

## **Helping your child with Literacy in Primary 6**

This leaflet provides some ideas about how you can support your child's learning in literacy in small, fun, practical ways at home this year.

This leaflet has a greater focus on writing.

At the beginning of primary six many of the pupils will be continuing their learning journey through second level. They will be moving onto more complex tasks within literacy. By the end of primary seven many of our pupils will be secure at second level.

### **You can help your child's spelling by working on homophones. These are words that sound the same but are spelt differently.**

there/their/they're, here/hear, quite/quiet, see/sea, bare/bear, one/won, sun/son, to/too/two, be/bee, blue/blew, night/knight, accept/except, ball/bawl, berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he'll, knot/not, mail/male, meat/meet, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who's

Here are a number of websites that provide activities about homophones.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/game/en21watc-game-paris-word>

<https://learninggamesforkids.com/vocabulary-games/homophones-games.html>

<https://www.spellzone.com/games/index.cfm?wordlist=1685>

### **Here are some targets that you can support at home for primary 6 writers.**

- ✓ I am learning how to use speech marks to show direct speech.
- ✓ I can write a number of sentences that are linked and make sense.
- ✓ I am using commas in a list.
- ✓ I am learning to read over what I have written to check that the meaning is clear.
- ✓ I can investigate homophones and distinguish between the different word meanings.
- ✓ I can use a thesaurus to find interesting and alternative words.
- ✓ I can use a variety of sentence structures and layout and adapt my writing for purpose and audience.
- ✓ I can use paragraphs in extended pieces of writing.
- ✓ I am beginning to use direct speech accurately.
- ✓ I can vary the structure of my writing by using paragraphs and experimenting with sentence length.
- ✓ I can use interesting introductions, appropriate settings and vocabulary to engage the audience.
- ✓ I can express thoughts and opinions in my writing using some supporting detail and evidence.
- ✓ I can write using a variety of genres (Narrative, Reports, Recounts, Instructions/directions, Persuasive writing, Explanation, Discursive).

There are lots of ways that you can support your child's writing. First of all keep reading with your child. Here are some ideas.

### **Supporting Your Child at Home – Reading**

- Continue reading aloud to your child. Read young adult novels together. It's an important way to stay connected as your child grows into adolescence.
- Read the newspaper and magazines and discuss articles together.
- Read on the tablet/kindle together
- Help your child make time for reading and set goals as a reader.
- Visit the public library regularly to borrow books and do research.
- Keep up with new young adult and children's books by talking to teachers, friends, librarians, and bookstore staff. Read some of the books yourself so you can talk about them with your child.
- Collect books by a favourite author. Have your child write to the author. Send the letter to the publisher listed near the copyright information in the front of the book.
- Encourage wide reading of different genres and types of texts.
- Provide support as your child begins to read informational texts in different subject areas.
- Discuss the themes, language, and the author's style as you read. Reading a book together also provides an opportunity to talk about issues.

### **Punctuation - capital letters! Any opportunity try and reinforce.**

Capital letters for proper nouns and names: We give capital letters to any proper noun. This means the actual name of something or someone. We give capitals to all the main words that are part of the name. Examples:

Harry Walker; Drumoak Primary School; Banchory; Easter; Glasgow Warriors; The Battle of Bannockburn; Aberdeen Football Club; Loch Ness; Monday July 13.

We give capital letters to all the main words in titles, including in books, films, and pieces of work. Small words (such as of, the, a, an) are not given capitals unless they are the first word of the title. The History of Drumoak; Charlie and the Chocolate Factory; The Prince of Wales; The Return of the Jedi.

Direct speech is a sentence in which the exact words spoken are reproduced in speech marks (also known as quotation marks or inverted commas). For example:

"You'll never guess what I've just seen!" said Sam, excitedly.

"What's that?" asked Louise.

"Our teacher has a broomstick and a black pointy hat in the back of her car. Maybe she's a witch!"

"No, silly! They're for the school play!" replied Louise, sighing.

### **The rules of Direct Speech.**

Each new character's speech starts on a new line.

Speech is opened with speech marks.

Each line of speech starts with a capital.

The line of speech ends with a comma, exclamation mark or question mark.

A reporting clause is used at the end (said Jane, shouted Paul, replied Mum).

A full stop goes after the reporting clause.

## Synonyms and antonyms

nice	pleasant	delightful	agreeable
enjoyable	favourable	call	cry
affable	obliging	scream	considerate
friendly	shout	screech	move
civil	exclaim	bellow	advance
polite	hail	thunder	progress
courteous	roar	yell	dart
slither	leap	waddle	shuffle
dance	travel	run	strut
travel	swagger	march	amble

Have a go at this activity – list words with similar meanings (synonyms) and then opposites (opposites)

Use a thesaurus to learn about synonyms and antonyms.

There are lots of activities on this website for synonyms and antonyms

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/english/englishA7.htm>

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/z8t8pbk>

Use dictionary.com and thesaurus.com.

They are fantastic references points for word meaning and synonyms. Also, they have so much more than word meanings.

Give it a go today.

## Paragraphing – Functional writing

It is helpful that children start to write with a paragraphing structure. A paragraph is a section of writing consisting of one or more sentences grouped together and discussing one main subject.

Paragraphs help to structure text; **every new paragraph starts on a new line**. We start a new paragraph to signal that the person, place, time or topic of the sentences has changed.

In a **non-fiction text**, a paragraph is a group of sentences that usually all have one theme in common.

In primary school texts will often have a five-paragraph structure:

- Paragraph 1 is an introduction
- Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 focus on three specific (and different) points
- Paragraph 5 is a conclusion

Example – Let's write about a mole. The children would create questions and then do some research. From the research the children would write an intro, then three paragraphs (possibly Habitat, Diet, Lifespan) and then they would finish off with a conclusion.

## Keyboarding skills

Just 20 minutes' practice a day could be enough to make your child a fluent touch-typist in as little as 10 weeks.

So why is touch-typing such a useful skill for kids to master? We take a look at some of the reasons every child should learn the art of keyboarding; if you're keen to get started we also have reviews of online typing tutors and touch-typing software

Please read this article

<https://www.theschoolrun.com/touch-typing-for-children>

I believe that touch typing will benefit your child. Any age can start but maybe our Primary 5 and 6 pupils will become fluent quickly. Every day for a short while will make a difference.

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/z3c6tfr>

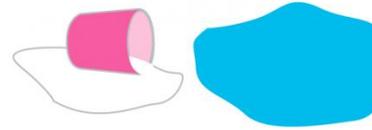
## Writing ideas – here are some ideas for writing

- Write post cards / emails to friends and family members.
- Use the computer to become familiar with WORD. Make posters, use cut and paste/ spelling tools and have fun. The more familiarity with the keyboard and word the better.
- Write a letter to an author/ TV personality / singer / sports person (they might write back!)
- If you visit somewhere and enjoy yourselves, write a letter or card to the venue explaining what you enjoyed or what would make it even better! Grandparents love receiving information.
- Write a story as a family – decide on your setting and your characters and away you go!
- Play word games – countdown/ Boggle / scrabble / merge two words together to make new words e.g. kiss and cuddle = kiddle!
- Make up new / alternative newspaper headlines.
- Write newspaper articles / reports about an activity you have taken part in.
- Play around with sentences e.g. start with a simple sentence – *I went swimming*. Take it in turns to tell your partner what to do e.g. change the verb/ add a time connective / add a phrase to add detail (where).
- In pairs / a group make up sentences by saying one word each / a story by saying one sentence each.

## Similes

A simile is a comparison phrase which finds similar characteristics in two objects and compares them, always by using the words 'like' or 'as'. Writers often use similes to make their writing richer and give the reader a really good picture of what is being described. For example:

The spilt milk was like a lake.



This simile is used to show that the amount of milk spilt was large and spread across a surface, just like a lake.

The similes in this passage are highlighted in bold:

The cracked earth was **as dry as sandpaper**. Suddenly, **lightning forked in the sky like fluorescent veins**. The sky darkened to a moody grey and **thunder roared like an angry lion**. Rain sluiced down from the sky, drenching the parched earth.

## **Don't forget the importance of listening and talking and the role this has in developing writing. Here are some ideas.**

✓ Ask your child to find specific information for you on a computer or tablet. Once they find this information, ask them to give you a verbal summary of the information that they found. (They will probably need to take notes and explain).

✓ You could watch a television programme or film with your child and then ask them questions about the contents, getting them to express their opinions and preferences. Then they could become a film/tv critic and write their personal response.

✓ Involve your child in discussions about the planning and organising of day trips, holidays, visiting other family members etc. Ask them to make a written plan of the holiday.