

Year 3 and 4 English Overview

Spoken Language (Years 1-6)

Pupils should be taught to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

Reading - Word Recognition

Pupils should be taught to:

- apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (etymology and morphology) as listed in [English Appendix 1](#), both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet
- read further exception words, noting the unusual correspondences between spelling and sound, and where these occur in the word.

Reading - Comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:
 - listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
 - reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
 - using dictionaries to check the meaning of words that they have read
 - increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally
 - identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
 - discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
 - recognising some different forms of poetry [for example, free verse, narrative poetry]
- understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
 - checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and explaining the meaning of words in context
 - asking questions to improve their understanding of a text
 - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
 - predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
 - identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
 - identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning
 - retrieve and record information from non-fiction
- participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say.

Writing - Transcription	Writing - Handwriting	Writing - Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation	Writing - Composition
<p>Spelling (see English Appendix 1) Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them (English Appendix 1) ▪ spell further homophones ▪ spell words that are often misspelt (English Appendix 1) ▪ place the possessive apostrophe accurately in words with regular plurals [for example, girls', boys'] and in words with irregular plurals [for example, children's] ▪ use the first two or three letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary ▪ write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far. 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined ▪ increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]. 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop their understanding of the concepts set out in English Appendix 2 by: ▪ extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including when, if, because, although ▪ using the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense ▪ choosing nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition ▪ using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause ▪ using fronted adverbials ▪ learning the grammar for years 3 and 4 in English Appendix 2 ▪ indicate grammatical and other features by: ▪ using commas after fronted adverbials ▪ indicating possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns ▪ using and punctuating direct speech ▪ use and understand the grammatical terminology in English Appendix 2 accurately and appropriately when discussing their writing and reading. 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ plan their writing by: ▪ discussing writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar ▪ discussing and recording ideas ▪ draft and write by: ▪ composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures (English Appendix 2) ▪ organising paragraphs around a theme ▪ in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot ▪ in non-narrative material, using simple organisational devices [for example, headings and sub-headings] ▪ evaluate and edit by: ▪ assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements ▪ proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences ▪ proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors ▪ read aloud their own writing, to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear.

Spelling - work for years 3 and 4

Revision of work from years 1 and 2

Pay special attention to the rules for adding suffixes.

New work for years 3/4 and 4

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	If the last syllable of a word is stressed and ends with one consonant letter which has just one vowel letter before it, the final consonant letter is doubled before any ending beginning with a vowel letter is added. The consonant letter is not doubled if the syllable is unstressed.	forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, prefer, preferred gardening, gardener, limiting, limited, limitation
The /ɪ/ sound spelt y elsewhere than at the end of words	These words should be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	These words should be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
More prefixes	Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in- below. Like un- , the prefixes dis- and mis- have negative meanings. The prefix in- can mean both 'not' and 'in'/'into'. In the words given here it means 'not'.	dis- : disappoint, disagree, disobey mis- : misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) in- : inactive, incorrect

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
	Before a root word starting with l , in- becomes il . Before a root word starting with m or p , in- becomes im- . Before a root word starting with r , in- becomes ir- . re- means 'again' or 'back'. sub- means 'under'. inter- means 'between' or 'among'. super- means 'above'. anti- means 'against'. auto- means 'self' or 'own'.	illegal, illegible immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible re- : redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate sub- : subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge inter- : interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) super- : supermarket, superman, superstar anti- : antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial auto- : autobiography, autograph
The suffix -ation	The suffix -ation is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply.	information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration
The suffix -ly	The suffix -ly is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply. The suffix -ly starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words.	sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly)

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
	<p>Exceptions:</p> <p>(1) If the root word ends in -y with a consonant letter before it, the y is changed to i, but only if the root word has more than one syllable.</p> <p>(2) If the root word ends with -le, the -le is changed to -ly.</p> <p>(3/4) If the root word ends with -ic, -ally is added rather than just -ly, except in the word <i>publicly</i>.</p> <p>(4) The words <i>truly, duly, wholly</i>.</p>	<p>happily, angrily</p> <p>gently, simply, humbly, nobly</p> <p>basically, frantically, dramatically</p>
Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/	<p>The ending sounding like /ʒə/ is always spelt -sure.</p> <p>The ending sounding like /tʃə/ is often spelt -ture, but check that the word is not a root word ending in (t)ch with an er ending - e.g. <i>teacher, catcher, richer, stretcher</i>.</p>	<p>measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure</p> <p>creature, furniture, picture, nature, adventure</p>
Endings which sound like /ʒən/	<p>If the ending sounds like /ʒən/, it is spelt as -sion.</p>	<p>division, invasion, confusion, decision, collision, television</p>
The suffix -ous	<p>Sometimes the root word is obvious and the usual rules apply for adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters.</p> <p>Sometimes there is no obvious root word.</p> <p>-our is changed to -or before -ous is added.</p> <p>A final 'e' of the root word must be kept if the /dʒ/ sound of 'g' is to be kept.</p> <p>If there is an /i:/ sound before the -ous ending, it is usually spelt as i, but a few words have e.</p>	<p>poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various</p> <p>tremendous, enormous, jealous</p> <p>humorous, glamorous, vigorous</p> <p>courageous, outrageous</p> <p>serious, obvious, curious</p> <p>hideous, spontaneous, courteous</p>

Statutory requirements
Endings which sound like /ʃən/, spelt -tion, -sion, -ssion, -cian
Words with the /k/ sound spelt ch (Greek in origin)
Words with the /ʃ/ sound spelt ch (mostly French in origin)
Words ending with the /g/ sound spelt -gue and the /k/ sound spelt -que (French in origin)
Words with the /s/ sound spelt sc (Latin in origin)
Words with the /ei/ sound spelt ei, eigh, or ey

Statutory requirements
Possessive apostrophe with plural words
Homophones and near-homophones

Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
<p>Strictly speaking, the suffixes are -ion and -ian. Clues about whether to put t, s, ss or c before these suffixes often come from the last letter or letters of the root word.</p> <p>-tion is the most common spelling. It is used if the root word ends in t or te.</p> <p>-ssion is used if the root word ends in ss or -mit.</p> <p>-sion is used if the root word ends in d or se.</p> <p>Exceptions: <i>attend - attention, intend - intention</i>.</p> <p>-cian is used if the root word ends in c or cs.</p>	<p>invention, injection, action, hesitation, completion</p> <p>expression, discussion, confession, permission, admission</p> <p>expansion, extension, comprehension, tension</p> <p>musician, electrician, magician, politician, mathematician</p>
	scheme, chorus, chemist, echo, character
	chef, chalet, machine, brochure
	league, tongue, antique, unique
In the Latin words from which these words come, the Romans probably pronounced the c and the k as two sounds rather than one - /s/ /k/.	science, scene, discipline, fascinate, crescent
	vein, weigh, eight, neighbour, they, obey

Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
<p>The apostrophe is placed after the plural form of the word; -s is not added if the plural already ends in -s, but <i>is</i> added if the plural does not end in -s (i.e. is an irregular plural - e.g. <i>children's</i>).</p>	<p>girls', boys', babies', children's, men's, mice's</p> <p>(Note: singular proper nouns ending in an <i>s</i> use the 's suffix e.g. Cyprus's population)</p>
	<p>accept/except, affect/effect, ball/bawl, berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he'll, knot/not, mail/male, main/mane, meat/meet, medal/meddle, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who's</p>

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Teachers should continue to emphasise to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. Once root words are learnt in this way, longer words can be spelt correctly, if the rules and guidance for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known.

Examples:

business: once *busy* is learnt, with due attention to the unusual spelling of the /i/ sound as 'u', *business* can then be spelt as **busy + ness**, with the **y** of **busy** changed to **i** according to the rule.

disappear: the root word *appear* contains sounds which can be spelt in more than one way so it needs to be learnt, but the prefix **dis-** is then simply added to **appear**.

Understanding the relationships between words can also help with spelling. Examples:

- *bicycle* is *cycle* (from the Greek for *wheel*) with **bi-** (meaning 'two') before it.
- *medicine* is related to *medical* so the /s/ sound is spelt as **c**.
- *opposite* is related to *oppose*, so the schwa sound in *opposite* is spelt as **o**.

Word list – years 3 and 4

Words in bold do not appear in the cross-curricular word list.

accident(ally)	disappear	island	promise
actual(ly)	early	knowledge	purpose
address	earth	learn	quarter
answer	<u>eight (h)/eighth</u>	length	question
appear	enough	library	recent
arrive	exercise	material	regular
believe	experience	medicine	reign (h)
bicycle	experiment	mention	remember
breath	extreme	minute	sentence
breathe	famous	natural	separate
build	favourite	naughty	special
busy/business	February	notice	straight
calendar	forward(s)	occasion(ally)	strange
caught	fruit	often	strength
centre	grammar	opposite	suppose
century	group	ordinary	surprise
certain	guard	particular	therefore
circle	guide	peculiar	though/although
complete	heard(h)	perhaps	thought (phase 5)
consider	heart	popular	through (phase 5)
continue	height	position	(h)
decide	history	possess(ion)	various
describe	imagine	possible	weight (h)
different (phase 5)	increase	potatoes	woman/women
difficult	important	pressure	
	interest	probably	

Please note there are some words on the statutory word lists that do not appear on here as they do not fit into the curriculum areas.

Year 3 and 4 word list groups

	Science	Maths	Language of learning	Geography	Literacy language	History
	material natural experiment pressure separate medicine breath/e heart	circle centre eight/h quarter weight height group length minute increase opposite century	complete consider continue decide answer describe guide imagine interest knowledge learn purpose remember thought difficult	island earth	library sentence question grammar describe answer address possession	history reign famous century recent woman/women
	Time words	Unstressed vowels	Music	Connecting adverbials	Hypothetical language	Rare GPCs
	regular occasionally often early minute recent calendar	February business interest ordinary separate	rhyme rhythm	though although therefore	perhaps possible probably suppose	guard guide

Year 3: Detail of content to be introduced (statutory requirement)

Word	Formation of nouns using a range of prefixes [for example <i>super-</i> , <i>anti-</i> , <i>auto-</i>] Use of the forms <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> according to whether the next word begins with a consonant or a vowel [for example, <u>a</u> rock, <u>an</u> open box] Word families based on common words , showing how words are related in form and meaning [for example, <i>solve</i> , <i>solution</i> , <i>solver</i> , <i>dissolve</i> , <i>insoluble</i>]
Sentence	Expressing time, place and cause using conjunctions [for example, <i>when</i> , <i>before</i> , <i>after</i> , <i>while</i> , <i>so</i> , <i>because</i>], adverbs [for example, <i>then</i> , <i>next</i> , <i>soon</i> , <i>therefore</i>], or prepositions [for example, <i>before</i> , <i>after</i> , <i>during</i> , <i>in</i> , <i>because of</i>]
Text	Introduction to paragraphs as a way to group related material Headings and sub-headings to aid presentation Use of the present perfect form of verbs instead of the simple past [for example, <i>He has gone out to play</i> contrasted with <i>He went out to play</i>]
Punctuation	Introduction to inverted commas to punctuate direct speech
Terminology for pupils	preposition conjunction word family, prefix clause, subordinate clause direct speech consonant, consonant letter vowel, vowel letter inverted commas (or 'speech marks')

Year 4: Detail of content to be introduced (statutory requirement)

Word	The grammatical difference between plural and possessive -s Standard English forms for verb inflections instead of local spoken forms [for example, <i>we were</i> instead of <i>we was</i> , or <i>I did</i> instead of <i>I done</i>]
Sentence	Noun phrases expanded by the addition of modifying adjectives, nouns and preposition phrases (e.g. <i>the teacher</i> expanded to: <i>the strict maths teacher with curly hair</i>) Fronted adverbials [for example, <u>Later that day</u> , <i>I heard the bad news.</i>]
Text	Use of paragraphs to organise ideas around a theme Appropriate choice of pronoun or noun within and across sentences to aid cohesion and avoid repetition
Punctuation	Use of inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech [for example, a comma after the reporting clause; end punctuation within inverted commas: <i>The conductor shouted, "Sit down!"</i>] Apostrophes to mark plural possession [for example, <i>the girl's name</i> , <i>the girls' names</i>] Use of commas after fronted adverbials
Terminology for pupils	determiner pronoun, possessive pronoun adverbial