

# How to help your child with writing

## Year 6

## Ways to help with writing

- Help your child write a letter to their favourite author. Correspondence can often be sent to an author's publisher (whose details can be obtained on the internet) who will pass it on.
- When you go on holiday, encourage children to write postcards to friends or relatives. They could record things that you do in a holiday diary which they can share with friends or relatives when they get home.
- After making a cake or doing a craft activity, challenge children to write the recipe or instructions for someone else to use.
- Write an information page or booklet about something they find interesting e.g. spiders, Dr Who, dinosaurs, cats, etc. Draw a picture and label it or write a caption to go with it.
- Encourage your child to learn weekly spellings and phonic group spellings. Write the spellings in sentences with accurate punctuation and practise high frequency words and handwriting.
- Provide your child with a comfortable place to work and exciting writing materials. A dictionary and thesaurus would also be useful.
- Ask your child what his/her writing targets are from time to time and help them work specifically on these.
- Talk through their ideas with them before they start to write, for example, prompt them to think about how they intend to tackle a subject.
- Help them to reflect on their writing, particularly the effect they hoped to have on the reader. For example, is the reader sufficiently prepared for the ending? Have they introduced all the characters? Does their writing have detail?
- Encourage them to read through their work, shaping their sentences for clarity and impact and checking their accuracy.

On the following pages are the targets your child is working on and will need to be secure in by the end of the school year.

I can explain complicated information concisely in a single sentence.

- ✓ *The steam that powered Victorian trains was made by burning coal to boil water and this pushed the pistons that moved the wheels.*

Use commas to add useful information to a sentence.

- ✓ *Matilda, who was still only 2 years old, could read most of the books in the children's section of the library.*



Use semi-colons or dashes to mark boundaries between independent clauses (ideas that could stand alone) in a sentence.

- ✓ *Lilly was so tired; she wanted to go home.*
- ✓ *Lilly was so happy - all her friends were waiting for her.*

Use bullet points for lists where it is useful for the reader.

- ✓ *On the school trip children will need to bring:*
  - *A waterproof coat.*
  - *Sunscreen.*
  - *A packed lunch.*

Use a hyphen to avoid confusing the reader when a sentence could have more than one meaning.

- ✓ *There was a man-eating shark. =  
There was a shark that would eat men.*
- ✓ *There was a man eating shark. =  
There was a man eating shark meat.*

Use a colon to introduce a list.

- ✓ *To make a cheese and salad sandwich you will need the following things: bread, butter, cheese, lettuce, cucumber and tomato.*

## Eight ways to improve a sentence

The mouse ate the cheese.

✓ **Add words in:**

*The greedy mouse carefully ate the stale cheese.*

✓ **Add on at the beginning:**

*While it was waiting, the mouse ate the cheese.*

✓ **Add on at the end:**

*The mouse ate the cheese because it was hungry.*

✓ **Add a simile:**

*The mouse, like a tiny vampire, sank its teeth into the cheese.*

✓ **Start with an "ing" clause.**

*Sniffing cautiously, the mouse nibbled the cheese.*

✓ **Alliteration:**

*The miniscule mouse, marvelled at the mouldy cheese cheerfully.*

✓ **Start with an "ed" clause.**

*He chuckled, his mouth full of cheese.*

**Change words:**

✓ *The rodent gnawed the cheddar.*