



Spelling,
punctuation and
grammar (SPaG) -

A guide for
parents

Year 6

Introduction

In the 2014 National curriculum for English, there is a very significant emphasis placed on SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar).

This booklet outlines the expectations for Year 6, including:

- The statutory word list (100 words) for Years 5 and 6
- The spelling rules/patterns covered in Years 5 and 6
- The grammar foci for Year 6
- The technical vocabulary pupils need to understand in Year 6

We appreciate that there is a lot of information in this booklet, and that it may be a lot to digest! Our rationale is to keep you informed, in order for us to work together to support children in their learning. Therefore, practical ideas for how you can help are included. If you have any queries, a wealth of information can be found online, and we are always here should you wish to ask us for more information.

Statutory word list

The word lists for Years 5 and 6 are statutory. The list is a mixture of words pupils frequently use in their writing and those which they often misspell. Parents can support their children by ensuring that they are familiar with these words, by applying them, using the range of games and activities listed in this booklet. They will also be a focus for homework and tests throughout the year.

Spelling rules/patterns

As a school, we have decided to split the Year 5/6 spelling programme to make it more manageable. Please note that the sections that are highlighted in purple are spelling patterns/rules that are to be covered in Year 6.

How is spelling taught in school?

Your child will have a daily, short, focused session of spelling and grammar. During these sessions, new spelling patterns/rules and grammar content will be introduced and then reinforced through games and activities that encourage enquiry and pattern finding.

Parent/Carer support

Parents can support their children by having a good understanding of the expectations and maintaining a focus on spelling and grammar at home. Once a fortnight your child will receive a spelling sheet with a list of spellings to practise and learn. These will consist of words from the Year 5 spelling or grammar programme. Your child will have a spelling test every other week and we will expect to see these words increasingly spelt correctly in their writing.

Statutory word list

(Purple highlighted words to be covered in Year 6)

accommodate	correspond	identity	queue
accompany	criticise	immediate(ly)	recognise
according	curiosity	individual	recommend
achieve	definite	interfere	relevant
aggressive	desperate	interrupt	restaurant
amateur	determined	language	rhyme
ancient	develop	leisure	rhythm
apparent	dictionary	lightning	sacrifice
appreciate	disastrous	marvellous	secretary
attached	embarrass	mischievous	shoulder
available	environment	muscle	signature
average	equip (-ped, -ment)	necessary	sincere(ly)
awkward	especially	neighbour	soldier
bargain	exaggerate	nuisance	stomach
bruise	excellent	occupy	sufficient
category	existence	occur	suggest
cemetery	explanation	opportunity	symbol
committee	familiar	parliament	system
communicate	foreign	persuade	temperature
community	forty	physical	thorough
competition	frequently	prejudice	twelfth
conscience*	government	privilege	variety
conscious*	guarantee	profession	vegetable
controversy	harass	programme	vehicle
convenience	hindrance	pronunciation	yacht

Spelling rules/patterns

(Purple highlighted words to be covered in Year 6)

Spelling Pattern	Rules and Guidance	Example Words
Endings -cious -tious	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in -ce , the sound is usually spelt as c - e.g. <i>vice</i> - <i>vicious</i> , <i>grace</i> - <i>gracious</i> , <i>space</i> - <i>spacious</i> , <i>malice</i> - <i>malicious</i> . Exception: <i>anxious</i> .	<i>vicious</i> , <i>precious</i> , <i>conscious</i> , <i>delicious</i> , <i>malicious</i> , <i>suspicious</i> <i>ambitious</i> , <i>cautious</i> , <i>fictitious</i> , <i>infectious</i> , <i>nutritious</i>
Endings -cial -tial	-cial is common after a vowel letter and -tial after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions. Exceptions: <i>initial</i> , <i>financial</i> , <i>commercial</i> , <i>provincial</i> (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to <i>finance</i> , <i>commerce</i> and <i>province</i>).	<i>official</i> , <i>special</i> , <i>artificial</i> , <i>partial</i> , <i>confidential</i> , <i>essential</i>
Endings -ant -ance -ancy -ent -ence -ency	Use -ant and -ance/-ancy if there is a related word with an 'a' (<i>cat</i>) or 'ay' sound in the right position; -ation endings are often a clue. Use -ent and -ence/-ency after soft c, soft g and qu, or if there is a related word with a clear 'e' (<i>hen</i>) sound in the right position. There are many words, however, where the above guidance does not help. These words just have to be learnt.	<i>observant</i> , <i>observance</i> , (<i>observation</i>), <i>expectant</i> (<i>expectation</i>), <i>hesitant</i> , <i>hesitancy</i> (<i>hesitation</i>), <i>tolerant</i> , <i>tolerance</i> (<i>toleration</i>), <i>substance</i> (<i>substantial</i>) <i>innocent</i> , <i>innocence</i> , <i>decent</i> , <i>decency</i> , <i>frequent</i> , <i>frequency</i> , <i>confident</i> , <i>confidence</i> (<i>confidential</i>) <i>assistant</i> , <i>assistance</i> , <i>obedient</i> , <i>obedience</i> , <i>independent</i> , <i>independence</i>
Endings -able -ible -ably -ibly	The -able/-ably endings are far more common than the -ible/-ibly endings. As with -ant and -ance/-ancy , the -able ending is used if there is a related word ending in -ation .	<i>adorable/adorably</i> (<i>adoration</i>), <i>applicable/applicably</i> (<i>application</i>), <i>considerable/considerably</i> (<i>consideration</i>), <i>tolerable/tolerably</i> (<i>toleration</i>)

	<p>If the -able ending is added to a word ending in -ce or -ge, the e after the c or g must be kept as those letters would otherwise have their 'hard' sounds (as in cap and gap) before the a of the -able ending.</p> <p>The -able ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it, even if there is no related word ending in -ation. The first five examples opposite are obvious; in reliable, the complete word rely is heard, but the y changes to i in accordance with the rule.</p> <p>The -ible ending is common if a complete root word can't be heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word can be heard (e.g. sensible).</p>	<p>changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible</p> <p>dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable</p> <p>possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, terrible/terribly, visible/visibly, incredible/incredibly, sensible/sensibly</p>
<p>Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in -fer</p>	<p>The r is doubled if the -fer is still stressed when the ending is added.</p> <p>The r is not doubled if the -fer is no longer stressed.</p>	<p>referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring, transferred, reference, referee, preference, transference</p>
<p>Use of the hyphen</p>	<p>Hyphens can be used to join a prefix to a root word, especially if the prefix ends in a vowel letter and the root word also begins with one.</p>	<p>co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own</p>
<p>Words with the 'e' (she) sound spelt ei after c</p>	<p>The 'i before e except after c' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by ei is 'e' Exceptions: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).</p>	<p>deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling</p>
<p>Words containing the letter- string ough</p>	<p>ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English - it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.</p>	<p>ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought, rough, tough, enough, cough, though, although, dough, through, thorough, borough, plough, bough</p>

<p>Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)</p>	<p>Some letters which are no longer sounded used to be sounded hundreds of years ago: e.g. in knight, there was a /k/ sound before the /n/, and the gh used to represent the sound that 'ch' now represents in the Scottish word loch.</p>	<p>doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight</p>
<p>Homophones and other words that are often confused</p>	<p>In the pairs of words opposite, nouns end -ce and verbs end -se. Advice and advise provide a useful clue as the word advise (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound - which could not be spelt c.</p>	<p>advice/advise device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy</p>
	<p>More examples: aisle: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane). isle: an island. aloud: out loud. allowed: permitted. affect: usually a verb (e.g. The weather may affect our plans). effect: usually a noun (e.g. It may have an effect on our plans). If a verb, it means 'bring about' (e.g. He will effect changes in the running of the business). altar: a table-like piece of furniture in a church. alter: to change. ascent: the act of ascending (going up). assent: to agree/agreement (verb and noun). bridal: to do with a bride at a wedding. bridle: reins etc. for controlling a horse. cereal: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal). serial: adjective from the noun series - a succession of things one after the other. compliment: to make nice remarks about someone (verb) or the remark that is made (noun). complement: related to the word complete - to make something complete or more complete (e.g. her scarf complemented her outfit). descent: the act of descending (going down).</p>	<p>guessed: past tense of the verb guess guest: visitor heard: past tense of the verb hear herd: a group of animals led: past tense of the verb lead lead: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (as heavy as lead) morning: before noon mourning: grieving for someone who has died past: noun or adjective referring to a previous time (e.g. In the past) or preposition or adverb showing place (e.g. he walked past me) passed: past tense of the verb 'pass' (e.g. I passed him in the road) precede: go in front of or before proceed: go on principal: adjective - most important (e.g. principal ballerina) noun - important person (e.g. principal of a college) principle: basic truth or belief profit: money that is made in selling things prophet: someone who foretells the future</p>

	<p>dissent: to disagree/ disagreement (verb and noun). desert: as a noun - a barren place (stress on first syllable); as a verb - to abandon (stress on second syllable)</p> <p>dessert: (stress on second syllable) a sweet course after the main course of a meal. draft: noun - a first attempt at writing something; verb - to make the first attempt; also, to draw in someone (e.g. to draft in extra help)</p> <p>draught: a current of air.</p>	<p>stationary: not moving</p> <p>stationery: paper, envelopes etc.</p> <p>steal: take something that does not belong to you</p> <p>steel: metal</p> <p>wary: cautious</p> <p>weary: tired</p> <p>who's: contraction of who is or who has</p> <p>whose: belonging to someone (e.g. Whose jacket is that?)</p>
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Spelling Activities

Try some of these activities to help your child learn their spellings.

<p><u>Scrambled words</u></p> <p>Fold a piece of paper into 3 columns. Write the words in the first column, then write each word again in the second column with the letters all jumbled up. Fold the correct answers behind the page and see if a partner can unscramble the words correctly.</p>	<p><u>Air and back spelling</u></p> <p>Write the word in the air, really big, then really small, saying each letter as it is written. If the word can be sounded out, use the phonemes, if not, use the letter names.</p> <p>Try writing words on each other's backs and see if your partner can say what word you're writing.</p>	<p><u>Acrostic</u></p> <p>Use your target word to make an acrostic poem with each line beginning with the next letter to spell out the word- it's easier to remember if the poem makes sense!</p> <p>e.g. what:</p> <p><u>W</u>hile Sam was walking down the path, <u>H</u>e saw a cat that stared, then laughed. <u>A</u> cat that laughs is quite a feature, <u>T</u>ell me, have you seen such a creature?</p>	<p><u>Write a story</u></p> <p>Write a paragraph/ story containing as many words as possible that follow the spelling rule/pattern you are focusing on.</p>
<p><u>Letter Writing</u></p> <p>Write a letter to a friend, family member, teacher or super hero. Underline the spelling rules that you have focused on in your letter.</p>	<p><u>Colourful words</u></p> <p>Use two different colours to write your words- one for vowels another for consonants then write them all in one colour.</p>	<p><u>Rainbow writing</u></p> <p>Write your words over and over, each time on top of the last but in a different colour- create a rainbow word.</p>	<p><u>Graffiti wall</u></p> <p>Create a graffiti wall, inspired by graffiti artists, draw your target words again and again across a page to create the artwork.</p>

<p><u>Ambidextrous</u></p> <p>Swap your pen into the hand that you don't usually write with. Now try writing your spellings with that hand.</p>	<p><u>Words within words</u></p> <p>Write down target words and then see how many other words you can make from the same letters.</p>	<p><u>Words without vowels</u></p> <p>Write spelling words in a list, replace all the vowels with a line. Can your partner fill in the gaps? (Also could be done without consonants instead, which is easiest?)</p>	<p><u>Make Some Music</u></p> <p>Write a song or rap that includes your words.</p> <p>Share with a friend or family member.</p>
<p><u>Pyramid power</u></p> <p>Sort a given group of words into a list from easiest to hardest. Write the easiest once in the middle at the top of the page, the next easiest twice underneath, third easiest three times below that etc so forming a pyramid.</p>	<p><u>Hangman</u></p> <p>Write dashes for the letters of the word. Your partner needs to say letters and guess the word before you complete the stick man.</p>	<p><u>ABC Order</u></p> <p>Write a list of your spellings in alphabetical order. For even greater challenge, can you write them in reverse alphabetical order first?</p>	<p><u>Squiggly / Bubble spelling words</u></p> <p>Write a list of your spelling words twice - once in your regular writing, then in squiggly or bubble letters.</p>
<p><u>Consonant circle</u></p> <p>Write a list of examples of your spellings. Circle all the consonants.</p>	<p><u>Sign your words</u></p> <p>Use sign language finger spelling to sign your words.</p> <p>http://www.unitykid.com/signlanguage.html</p> <p>http://www.british-sign.co.uk/bsl-british-sign-language/fingerspelling-alphabet-charts/</p>	<p><u>UPPER and lower</u></p> <p>Write a list of your spelling words, firstly in UPPERCASE and then in lowercase.</p>	<p><u>Across and down</u></p> <p>Write all of your spelling words across and then down starting with the first letter.</p> <p>W h e n h e n</p>
<p><u>Back Writing</u></p> <p>Use your finger to spell your words, one letter at a time on your partners back. Partner has to guess the word.</p>	<p><u>Find your words</u></p> <p>Using your reading book, list as many spellings that follow the rule as possible.</p>	<p><u>Choo- Choo words</u></p> <p>Write the entire list end- to-end as one long word (like a train). Use a different coloured crayon for each word.</p> <p>E.g. hopmopestopdrop</p>	<p><u>Connect the dots</u></p> <p>Write your spelling words in dots. Then connect the dots by tracing over them with a coloured pencil. Can you do this with joined up writing?</p>

<p><u>Rhyming words</u></p> <p>Write a list of your spelling words. Next to each word, write a rhyming word. If necessary, your rhyming word can be a nonsense word (as long as it follows the same spelling pattern).</p>	<p><u>Adding my words</u></p> <p>Each letter has a value. Consonants are worth 10 Vowels are worth 5</p> <p>Find as many spellings that follow the rule / pattern and add up your score.</p>	<p><u>Spelling poem</u></p> <p>Write a poem using several of your spelling words. Underline the words that you use. You can write any style of poem.</p>	<p><u>X words</u></p> <p>Find two target words with the same letter in and then write them so they criss cross.</p>
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Year 6 Grammar Content

Year 6: Detail of content to be introduced (statutory requirement)	
<p>Word</p>	<p>The difference between vocabulary typical of informal speech and vocabulary appropriate for formal speech and writing [for example, <i>find out - discover, ask for - request; go in - enter</i>]</p> <p>How words are related by meaning as synonyms and antonyms [for example, <i>big, large, little</i>].</p> <p><i>Children will be expected to use thesauruses to improve their selection and variety of vocabulary - this can be a focus at home for any piece of writing.</i></p>
<p>Sentence</p>	<p>Use of the passive to affect the presentation of information in a sentence [for example, <i>I broke the window in the greenhouse</i> versus <i>The window in the greenhouse was broken (by me)</i>].</p> <p>The difference between structures typical of informal speech and structures appropriate for formal speech and writing [for example, the use of question tags: <i>He's your friend, isn't he?</i>, or the use of subjunctive forms such as <i>If <u>I were</u></i> or <i><u>Were they</u></i> to come in some very formal writing and speech]</p>
<p>Text</p>	<p>Linking ideas across paragraphs using a wider range of cohesive devices: repetition of a word or phrase, grammatical connections [for example, the use of adverbials such as <i>on the other hand, in contrast, or as a consequence</i>], and ellipsis</p> <p>Layout devices [for example, headings, sub-headings, columns, bullets, or tables, to structure text]</p>
<p>Punctuation</p>	<p>Use of the semi-colon, colon and dash to mark the boundary between independent clauses [for example, <i>It's raining; I'm fed up</i>]</p> <p>Use of the colon to introduce a list and use of semi-colons within lists</p> <p>Punctuation of bullet points to list information</p> <p>How hyphens can be used to avoid ambiguity [for example, <i>man eating shark</i> versus <i>man-eating shark, or recover</i> versus <i>re-cover</i>]</p>

Year 6 Grammar Terminology

<p>Subject</p>	<p>The subject of a sentence is the person, place, thing, or idea that is doing or being something. You can find the subject of a sentence if you can find the verb.</p> <p>The subject of a verb is normally the noun, noun phrase or pronoun that names the 'do-er' or 'be-er'. The subject's normal position is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • just before the verb in a statement • just after the auxiliary verb, in a question. 	<p><u>Rula's mother</u> went out.</p> <p><u>That</u> is uncertain.</p> <p><u>The children</u> will study the animals. Will <u>the children</u> study the animals?</p>
<p>Object</p>	<p>The object in a sentence is the thing that is acted upon by the subject. There is a distinction between subjects and objects that is understood in terms of the action expressed by the verb, e.g. Tom studies grammar - Tom is the subject and grammar is the object.</p> <p>An object is normally a noun, pronoun or noun phrase that comes straight after the verb, and shows what the verb is acting upon.</p> <p>Objects can be turned into the subject of a passive verb, and cannot be adjectives (contrast with complements).</p>	<p><i>Year 2 designed</i> <u>puppets</u>. [noun acting as object] <i>I like</i> <u>that</u>. [pronoun acting as object] Some people suggested <u>a pretty display</u>. [noun phrase acting as object] Contrast: <i>A display was suggested</i>. [object of active verb becomes the subject of the passive verb] <i>Year 2 designed pretty</i>. [incorrect, because adjectives cannot be objects]</p>
<p>Active</p>	<p>Active voice describes a sentence where the subject performs the action stated by the verb.</p>	<p>Active: <i>The school arranged a visit.</i> Active: <i>Sue changed the flat tire.</i></p>
<p>Passive</p>	<p>In passive voice sentences, the subject is acted upon by the verb.</p>	<p>Passive: <i>A visit was arranged by the school.</i> Passive: <i>The flat tire was changed by Sue.</i></p>

<p>Synonym</p>	<p>Two words are synonyms if they have the same meaning, or similar meanings.</p>	<p><i>talk -</i> <i>speak old -</i> <i>elderly</i></p>
<p>Antonym</p>	<p>Two words are antonyms if their meanings are opposites.</p>	<p><i>hot - cold</i> <i>light - dark</i> <i>light -</i> <i>heavy</i></p>
<p>Ellipsis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the act of leaving out one or more words that are not necessary for a phrase to be understood • a sign (such as ...) used in text to show that words have been left out <p>An ellipsis [...] proves to be a handy device when you're quoting material and you want to omit some words. The ellipsis consists of three evenly spaced dots</p>	<p><i>Frankie waved to Ivana and she watched her drive away.</i></p> <p><i>She did it because she wanted to do it.</i></p> <p><i>Begin when ready versus Begin when you are ready.</i></p> <p><i>"Points of ellipsis have two main functions: to indicate the omission of words within something that is being quoted, . . . and to indicate lengthy pauses and trailed-off sentences."</i></p>
<p>Hyphen</p>	<p>A hyphen (-) is a punctuation mark used to join the separate parts of a compound word. A hyphen is a joiner.</p> <p>Use hyphens in compound adjectives and nouns to show they are single entities.</p>	<p>Compound adjectives</p> <p><i>free-range eggs</i></p> <p><i>two-day break</i></p> <p><i>four-seater</i></p> <p><i>aircraft</i></p> <p>Compound nouns</p> <p><i>water-bottle</i></p> <p><i>passer-by</i></p> <p><i>sister-in-law</i></p>

<p>Colon</p>	<p>One common use of the colon is to introduce a list of items.</p> <p>A colon can also be used to introduce a definition, statement or explanation of something. For example:</p>	<p><i>To make the perfect jam sandwich you need three things: some bread, butter and strawberry jam.</i></p> <p>Three items are listed in the sentence above. The first part of the sentence informs the reader that there will be three things; then the colon tells the reader "here are the three items".</p> <p>I know how I'm going to handle this: I'm going to hide!</p> <p>Penguin (noun): an aquatic, flightless bird found almost exclusively in the Antarctic.</p>
<p>Semi-colon</p>	<p>Semi-colons, like commas and full stops, are a form of pause. They mark a breather within a sentence. The full stop is the strongest pause, whilst the comma is the weakest. The semi- colon comes in between the two.</p> <p>Rule 1: The semi-colon can be used instead of a full stop. It can link two complete sentences and join them to make one sentence. Any two sentences? Pretty much, but the two sentences must be on the same theme. The semi-colon can be used instead of a connective to join the sentences. <i>So long as the second 'sentence' after the semi-colon links back to the first</i></p>	<p>The door swung open; a masked figure strode in.</p> <p>Alex bought a toy car; he played with it as soon as he got home.</p> <p>She was very tired; she had worked late the night before.</p>

Websites for Grammar

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks2/english/spelling_grammar/

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Flash.aspx?e=spelling-grammar01>

<http://www.funbrain.com/grammar/>

<http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar>

<http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy2.htm>

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/ks2literacy.html>

<http://www.grammar-monster.com/>