



# National Literacy Framework

Pupils will be encouraged to develop their literacy skills in ALL lessons, not just in English. Here at West Monmouth School we work hard to adapt our curriculum and teaching methods to ensure your children have as many opportunities as possible to practice and develop their literacy skills in many different contexts.

## How can you help to support your child's literacy at home?



### Reading

- 1 Encourage your child to read, whether it's a book, an article on the internet, a magazine or a sports report in a newspaper. As they read, children are exposed to a range of vocabulary, ideas and text types, all of which will help them in their written work.
- 2 Establish a reading routine at home. Perhaps your child could read before bed or for a certain length of time every day.
- 3 Try to be a good reading role model. Talk about books you have read and enjoyed or something interesting you have read recently in a newspaper. If a child sees other family members reading regularly, it is more likely to be something they accept as part of their daily lives.
- 4 Show your child that reading isn't boring or difficult. Help them to select reading material that will interest them and is appropriate for their ability. We can help you with this if you'd like some advice.
- 5 Sit and read with your child; take it in turns to read a paragraph or chapter and enjoy reading together.
- 6 Provide your child with reading material. There are great stories you can access on line or at your local library.

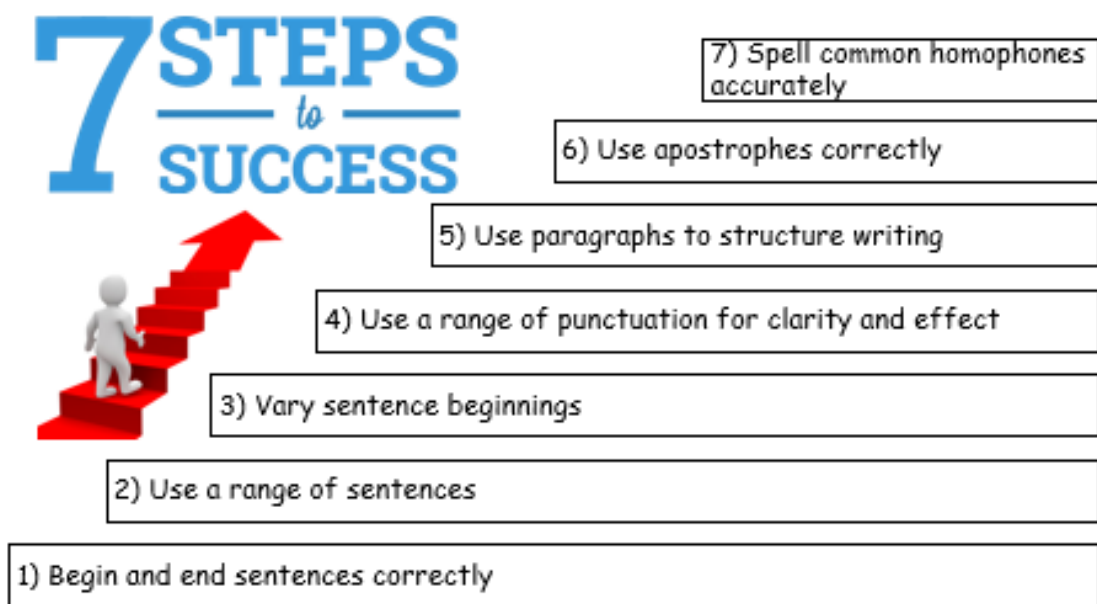


### 'Wordsmiths' at West Monmouth School

As part of our 'Every lesson, every day' strategy at West Monmouth School, we use the 'Wordsmiths' strategy to help pupils build and develop vocabulary across the curriculum. In every lesson, there should be a 'Wordsmith' word (a 'word of the lesson', if you like). This will be a more ambitious piece of vocabulary that has arisen during the lesson for further discussion. This is an extremely popular strategy with pupils, and it's something that you can also enjoy at home too in everyday conversations with your child.

## Writing

Remind your child that their writing in ALL subjects should be as accurate as possible. This is a vital life skill that will help your child communicate in all aspects of life. At West Monmouth School, we use a strategy called '7 Steps to Success' to ensure that the importance of writing accurately is always kept current.



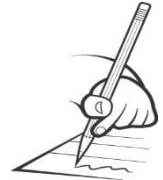
There is specific literacy guidance in pupil planners which contains much more advice. Try to establish a routine where pupils have this open in front of them when they complete homework. The guidance has also been included at the end of this booklet.

Pupils are expected to proofread against all of the 7 Steps. However, your child will also have three personal 7 Steps targets which will be recorded in their planners and replicated at the front of every exercise book.





## Writing ctd.



- Your child will bring homework home regularly, and this is a perfect opportunity for you to help them with their writing skills.
- Firstly, ensure that your child has a quiet place to work away from distractions.
- Check homework planners daily and set aside time for your child to complete their work. Encourage them not to leave it until the day before it is due in!
- Provide your child with a dictionary and thesaurus so that they get into the habit of checking their own work for spelling errors. You can also download apps for mobile phones, iPads etc. which are equally as effective.
- If your child is producing work on computers, encourage them to use the spell checking facility to help them with the accuracy of their work.
- If your child is completing a research based homework, encourage them to consider how reliable the website is.
- Encourage your child not to cut and paste pages of information in their homework. This is NOT what their teachers will be looking for. Instead, your child should read a piece of information and jot down notes. They can then summarise their findings in their own words. This IS what teachers will be looking for.
- Don't tell your child what to write, but give them suggestions as to what they may include. We are encouraging our learners to be independent thinkers and writers.
- Discuss ideas with your child wherever possible (even if these ideas are just from everyday conversations and not necessarily linked to specific homework). The best writing emerges when children have had opportunity to discuss their ideas in detail first. At West Monmouth School, we use the 'Articulate' strategy to encourage pupils to give extended responses when speaking. Examples of how to develop responses can be found in pupil planners.



## Instant Ideas:

Try some skimming and scanning together. Skimming is when you read through a piece of text quickly to find out what the main idea is; scanning is glancing through a piece of text to find a specific piece of information. You can do this with a newspaper - perhaps ask your child to find something out for you. Why not ask them to scan a newspaper for news about a favourite footballer or to find out the weekend weather, or get them to read a recipe to tell you the basic steps?

Help your child to work out what an unfamiliar word means by getting them to read the rest of the sentence and look for clues.

Help by testing your child with some key spellings and by encouraging them to look up words they don't know in a dictionary or on an app or website.

## HELP! My child won't read.

Lots of children and teenagers don't read, and this can be a cause of frustration for parents. Here are some hints and tips from parents with reluctant readers:



- Talk to your child to find out what they do and don't like reading.
- Don't force your child to read something they are not interested in, even if you are worried about their reading.
- Try to find online sites that your child will enjoy reading. There are so many excellent sites for people with specific interests e.g. skateboarding, fishing, cars etc. It is a good idea to check sites first to see that you are happy for your child to visit them.
- Encourage your child to read by finding reading material about their interests. Plenty of interest-specific books, magazines and sites are available. As children hit their teenage years and are faced with other distractions they can lose interest in reading fiction, so any reading that your child does is a good thing.

# The Accelerated Reader Programme

Most pupils in Year 7 will take part in the Accelerated Reader programme. The aim of the programme is to develop reading skills and encourage a love of reading for pupils of all abilities. The programme is extremely popular with pupils and is supported by form tutors, English teachers and our library staff, Mrs Baker and Miss Scard.

## What is Accelerated Reader (AR)?

AR is a computer programme that helps teachers manage and monitor a learner's independent reading practice. The learner picks a book at his/her own level and reads it at his/her own pace. When finished, they take a short quiz on a computer - passing the quiz is an indication that the pupil has understood what has been read. Learners should be aiming for a score of 80% or above to ensure *accelerated* progress.

### Securing Success

**Learners** should:

Ensure that they read for **at least 30 minutes a day. Time is being built into form and lesson to allow this. Your child can, of course, read more.**

- Ensure that they have a **reading book at all times**
- Ensure that they **complete their quiz within 24 hours** of completing a book
- Ensure that they change their reading book as soon as possible. When in school, learners will be expected to bring a book to every lesson.

**Parents** may assist learners by:

- **Encouraging their child to read at least 30 minutes a day** (each book should take no more than 3 weeks)
- Ensuring that their child **brings their reading book to school every day**. They will have further opportunities to read in school.
- **Monitoring** reading, quizzing and pass rates via the 'bookshelf' function on the AR website
- **Discussing** books, asking questions about what their child has read and visiting the local library
- **Encouraging them to read online via MyON**

**Teachers** will assist learners by:

- Guiding them to books appropriate to their ability and interests
- Affording opportunities for reading time in school
- Monitoring the progress and pace of reading and quizzing

Since they are reading books at their own reading and interest levels, most learners are likely to be successful and enjoy the books and quizzes. Best of all, they learn and develop at their own pace.

### **What is a STAR Reading Test?**

STAR Reading is used to determine a learner's reading level. It is a computer-based assessment programme that uses computer-adaptive technology. Questions continually adjust to the learner's responses. If the response is correct, the difficulty level is increased. If the learner cannot answer a question or answers incorrectly, the difficulty level is reduced. The test uses multiple-choice questions. Your child sat a Star Reading Test in the autumn term, and the result of this informs what book level and ZPD your child should be reading to ensure maximum progress.

### **What is a Book Level?**

Book Levels are reported using the ATOSTM readability formula and represent the difficulty of the text. *The levels range from 0.5-13.5.* Books are chosen based on the ZPD range recommended for each learner by STAR Reading.

### **What is a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)?**

ZPD is the range of books that will challenge a learner without causing frustration or loss of motivation. Your child will receive a ZPD, or reading range after taking a STAR Reading test. It is important for learners to read with a high degree of comprehension and within their ZPD.

### **What are points?**

Every book that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz is given a points value. AR points are based on the length of the book (number of words). Learners earn a percentage of points according to how well they pass the quiz. There will be rewards available for learners at all levels who meet and exceed their point targets.

### **How do we plan to motivate learners to read?**

AR points will be collated and incentives will be in place to encourage engagement in reading practice at all levels. Certificates, prizes and reading achievement awards are all standard practice with AR.

### **How can I find further information?**

We will inform you about your child's progress at the end of the summer term, after they have had time to become immersed in the programme. You can also visit **AR Book Finder** at [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) to conduct a search of all available books with AR quizzes.



# Advice for pupils on drafting of work

**QUESTION** When you are given your question, take a highlighter and highlight the key words in the question.

**PLAN** Planning could take the form of a mind map, a list of points or notes. If you are expected to complete research for your written work, make a list of the places you intend to find your information from. Perhaps design a checklist of things to include that you can refer back to throughout the drafting stage.

**DRAFT** Once you have thought about your ideas, write your first draft. Get all of your ideas down onto paper, not worrying too much about whether your organisation is perfect. Leave your draft for a few hours or days. This means that when you return to it you will be looking at it with a fresh perspective.

**REDRAFT** Read the questions/task once more to remind yourself EXACTLY what you are expected to do. Read your first draft carefully. Perhaps you can read it aloud to help you pick up on errors. Refer back to your plan/checklist. Have you included everything you need to include? Ask yourself whether any ideas need to be developed further or explained more clearly. If so, then rewrite these sections.

**FINAL DRAFT** Your final draft should be as perfect as possible and represent the best work that you have to give. Don't be afraid, in the drafting process, to cut your words, sentences or even paragraphs you don't like. Being brave will help you to produce your best work. Highlighting, crossing out and rewriting are all parts of the drafting process and WILL help you. Remember to proofread carefully. Finally - remember that drafting is NOT just copying something out twice!

## 7 Steps Toolkit

### 1. Begin and end sentences correctly

Every sentence must start with a capital letter and end with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

### 2. Use a range of sentences

Every sentence has a subject (the person or thing doing the action) and a verb or group of verbs (the action that is being done).

I am a simple sentence.

I used to be a simple sentence, but now I am a compound sentence. (Remember FANBOYS)

Before I was a complex sentence, I used to be a simple sentence. (Remember main clause and dependent clause—the dependent clause does not make sense on its own)

### 3. Vary sentence beginnings

Below are some ways to add variety to sentence beginnings:

1. Beginning with a noun (naming word)
2. Beginning with an adjective (word that describes a noun)
3. Beginning with a verb (doing or being word)
4. Beginning with an adverb (describes how a verb is done)
5. Begin with a connective
6. Use a question
7. Begin with an emotion
8. Use a simile or metaphor
9. Use some dialogue or a quotation

### 4. Use a range of punctuation for clarity and effect

#### The semicolon (;)

- A semicolon connects two sentences that are closely related in thought.
- A semicolon introduces a sentence beginning with a linking connective (however, therefore etc.)
- A semicolon separates items in a list which are detailed or have punctuation of their own.

#### The colon (:)

A colon is used to introduce an item, series of items or quotation.

#### Parenthesis

As well as commas, you can use other punctuation to add extra information to a sentence:

#### Brackets ()

Brackets can be used to add extra information or a definition to sentences. If you remove the brackets and their content, the sentence will still make sense—it just won't have the extra detail that makes meaning clear for the reader.

#### The dash -

Like commas and brackets, the dash adds extra information to a sentence. They can be used in pairs (like brackets) or they can be used to add information at the end of the sentence.

## 5. Use paragraphs to structure writing

We can use TiP ToP (time, place, topic, person) to help decide when to start a new paragraph.

Well-structured paragraphs should have topic, developing and concluding sentences.

## 6. Use apostrophes correctly

There are two types of apostrophe:

### Apostrophes for possession

We use an apostrophe to show something belongs to someone or something e.g. Harry's pen.

If the owner already ends in s, just add 's. It's also acceptable just to add the apostrophe and not the s e.g. James's coat or James' coat.

If more than one person owns something then put the apostrophe after the s e.g. the boys' changing room (more than one boy).

### Apostrophes for contractions (missing letters)

We also use apostrophes to contract two words together. The missing letter is replaced by an apostrophe e.g. did not = didn't, does not = doesn't

## 7. Spell common homophones correctly

Homophones are words that sound the same but are spelt differently. Below are some of the main homophones that give us difficulty.

### You're and your

'You're' is the shortened version of 'you are'. We place the apostrophe where the missing letter once was.

"You're beautiful," said Morgan.

You're sure to do well if you listen carefully in class.

'Your' means belonging to you.

"You will do well in your exams."

"Have you done your homework?"

### There, their and they're

'There' means place e.g. in that place or over there.

'There' may also be used as a subject at the start of a sentence.

'Their' indicates belonging (that someone owns something) e.g. It's their turn.

'There' is the shortened version of 'they are'. Again, we use an apostrophe to show the missing letters.

### To, too and two

**To** is a preposition (a word that tells you the position of something) e.g. I am going to school.

**Too** means also/as well **or** is an indication of amount.

I will be going to the cinema too.

It is too loud in here!

**Two** is the number e.g. the animals went in two by two.

## Developing your child's oracy at home

Having conversations with your child is one of the most powerful things you can do to help their oracy, reading and writing skills. Encouraging your child to give extended responses where they explain their thoughts and ideas will break down some of the barriers to writing (e.g. "I don't know what to write"). Exploring ideas will also help with reading skills such as inference (reading between the lines) and analysis (thinking in more detail).

In West Monmouth School, we use the Articulate strategy to help pupils give extended responses and have thoughtful discussions. Some ideas and prompts are included below.

### Articulate (for discussions)

- 'Can you give an example?', 'What do you mean by that?', 'Why do you think that?'
- Agree/disagree and why: 'Do you agree?', 'Do you agree with what x said?', 'What do people think about what x said?', 'Why?', 'I agree because...', 'I don't agree because...'
- Question or challenge: 'Is that always true?', 'What about...?', 'What if...?'
- Clarify: 'So, let me see if I've got this right...', 'So you're saying that...'
- Rephrase/repeat: 'Or another way of saying that is...', 'So just to repeat what you said...'
- Add on: 'Would someone like to add to that?', 'So to add on to that...', 'To go back what x said...'
- Explaining what someone else means: 'Who can / can you explain what x meant?', 'To add some more to what x said...'

### Queries

If you have any concerns or queries about your child's literacy, please do not hesitate to contact school. Ask to speak to your child's Head of Year or Mrs Jeffries (Literacy Co-ordinator) on 01495 762080.

You can also contact the school through the website at:

[www.westmonmouthschool.com](http://www.westmonmouthschool.com)