

Year 6 Spelling: A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents

This step-by-step explanation to spelling can help you support your child's learning at home. Each subject is broken down into manageable chunks, providing all the resources you need to understand how the spelling patterns work in each year group along with techniques and resources to help you support your child.

Within this area of the website, you will find a selection of materials and activities intended to help your child learn about each step of this guide. Each step also contains a keyword or phrase that you can use to search the Twinkl site for more resources and activities, designed to support your child in achieving that stage. Simply type the keyword or phrase into the search bar and press enter to explore together.

 

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. The contents of this resource are for general, informational purposes only. This guide is intended to offer parents general guidance on what subject areas tend to be covered in their child's year group and where they could support their children at home. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. There are some subject areas that we have intentionally not covered due to the nature of how they are taught or because a trained professional needs to teach these areas. We try to ensure that the information in our resources is correct but every school teaches the national curriculum in its own way. If you would like further guidance or are unsure in any way, we recommend that you speak to your child's teacher or another suitably qualified professional.

Spelling

How Is Spelling Taught in Year 6?

In years 5 and 6, spelling work follows a set list (often referred to as 'statutory spellings') that is required by the national curriculum, but can be taught in a pattern chosen by the school. Primary schools often organise their spelling programme to link with other aspects of their literacy curriculum.

In year 6, children practise all the spellings from the year 5 and 6 statutory lists and should also know the spellings taught and learnt in earlier years of primary school. This is because children in mainstream school will sit a 20-mark spelling test as part of the assessments that are taken in May of the final junior year.

What Does the Key Stage 2 Spelling Test Involve?

The year 6 spelling test is a part of what is popularly known as the SPaG assessment at key stage 2. SPaG stands for 'spelling, punctuation and grammar'. In the test, your child will hear twenty sentences read clearly. They have an answer book which contain these sentences, but one word is missing from each sentence. Your child has to add the word that is missing on their answer sheet.

The spelling test lasts around 15 minutes, though it varies slightly depending on how the sentences are being read. The teacher will read the word, then the word within a sentence, then repeat the word. Most children will fill the word in before the word is said for the third time.

For example, in the 2019 test, the first spelling was 'creature'. The teacher would say:

'Spelling one: The word is creature. The dragon is an imaginary creature. The word is creature.'

Teachers are not allowed to emphasise spelling as they pronounce words. For example, a teacher is not allowed to over-emphasise the middle 'a' if they are saying 'separate' as this gives additional help to the children.

Say Like It Is

Year 5 and 6 spelling lists are full of tricky words that look different to the way they sound. Why not try saying the words the way they look. For example, saying "sep-are-ate" instead of "sep-er-ate" might help you to remember that separate has an 'a' not an 'e' in the middle.

Make a Short Story

Challenge your child to write a short story that includes all of their current spellings that need practising. It can be as silly or serious as they like! Using the words in context will develop and demonstrate their understanding of the meaning of the words.

Silly Sentences

Use your child's spelling words in silly sentences. The sillier the sentence they can make, the more memorable! For example, 'it is possible that I accidentally ate my eighth calendar.' By underlining the spelling words in each sentence, your child can come back to the sentences they write in the future and know exactly which ones to revise. With this game, you should double check that your child has spelt the key spelling words correctly.

Crossword Maker

Encourage your child to make a crossword with some of the spellings they're currently learning. They may find this easier to do on grid paper (with a letter in each box and lines to follow for the outline) or on the computer. Who will they challenge to find the words? They could present it to you, another family member, or their friends. If their friends are also learning those spellings, they could even both make a crossword and challenge each other.

Step 1

Year 5 and 6 Word Mats

The activity mats in this bumper pack contain all the required (statutory) spellings for years 5 and 6, with practice activities for each word. Individual mats are a great prompt to practise tricky words; we suggest using one mat as a single activity rather than to complete multiple mats in a single sitting. This way, your child continues to get regular exposure to spellings without overwhelm or exhaustion. You could also try using it to give your child control over tracking their own progress, highlighting or ticking each word as they've learnt it. As more are highlighted, the number of words left will decrease, making organising your child's learning easier.



Learning to Spell with Dictation

Dictation describes a process where one person writes down what another person is reading aloud at a measured pace. In schools, this can be a recorded passage that needs writing down, but is most often read aloud by the teacher. This pack includes dictation passages that contain the required (statutory) spellings and exception words that are taught throughout years 5 and 6. Practising dictation helps children to learn spellings and also helps them to write fluently under a time constraint, which is a skill needed before taking SATs at the end of the year. When you try your first dictation, judge the speed of your child's writing and slowly increase the pace over multiple sessions.

Step 2



Step 3

Practice and Revision Booklet

All children in mainstream schools will sit a national test in spelling in May of year 6. This booklet is a varied and comprehensive guide for parents to the expectations of the test, with advice on how to get your child ready in a low-pressure way by using activities and prompts. This booklet also contains plenty of quick spelling quizzes alongside helpful parent information.

Practice Test

If you want to get your child used to the pattern of the year 6 SAT test, then using practice tests could be a helpful way to prepare them (though they will of course be practising in school as well). The 'home practice test' section of this pack contains lots of practise spelling quizzes with answer sheets at the back, so you can award one mark for each correctly spelt word your child uses during the test. Be sure to only use the test material to support your child, as over-practising can lead to increased anxiety.

Step 4

Explore and Discover More

Twinkl Go! is a digital platform, hosting interactive content such as videos, games, audiobooks and more. Twinkl Go! enables digital content to be streamed to your computer or mobile device.



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Go!



twinkl
Book Club

Twinkl Book Club is our book subscription service. Enjoy our original works of fiction in beautiful printed form, delivered to you each half-term and yours to keep!



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Boost

Twinkl Boost is a range of intervention resources, created to support and lift learning with children at every level. These include our easy-to-use SATs and Phonics Screening resources.



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imagine

Imagine resources are designed to help your children to think creatively, question and imagine. Every week, a new topic consisting of five photos, each with related activities, is created.



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ORIGINALS

Twinkl Originals are engaging stories written to inspire pupils from EYFS to KS2. Designed to encourage a love of reading and help curriculum-wide learning through accompanying resources.



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KIDS' TV

Twinkl Kids' TV is our wonderful YouTube channel dedicated to fun and informative video-style resources full of new and creative activities you can try at home!