about?
- What is happening now? What happened before this? What will happen after?
- What does this paragraph suggest will happen next? What makes you think this?
- Do you think the choice of setting will influence how the plot develops?
- Do you think... will happen? Yes, no or maybe? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.

Explain

- Explain how content is related and contributes to the meaning as a whole.
- Explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of language.
- Explain the themes and patterns that develop across the text.
- Explain how information contributes to the overall experience.

Example questions

- Why is the text arranged in this way?
- What structures has the author used?
- What is the purpose of this text feature?
- Is the use of effective?
- The mood of the character changes throughout the text. Find and copy the phrases which show this.
- What is the author's point of view?
- What affect does have on the audience?
- How does the author engage the reader here?
- Which words and phrases did effectively?

Retrieve

Retrieve and record information and identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.

Example questions

- How would you describe this story/text? What genre is it? How do you know?
- How did...?
- How often...?
- Who had...? Who is...? Who did...?
- What happened to...?
- What does..... do?
- How is?
- What can you learn from from this section?
- Give one example of.....
- The story is told from whose perspective?

Summarise

Summarise the main ideas from more than one paragraph

Example questions

- Can you number these events 1-5 in the order that they happened?
- What happened after?
- What was the first thing that happened in the story?
- Can you summarise in a sentence the opening/middle/end of the story?
- In what order do these chapter headings come in the story?

Maths

Whilst we will be continually working on and recapping our previous topics of number, including the four operations, and fractions decimals and percentages, we will have a particular focus this term on some of the more complex areas of the maths curriculum; these will include ratio and proportion, scale factors, geometry (shape & position), measurement, time & statistics. We will also be working hard on our reasoning and problem-solving skills as this is a big part of the maths curriculum for Year 6.

If you want to support your child in some of the work we will be doing, encourage them to continue to practice using the different written methods for the four calculations – look back over the last supporting your child letter for the strategies we use.

Strategies we use for using the four operations within fractions

When adding and subtracting fractions with different denominators you need to make the denominators the same.

$$\frac{4}{5} + \frac{2}{3}$$

Find the lowest common multiple

Lowest common multiple = 15

Turn both fractions into a fraction with the same denominator

$$\frac{4}{5} + \frac{2}{3} = \frac{\quad}{15} + \frac{\quad}{15}$$

Then I would see how many times 5 and 3 go into 15

5 into 15 = 3x

3 into 15 = 5 x

Then in multiply the top number by the same as the bottom

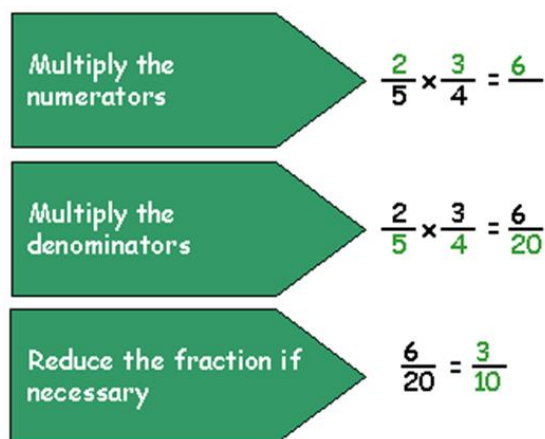
$$3 \times 4 = 12$$

$$5 \times 2 = 10$$

$$\frac{4}{5} + \frac{2}{3} = \frac{12}{15} + \frac{10}{15} = \frac{22}{15}$$

I then look if I can simplify or turn into a mixed number.

Multiplying fractions



Dividing

fractions

When I divide fractions we use stick, swap, flip to help us.



Other activities you could use to support your child in maths:

Kaboom – a game which can be used to practice their times tables. Ask your child to show you how to play this game – we have been using it lots already this term.

Snap for equivalent fractions, decimals and percentages.

A Pack of card fractions. Play in pairs. Each person picks two cards: one would be the denominator and one the numerator. Pairs compare. Highest fraction wins. This could be adapted to simplifying fractions or turning fractions from improper to mixed numbers. The opportunities with packs of cards are endless. Try typing it into Google and see what variations you can find.

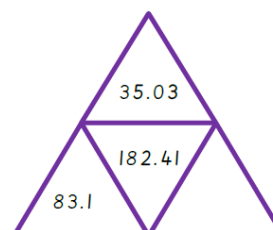
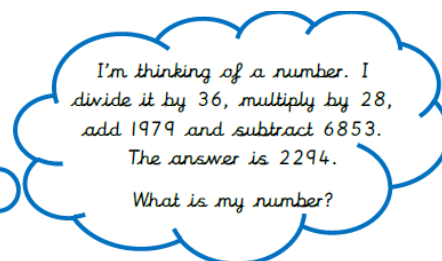
For Greater depth children

For those children who are extremely confident with maths, I would advise them to start to use these skills on a mastery level, solving a range of puzzles and problems. The rich, NACE and NCETM websites provide a range of different activities.

Encourage your child to create problems which involve working systematically. Get them to create problems for you to solve.



Jerry



They also need to continue to develop their ability to reason. Use problems like the one below to encourage them to prove a theory right or wrong.

Question One



Marlon says that twelve sixteenths of 48 is the same as three quarters of 48. Do you agree with Marlon? Prove why he is right/wrong.

Other techniques I use for this include...prove it; always, sometimes and never true and odd one out.

Finally, encourage children to find mistakes in calculations and give advice on how the mistake could be corrected.

Martin says that:

$$\frac{3}{8} + \frac{2}{8} = \frac{5}{16}$$

What mistake did he make? What would you say to Martin to help him with his learning?

For SEND children

- Work on using pictures and practical resources to support children with 4 calculations (division, multiplication, addition and subtraction)
- Practice times tables up to 12 times table
- Use <https://www.mymaths.co.uk/> for a range of activities to support place value and 4 calculations knowledge
- Use <https://mathsframe.co.uk/en/resources/category/22/most-popular> for a range of games which will engage the children in 4 calculations and place value

Curriculum

Our topic for this term is The Mayan Civilisation (with the title of our topic being 'Murderous Mayans'). During this topic, we will be learning about the key events, leaders and cities from throughout the Mayan Civilisation. Following on from this, we will look at the longevity and spread of the Mayan Civilisation around the world and the impacts that they have had on modern-day society. Our main focus will be on Mayan society, their social structure and what every-day life was like for different members of the community. Finally, we will be applying all of our knowledge so that we can create a Mayan museum for people to come and visit: including artefacts that we will make and presentations about different areas of our learning. In our science lessons, we will also explore evolution and inheritance during this term which will involve investigating the following things: key scientists in this field of science, different extreme environments and the animals that are adapted to survive in them and the different body parts and behavioural characteristics which are best to guarantee survival in different habitats. Furthermore, we will be looking at the different characteristics that can be inherited from our ancestors.

P.E.

Your child will have daily P.E. lessons each week including fitness with maths and English sessions. They will need a Glenmere Sports T-Shirt, black shorts and an outdoor PE kit, including tracksuit bottoms and a warm top if the weather is cold. A change of footwear is needed. The children will need both plimsolls or indoor trainers for indoor sessions and trainers for outdoors: these should not be the same shoes as their school shoes.

As we will be outdoors for some of the sessions, it is VERY important that your child has an outdoor kit, which will need to reflect the weather. A lightweight waterproof can also be worn, as we will still be outside if it is drizzly rain, and sun cream needs to be put on before coming to school if it's hot! I would like all children to bring a water bottle to school to be taken out for PE please. Please ensure the water bottles are clearly named, and the children will be encouraged to bring them home daily to wash them, and bring back for the following day. PE kits in school on Monday and take it home on Fridays. Please also note that for ALL PE activities, NO jewellery whatsoever must be worn, including earrings, watches and necklaces.

Homework

We will continue to use the booster books from before. Children will continue to be set their homework on Google Classroom; there will be homework for each day of the school week (apart from on a Monday). There will be the usual spellings homework. The spellings will be taught

throughout the week and given out on a Monday evening to be tested every Friday – children can continue to practice these on edshed (which they have thoroughly impressed us all with). Parts of their homework knowledge organiser will also be set weekly and we will have quizzes weekly to recap our knowledge of these aspects. I also understand that some elements of the Year 6 curriculum can be challenging so if there are any elements you are unsure on and I haven't mentioned them in this letter, please do not hesitate to speak to me.

Recommending Reading Books

As your child grows in confidence with their reading, it is essential that they are given the opportunity to read a wide variety of book. Below of some of my favourites for Year Six children.

- A Boy called Hope by Lara Williamson
- Illegal by Eoin Colfer
- The Nowhere Emporium by Ross Mackenzie
- Time Travelling with a Hamster by Ross Welford
- SeaBEAN by Sarah Holding
- Eren by Simon P Clark
- Raspberries on the Yangtze by Karen Wallace

For children who find reading challenging at times, The Brilliant World of Tom Gates is a great book for getting them engaged as it is a mixture of reading and drawing.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you for making the first term enjoyable – you have all been extremely hard-working and we are all very impressed. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks,

Mr Upfield