



SPAG BUSTERS

For KS2

***A handy parent's guide to help your child
with SPAG***

(Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar).



Welcome

We have put together this booklet to help you clearly see the Government's requirements for this area in English. We also hope to give you suggestions of fun activities for home that will help your child's understanding & progression in writing.

What is the benefit to the children of this greater emphasis on the teaching of grammar, punctuation & spelling?

The ability to write & to communicate are key life skills. Your child needs to be able to use these skills throughout their education, employment and adult life.

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Year 3 & 4

Spelling

Y3 and Y4 need to learn to

- Spell the words on the Y3 and Y4 list (These are statutory words the children have to learn by law!). (see additional materials in appendix)
- Recognise and spell more sets of homophones/near homophones (e.g. accept/except).
- Use the prefixes (beginning with) dis-, mis-, in- and im- il-, re-, sub-, inter-, anti-, auto-.
- Spell words with the suffixes (ending in) -tion, -sion, -cian, -ssion. -ly, -ation, -ous.
- Spell longer polysyllabic (more than one syllable) words accurately e.g. hippopotamus.
- Use the first 2/3 letters in a word to check its spelling in a dictionary.
- Write from memory simple sentences dictated by their teacher.

Activities

1. Discuss the meaning of words. Do they look or sound like other words? Does the word come from a different language?
2. Play word games eg Junior scrabble, Boggle, Hangman, countdown
3. Find examples of prefixes & suffixes in books & around and about
4. Speed spell- how many words can you spell accurately in a minute?

Top Tips

- Encourage your child to attempt to spell words by themselves & to use a dictionary efficiently
- Think about what you do when you're not sure of a spelling. Do you look it up; write it different ways to see what looks right; say it as it is spelt to yourself; break it down into chunks? Share these strategies with your child

Grammar & Punctuation



Y3 and Y4 need to learn to

- Write in complex sentences to show time using eg. until, during, meanwhile, while and following.
 - Use words that are interesting and appropriate.
 - Use noun phrases by adding more detail e.g. the teacher becomes the strict, maths teacher with curly hair.
 - Write sentences where nouns and verbs agree e.g. 'the man was' not 'the man were'.
 - Experiment with a wide range of punctuation, such as ... , ! ? : " " ' ' ; ;
 - Include pronouns in sentences to avoid repetition- "The man walked to the shops and the man bought some milk" becomes "The man walked to the shops and he bought some milk."
 - Proof read for spelling and punctuation errors.
 - Extend sentences with more than one clause (a phrase with a verb) by using a wider range of conjunctions (joining words), when, if, because, although.
 - Use the possessive apostrophe for plurals e.g. girls' names (for more than one girl. Remember it is the owner that has the apostrophe girls ends in s).
- Use and punctuate direct speech correctly (including inverted commas, commas, new speaker/ new line).
- Use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause.
 - Use fronted adverbials correctly ensuring that a comma follows them e.g. Swimming cautiously, Later that day,
 - Use the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to past tense. I've played the guitar ever since I was a teenager.
 - Use a or an depending on what the next word begins with. If it is a vowel, 'an' is needed e.g. an old house.

Possible Activities

The best way to help your child with these challenging expectations is to get them to practise all their skills in writing for a real person or reason eg:

- a letter of information (or email) to a relation or friend
- Booklets – make a story or information booklet for different family members
- Write a persuasive letter or leaflet eg why you should be allowed to do something
- Diary

Ask your child to read their own homework over for errors & to make improvements independently – this is a real life skill

Year 5 & 6

Spelling

The trick in upper key stage 2 is to learn about families of words. Understanding root words helps children to understand more complicated suffixes and prefixes.

Help your child to understand homophones (eg aisle/isle). We look at words ending in -cious and -tious, -ance and -ence, -able and -ible. The 'i before e except after c' rule still applies but we have to be aware of plenty of exceptions (protein, Caffeine, seize). We also look at the -ough letter string and silent letters in words.

Activities

- Discuss the meaning of words. Do they look or sound like other words? Does the word come from a different language?
- Identify root words that can help spelling when pronunciation changes after adding a suffix eg differ – difference (first e is usually not stressed)
- Discuss different spelling strategies you use yourself
- Encourage your child to use a dictionary efficiently using the first 3 letters of a word and the guide words at the top of dictionary pages.
- Play word games eg scrabble, Boggle, Hangman, countdown
- Encourage your child to complete their homework



Grammar & punctuation

Year 5 and 6 need to:

- Remember all the above!
 - Recognise vocabulary that is appropriate for formal speech and writing (including the horrible 'subjunctive'!).
 - Use passive verbs to affect the presentation of information in a sentence.
 - Use the perfect form of verbs to mark relationships of time and clause.
 - Use expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely.
 - Use modal verbs or adverbs to indicate degrees of possibility.
- Use relative clauses beginning with who, which, when, whose, or that.
- Use commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity.
 - Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity.
 - Use dashes, brackets or commas to indicate parenthesis.
 - Use semi-colons, colons or dashes to mark boundaries between independent clauses.
 - Use colons to introduce lists.
 - Punctuate bullet points consistently.

Activities

Out in the world

- identify the (often poor) use of possessive apostrophes in plural words eg MOT's
- look for examples of persuasive writing in adverts
- formal and informal writing in different newspapers

Sources of information

- encourage your child to read from all sources – instructions, newspapers, magazines, trading cards and, of course, books!

How Can I Help My Child?

- Read and speak with your child- a lot of language for writing will come from these experiences.
- Develop listening skills by telling and reading stories and listening to the radio and podcasts.
- When you are writing a list, email or filling in a form, talk to your child about what you are writing and why.
- Help your child learn new vocabulary from visits, books and TV.
- Encourage your child to find their own errors e.g. tell them there are 3 full stops missing and get them to find them rather than correcting it for them.

• Talk to your child about what they are learning in grammar and encourage them to use correct grammar in speaking and writing
common mistakes include:

We was going- we were going

Them ones- those ones

Should of, could of, would of= should have (should've), could have, would have

- Encourage your child to complete school projects and homework
- Provide your child with a writing kit- this could include –pencils and paper; dictionary; notebook, exercise book or scrap book.
- Demonstrate the correct grammar to your child.
- Discuss an author's use of particular grammar and punctuation and the effect that it has on the reader
- Communicate with school - what are the phonics and spellings being taught?
- Practise spellings in a fun way- games and writing silly sentences including the words.
- Follow school's handwriting style.
- Encourage your child to write for a real person and purpose: e.g. letters and emails to relatives; invitations; write their own messages in birthday and Christmas cards; write a story or poem for a younger family member; create their own project about an interest;

Writing - What's new?

- Children need to learn to plan and improve their own writing.
- Spelling and phonics expectations are set out clearly for every year group.

Correct grammar is given more emphasis and there are detailed expectations for each year group.

- Handwriting has been given more importance – children should be joining their handwriting from an earlier age.
- Organise writing so that different audiences can understand and enjoy what has been written.
- They need to develop a wide vocabulary through reading & speaking and listening and use it in their writing.

Appendix / Additional materials

This booklet refers to documents published by the government and as teachers we recommend you have a look at these. They will show you expectations of learning and comprehensive lists of specific terms and words your child should be learning in each age group at school.

The national curriculum can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>

Vocabulary, Punctuation and Grammar Year 1 to 6 - Pages 65 - 69

Glossary for the Programme of Study Pages 70 – 88

Websites for Grammar

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks2/english/spelling_grammar/

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Flash.aspx?e=spelling-grammar01>

<http://www.funbrain.com/grammar/>

<http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar>

<http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy2.htm>

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/ks2literacy.html>

<http://www.grammar-monster.com/>