

Years 3 and 4 programme of study

Reading – word reading

Statutory requirements

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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

At this stage, teaching comprehension should be taking precedence over teaching word reading directly. Any focus on word reading should support the development of vocabulary.

When pupils are taught to read longer words, they should be supported to test out different pronunciations. They will attempt to match what they decode to words they may have already heard but may not have seen in print [for example, in reading ‘technical’, the pronunciation /tɛtʃnɪkəl/ (‘tetchnical’) might not sound familiar, but /tɛknɪkəl/ (‘teknical’) should].

Reading – comprehension

Statutory requirements

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

Statutory requirements

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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

The focus should continue to be on pupils' comprehension as a primary element in reading. The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are very similar at different ages. This is why the programmes of study for comprehension in years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are similar: the complexity of the writing increases the level of challenge.

Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, such as the triumph of good over evil or the use of magical devices in fairy stories and folk tales.

They should also learn the conventions of different types of writing (for example, the greeting in letters, a diary written in the first person or the use of presentational devices such as numbering and headings in instructions).

Pupils should be taught to use the skills they have learnt earlier and continue to apply these skills to read for different reasons, including for pleasure, or to find out information and the meaning of new words.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to listen frequently to stories, poems, non-fiction and other writing, including whole books and not just extracts, so that they build on what was taught previously. In this way, they also meet books and authors that they might not choose themselves. Pupils should also have opportunities to exercise choice in selecting books and be taught how to do so, with teachers making use of any library services and expertise to support this.

Reading, re-reading, and rehearsing poems and plays for presentation and performance give pupils opportunities to discuss language, including vocabulary, extending their interest in the meaning and origin of words. Pupils should be encouraged to use drama approaches to understand how to perform plays and poems to support their understanding of the meaning. These activities also provide them with an incentive to find out what expression is required, so feeding into comprehension.

In using non-fiction, pupils should know what information they need to look for before they begin and be clear about the task. They should be shown how to use contents pages and indexes to locate information.

Pupils should have guidance about the kinds of explanations and questions that are expected from them. They should help to develop, agree on, and evaluate rules for effective discussion. The expectation should be that all pupils take part.