

# Grammar and Reading Workshop

**THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN YEAR SIX**

# Expectations

In May, children will sit an exam in 'SPAG' Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. The main paper will feature around 49 – 50 questions based around grammar and punctuation. They will then have a separate spelling paper which asks for the correct spelling of 20 words.

The glossary of grammar terms that we cover can be found here:

[Grammar Terms](#)

The Key words for Year Six can be found in this document:

[Spellings Appendix](#)

# WORD TYPES

Every word belongs to a word class which summarizes the ways in which it can be used in grammar.

The major word classes for English are: **noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, determiner, pronoun, conjunction.**

# Determiners

Determiners are words that introduce a noun and provide some information about it (but do not describe it). They Tell you which person or thing the sentence is about. Or how much / how many of them there are.



The umbrella.

His umbrella.

Two umbrellas.

More umbrellas.



# Nouns

There are four different noun types children will be learning about and trying to identify:

Common Nouns: These are physical objects such as kettles, tables or a school.

Proper Nouns: These are names of people and places – London, Bob, Africa

Abstract Nouns: These are feelings such as joy, loneliness and hate.

Pronouns: Personal pronouns are used in place of nouns referring to specific people or things, for example I, me, mine, you, yours, his, her, hers, we, they, or them

Collective Nouns: *Collective nouns* are names for a collection or a number of people or things. Words like group, herd, and array are *collective noun* examples.

# Adverbs

Children will have to identify the following types of adverbs:

**Adverb of manner: He ran quickly.**

**Adverb of location: She ran outside.**

**Adverb of frequency: She always ran.**

**Adverb of time: He ran today.**

**Adverb of degree: He ran very quickly.**

Adverbs can be used to give us more information about a verb, an adjective or another adverb.

# Prepositions

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between two other nearby words. In the examples below, each preposition (underlined) shows the relationship between the word book and the word wizard.



The book about the wizard

The book by the wizard

The book near the wizard

The book behind the wizard

The book under the wizard



# Adverb or Preposition

It can be tricky to decide whether a word is a preposition or a 'where' adverb.

- ▶ You must go outside.
- ▶ You must go outside the school.

A preposition links the subject and verb of a sentence to the object. The adverb simply describes the 'action' in isolation. Prepositions often appear before a noun.

Please sit down. - Adverb

Please sit down on the chair. - Preposition

Jo looked underneath the bed. - Preposition

Jo looked underneath. - Adverb

# Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs are words which 'help' the main verb.

An auxiliary verb can tell us the tense, possibility, and emphasis of a verb. At this level the types of auxiliary verbs simply identify tense.

Jo was attacked by a tiger.

Jo is running to the shops.

Jo has finished his homework.

# Modal Verbs – a type of helping verb

These words are paired with verbs. They indicate possibility or certainty.



I might eat two pizzas for dinner.

I should eat two pizzas for dinner.



I can eat two pizzas for dinner and I will!

# Conjunctions – Joining words

Co-ordinating conjunctions: These words are used to join independent clauses. We sometimes refer to them as FANBOYS

– For- And – Nor- But – Or – Yet – So

Subordinating conjunctions: Typically these words indicate the beginning of a dependent clause. Examples include: despite, although, because, since, until.

Relative pronouns: These words begin a relative clause. We use relative clauses to post-modify a noun - to **make clear** which person or thing we are talking about. In these clauses we can have the relative pronoun (type of dependent) who, who(m), whose, which, that

Identifying word classes can be looked at in many ways – Here we ask children to analyse this rather oddly specific sentence and discuss what word types are in use.

adjective

noun

modal verb

verb

**Her red coat could be  
left over by those five old  
umbrellas.**

adverb

determiner

pronoun

preposition

auxiliary verb

# Phrases & Clauses

Beyond classifying words we will also look at sentence construction. Sentences are made up from phrases and clauses. Children will learn about **independent clauses** and differing types of **dependent clauses**. Phrases in grammar means a group of words combining to do a singular job, typically as part of a clause or sentence.

**A noun phrase**

**An expanded noun phrase**

**A prepositional phrase**

**An adverbial phrase**

The difference between a clause and a phrase is that a clause will feature a noun and a verb. A phrase might feature a noun or a verb but generally not both.

# Noun Phrases

These 'simple' sentences contain noun phrases.



The coat was dangling on the hook.

Our Friends have bought a goat.



This is a group of words which strictly tell us only about the noun but not the action (verb). It could be simply a determiner paired with the noun.

# Expanded Noun Phrases

An Expanded Noun Phrase includes any determiners, adjectives and the actual noun.

The man sat in the bar. – noun phrase

The old man sat in the bar. – expanded noun phrase

The old, lonely man sat in the bar. – expanded noun phrase

# Prepositional Phrases

The student at the back is playing on his phone.

The girl at the front is answering back to the teacher.

Rashid is over there by the climbing frame.

This group of words are teaming up as a preposition. They are linking the subject and object of a sentence. Often by detailing or telling us about their position.

# Adverbial Phrases

Henry moved as slow as a glacier.

Claire is over there.

Sadiq voted with his conscience

Here the words combine to make an adverbial phrase. They are teaming up to describe or give us more information about an action

# Independent Clauses

Children at this level learn that there are 'main' **independent clauses** and what are described as either 'subordinate' or **dependent clauses**. Here are some examples of an independent clause.

**Paddy pulled on his cap.**

**Harry hit the drum.**

**The cat ran after the mouse.**

**A young boy called Harry ferociously hit the huge steel drum.**

A independent clause is a group of words with a verb and a subject that makes sense by itself. When appearing by itself without any other information or clauses it forms a simple sentence.

# Dependent Clauses

A dependent clause—will begin with a type of word called a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun and will contain both a subject and a verb.

**After Amy sneezed all over her sandwich,**

**Because of the pouring rain,**

**Despite the roar of the crowd,**

This combination of words will not form a complete sentence, rather it will add information which is dependent on the main clause to offer a complete thought.

# Dependent, relative and embedded clauses

This year, children will learn about differing types of 'dependent' clauses. They are known as relative clauses and embedded clauses. They both fit under the umbrella of a dependent clause as they rely on more information to make a complete thought or unit of meaning.

**Relative clauses** are most often used to define or identify the noun. They can appear in the middle or end of a sentence

**She lives in Liverpool, which is a big city.**

**Embedded Clauses** are dependent clauses which feature in the middle of a sentence. All embedded clauses are also relative. But not all relative clauses are embedded! I know, I know...

**My gran, who is 82, still goes swimming every day.**

# Reading Skills

Children will be assessed along the following criteria:

1. Read age-appropriate books with confidence and fluency (including whole novels)
2. Read aloud with intonation that shows understanding
3. Work out the meaning of words from the context
4. Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, drawing inferences and justifying these with evidence
5. Predict what might happen from details stated and implied
6. Retrieve information from non-fiction
7. Summarise main ideas, identifying key details and using quotations for illustration
8. Evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
9. Make comparisons within and across books and sample texts.

# Inference

When you make an inference, you're reading between the lines or just looking carefully at the facts and coming to conclusions based on prior knowledge. Children are asked to base any answers or opinions they develop with evidence which helps explain their conclusions.

We can refer to this as 'PEE' Making a POINT, using EVIDENCE and EXPLAINING its relevance. Questions which ask for this type of answer, commonly hold the most marks in any reading test or exam.

"Too many!" James shouted and slammed the door behind him.

"What?" Said Will

"Too many kids in this family!"

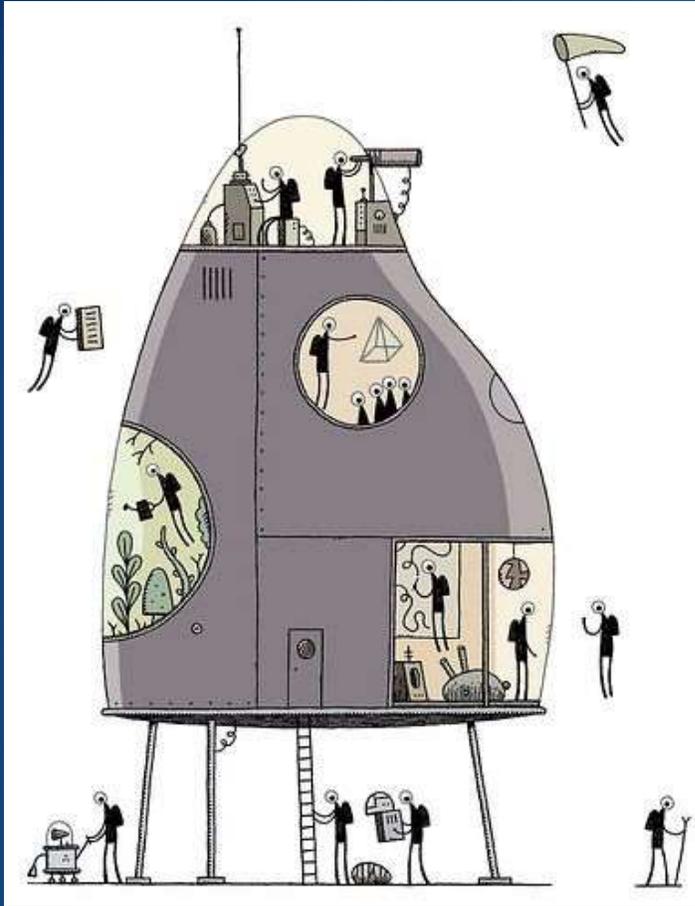
James stood fuming on the landing like a small angry locomotive, then stamped across to the window-seat, slumped onto the cushions and stared out at the garden.

"It's not fair." He said to no one in particular.

***How old do you think James is?***

***3 Marks***

With this type of question children are reliant on picking out clues from James's actions and they might draw conclusions from the way the author describes him as an angry locomotive. To get full marks they would need to include evidence from the text and explain its significance.



The Moulin's immediately set to work, exploring the surroundings and setting up a perimeter of sensors to alert them to the presence of any prying eyes.

Their Machines whirred into life, pulsating with the calculations which would allow them to lay their plans in motion. The chief Moulin rubbed her palms together, a greedy glint in her eye as she inspected the horizons to the south.

It had taken many years of careful consideration and preparation and her superiors would be most pleased at her efficiency.

**What can you infer about the character of the Moulins from this text?**

**3 marks.**

Here it is asking for more than one particular answer, so each characteristic should be evidenced from the text.

# Authorial Choice and discussing language

Some questions will also ask children to consider why an author has chosen a particular word or phrase to describe something.

This can include figurative language such as similes or onomatopoeia or the use of idioms such as 'raining cats and dogs'.

It might also ask why some text has been formatted differently to others. This can include spacing, being underlined or in italics.



Gulliver strained against his bonds but instantly heard a faint whooshing sound and realised that the little archers were shooting at him. Their tiny arrows prickled into his hands and face like a host of wasp stings, several of them just missing his eyes.

- 1: What does the writer compare the arrows to?**
- 2: Explain the effect of that comparison.**

With this question children must find and retrieve the comparison. Arrows / Wasp stings

They then must identify the language feature – in this case a simile.

Explain the effect of that comparison – It uses a reader's experience of wasp stings to give an understanding of the pain felt by Gulliver.

The noise was deafening. Shouting, screaming, laughing – it was so thunderous. I thought my head was about to explode. I took a deep breath, breathed out and then dipped down until I was completely underwater.

**Silence.**

**Peace.**

Explain why the writer has written the words *Silence* and *Peace* on two separate lines. 1 mark.

Children would have to look at how the words in question differ from those above it, or how the words respond to the action of the character. The character has moved underwater so it emphasises the peaceful surroundings. The writer uses the space to create a calm atmosphere.

# Ways to help with Reading and Grammar

Useful websites:

Grammar activities

British Council - [grammar practise](#)

Top Marks - [grammar games of assorted quality](#)

SATS papers - [SPAG](#) and Reading papers are all included free to be downloaded with mark schemes.

Rising Stars and Bond – Books with SPAG practice tests and worksheets

Pinterest - [reading activity ideas](#)

Grammar Appendix - [Grammar Terms](#)

Spelling Appendix - [Spellings](#) for KS2

Reading Skills Exemplar - [Key reading skills for assessment](#) – quite a dry document but explains each reading skill and how it can be evidenced.

We will at certain points send SATS papers home as well as provide the traditional home learning activities in these areas. We ask for these to be completed if possible. With reading, there is no better help for a child's development than to read an array of texts, some challenging and some for relaxation. Joint reading or family / peer book clubs are also a good way for discussing and questioning texts children have read.