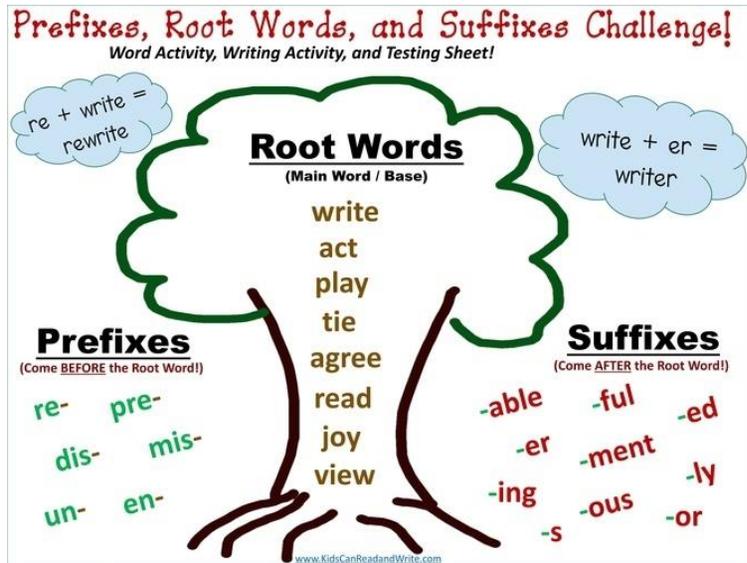


Helping your child with Literacy – Primary 4

This leaflet is to give you some ideas about how you can support your child's learning in literacy in small, fun, practical ways at home throughout the year.

Every Little Helps – little and often

Prefixes and suffixes – having fun with words.



Prefixes and suffixes are important in spelling. We add a prefix at the beginning of the word such as re play, dis agree and en joy. We add a suffix at the end of the word such as play ing, read er and joy ous.

We can add prefixes and suffixes to words –

en joy ment , dis agree ment and re en act ment

Short activity – Can you make words with prefixes and/ or suffixes.

Listening and talking

Here are some targets for listening and talking within first level.

They need to show confidence when listening and talking with others. They need to share and justify opinions – the pupils need to develop their reasons for likes and dislikes. They also need to show respect when ideas / opinions are challenged. They also have to accept that others have different opinions to their own. And they can talk about the differences between fact and opinion.

Here are a number of “thinking” questions you can ask your children and discuss with them. This will develop their opinions. (please feel free to challenge their thoughts.)

- You can only save three things from your house (doesn't include people) what would you save and why?
- What is the best age to be? Why?
- You can invite three celebrities for tea. Who would you choose and why?
- Listen to this piece of music and tell your family three things it made you think of or feel and why?
- What would an octopus pack in his suitcase? Why?
- You get 3 wishes, what are they and what happens when you get them?
If you met a cave man what would you ask him?
- If you could invent a new word for the dictionary what would it be?
What does it mean? Is it a noun, verb, adjective etc?
- One morning you wake up and you realise you can talk to animals.
What would your pet dog say to you? Describe your dream bedroom. What would be the positives and negatives if we lived in bouncy castles?
- You are a balloon flying freely through the sky what are the three most exciting things that happen to you?
- You have won £1000 but have to spend it in one day. What would you buy? If you could only eat 3 foods for the rest of the year which would they be and why?

Writing – activities to develop your child’s vocabulary – work together and have fun

The more words that your child knows, the more precise they can be when they write.

Using good... verbs – doing words.....can make all the difference.

(How many different words can you write instead of said?)

Using interesting adjectives – describing words;

Using active adverbs – words to describe how or when something is done;

Look at people, animals and objects with your child. How many words can you think of to describe them?

A dog – fierce; shaggy; obedient; intelligent; aggressive; handsome; glossy-coated; friendly.

Funny Faces: Pull faces and ask your child to describe how you feel using adjectives: miserable; happy; unhappy; fearful; anxious; horrified.

Acting Adverbs: Walk, or act in a particular way and ask your child to describe how you are doing it –cautiously; boldly; happily; slowly; quickly; loudly; softly; gracefully; etc.

Similes: Compare things that you see to other things:

• as big as; as fast as; as gentle as; as noisy as;

Why not write? Choose subjects your child loves, whether that is dinosaurs, superheroes, shopping or football. Your child will write best if they write about topics that they know about or that are hobbies.

Thinking about character and location before beginnings, middle and ends can help. Start by asking ‘Where is the story going to happen? In space? In the desert?’ and ‘Who is your main character? Who are the other characters?’

Why not put together a range of writing types to make your own family book, magazine or newspaper?

Be appreciative of the time and effort your child has put in to a piece of writing; if they are having fun and feel good about their work they will be more likely to persevere

Reading

Read together

Reading and writing support each other. The more your child does of each, the better she/he will be at both. Reading can also stimulate your child to write about their own family or school life. If your child has a favourite story or author, ask her why she thinks that story or that person's writing is special.

As you read and write more with your child, you will be building an important foundation, and taking steps that will help your child to become a better reader, writer, and pupil. Your efforts now will make a difference - and it may be just the difference that your child needs to succeed!

Reading and writing go hand-in-hand and it is through writing that children learn to formulate thoughts and improve their creativity and thinking skills. Children have very busy lives today and reading sometimes gets forgotten. However even if children can read fluently it is still important that they read daily. It is a great help if parents can encourage their children to read—even if it is only for 15 minutes a day—and discuss aspects of the book with them. Show children that you value reading, let them see you reading, share books with them. Encourage them to read a wide range of texts from a variety of authors. Perhaps join the local library.

If your child is a reluctant reader the following may help:

- Let your child see you reading – don’t force your child to read – encourage.
- Read to your child in a relaxed, cosy setting. Make it a pleasant, special, one to one experience. Share books with them—you read a page ask your child to read a page.
- Allow your child to read books which are easy then gradually move to more challenging material when your child is ready.
- If your child has a busy social life allow him/her to read for 15 minutes before going to sleep.
- Try not to worry as your tensions will pass on to your child.

Two great websites – www.topmarks.co.uk – spelling and grammar games and links to spelling activities.

<http://www.amblesideprimary.com/ambleweb/literacy.htm>

(lookcoverwritecheck)

Spelling

Spending some time on spelling can make a difference!

Spelling well takes lots of practice, so make sure your child doesn't get discouraged too easily. It's not easy! Give them plenty of opportunities to practice so that they have the opportunity to improve. Encouraging them to look closely at words and talking to them about words is very important.

Activities.

Have your children draw pictures for each of the spelling words. Have them write the word below the picture. Take all the pictures and create a spelling reference book over the course of the year.

Create a word search with your child's spelling words. You can do this by making a grid of 10 squares by 10 squares, writing the spelling words in the grid, then filling up the other squares with random letters. Keep a list of your children's spelling words nearby for them to reference while doing the word search.

Together, think of ways to remember the words. For example, *You HEAR with your EAR; He will be a FRIEND until the END; The ELEPHANT ate an ANT, that is why he has an ANT in him.*

Play word games, for example, say a word and have your child think up a word that begins with the last letter of your word. (For example, you say "net" your child says, "table", you say, "elephant", etc.)

Play games such as hangman and Boggle, scrabble and word searches.

Help your child write the spelling words on a separate piece of paper in alphabetical order.

Label household objects using note cards and tape; e.g. the word "refrigerator" stuck on the fridge, a card with the word "door" printed on it for the bedroom door, etc.

Tricky words - Here are some of the tricky words within the first level. If you want to practice with your child. Pick a few each day and use the strategies.

seven, seventeen, clothes, garden, yesterday, swimming, sure, before, never, fruit, believe, decided, another, quiet, quite, counting, idea, liked, mile, music, river, running, speechless, outside, twelve, thirteen, money, inside, interesting, screamed, seem, bought, whole, opened, leaves, gone, television, mouse, mice, squirrel, wonderful, without, spelling, greater, writing, yelled, your, yours, upon, while, young, across, both, following, near, brother, sister, cousin, friends, shoulder, they, called, round, continue, previous, morning, allow, our, asked, state, weather

When studying spelling, encourage your children to use the

"Look, Cover, Write, Check" method.

Take a piece of paper and fold it into four columns. Label the columns (as detailed below). Have your children write the spelling list in the "Look" column. They should then **look** at each word, and **say** the letters to remember how the word looks. Next, have them cover the words by folding the "Look" column over to the "Cover" column. Have your children write the word down in the "Write" column (from memory) and then check to see if they were correct by looking at the original word. They should rewrite the word in the "Check" column. You may want to underline the letters your children originally missed with red. Do this for the entire spelling list. Even if your children spell every word incorrectly at first, praise them for their efforts and encourage them to keep trying. You want your children to stay confident during this exercise so they don't give up!

Spelling strategies and techniques

There are many strategies that you can use to help your child become a confident and accurate speller. These include:

1. Sounding words out: breaking the word down into sounds, for example, c-a-t and sh-e-ll. Longer words do not work with this method very well so you should try some of the strategies below.

2. Dividing the word into chunks, and saying each chunk whilst writing the word. For example, REMEMBER can be broken up into RE – MEM – BER and then blended back together. disappointment - dis/ap/point/ment is another example of the prefix and suffix.

You can put words into a family of words which share the same letters
e.g. The skirt and the shirt were dirty.
e.g. strength and length

Make up silly sentences to learn awkward words.
e.g. Spelling is a piece of pie.

Words can be remembered by saying them in an odd way to stress letters
e.g. Wed/nes/day fat/her is/land diff/e/rent par/li/a/ment bis/cuits

Mnemonics are a useful way to learn spellings, the best ones are those that children think of themselves
e.g. necessary - Never Eat Cake Eat Sausage Sandwiches And Remain Youthful
because - Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants
rhythm - Rhythm Helps Your Two Hips Move

Practising writing words without seeing can help to strengthen the connection between the hand and the brain, it helps children to focus on the exact letters and hand movements they are making as they write.

And finally... encourage your child to have a go at spelling words they are unsure of. This will give them the opportunity to try out spelling strategies and to identify those that they find useful. You can help them to use the strategies outlined above and praise their efforts.

By the end of primary four most children will have achieved first level in Curriculum for Excellence. Here are some targets.

Reading

- ✓ read aloud to an audience using expression and respond to punctuation appropriately including speech marks and italics
- ✓ choose a text from a range of genres and read independently, recommend texts to others
- ✓ use context clues to support understanding
- ✓ identify fact and/or opinion within a text
- ✓ read a wider range of vocabulary accurately
- ✓ select relevant information and use it to create a new text
- ✓ make notes in their own words

Writing

- ✓ spell most common / high frequency words correctly
- ✓ use knowledge of the alphabet to find words in a dictionary or other reference source
- ✓ understand and use prefixes and suffixes to read unfamiliar words
- ✓ make notes using different formats and use them to create new texts in own words
- ✓ order and link sentences, ideas and events
- ✓ structure work into at least one paragraph
- ✓ describe the appearance, thoughts and feelings of characters
- ✓ check and edit work