

Key Skills in Writing



Lancashire Literacy Team

Key Skills in Writing

What are the key skills?

The key skills are the age appropriate writing skills for each year group. These key pieces of learning will support pupils in becoming effective and reflective independent writers.

Where have they come from?

The key skills have been identified primarily from the National Curriculum 2014 programmes of study. Other key documents cross referenced in their preparation include the Early Years Foundation Stage documents and Lancashire *Assessment and Progression in Writing*.

How might the key skills be useful?

The key skills should help to focus, and be exemplified, during whole class teaching. Taught in the context of lively, engaging and creative units of work, they help to ensure that pupils make progress as writers. Teaching should ensure that skills are modelled and scaffolded and that pupils are given opportunities to apply them in a range of different contexts. Regular teaching of skills would normally take place through a combination of lively 'warm up' sessions (particularly during the earlier phases of the teaching sequence), shared writing and guided writing. Pupils will practise applying the skills during independent and guided writing and have regular opportunities to reflect on how well they have done. To consolidate, children should be encouraged to apply the skills in their cross curricular writing.

Why are the key skills not levelled?

The key skills are age appropriate and are therefore particularly suited to supporting whole class teaching. Levelled statements, useful for supporting next steps teaching for groups (including guided writing) can be found in *Assessment and Progression in Writing*, and *Children's Targets for Writing*.

Year Group	Composition		Transcription	
	Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation	Composition	Spelling <i>(see also the Lancashire Supporting Spelling document for further detail and advice)</i>	Handwriting
Y1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Say, and hold in memory whilst writing, simple sentences which make sense ▪ Write simple sentences that can be read by themselves and others ▪ Separate words with finger spaces ▪ Punctuate simple sentences with capital letters and full stops ▪ Use capital letter for the personal pronoun I ▪ Use capital letters for names of people, places and days of the week ▪ Identify and use question marks and exclamation marks ▪ Use simple connectives to link ideas e.g. <i>and</i> ▪ Pluralise nouns using 's' and 'es' e.g. <i>dog, dogs; wish, wishes</i> ▪ Add suffixes to verbs where no spelling change is needed to the root word e.g. <i>helping, helped, helper</i> ▪ Add the prefix 'un' to verbs and adjectives to change the meaning e.g. <i>untie, unkind</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orally compose every sentence before writing ▪ Re-read every sentence to check it makes sense ▪ Orally plan and rehearse ideas ▪ Sequence ideas/events in order ▪ Use formulaic phrases to open and close texts ▪ Use familiar plots for structuring the opening, middle and end of their stories ▪ Write in different forms with simple text type features e.g. <i>instructions, narratives, recounts, poems, information texts</i> ▪ Discuss their writing with adults and peers ▪ Read aloud their writing to adults and peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Name the letters of the alphabet in order ▪ Use letter names to distinguish between alternative spellings of the same sound ▪ Spell words containing each of the phonemes already taught ▪ Be able to encode the sounds they hear in words ▪ Be able to read back words they have spelt ▪ Use their phonic knowledge when spelling unfamiliar words (<i>i.e. produce phonically plausible spellings</i>) ▪ Spell common exception words ▪ Spell the days of the week ▪ Use the spelling rule for adding –s or –es (<i>i.e. when the word has a /ɪz/ sound</i>) ▪ Use the prefix <i>un-</i> for words without any change to the spelling of the root word ▪ Use suffixes <i>-ing, -ed, -er</i> and <i>-est</i> where no change is needed in the spelling of root words ▪ Apply simple spelling rules and guidelines, as listed in Appendix 1 Supporting Spelling document ▪ Write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher that include words taught so far 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold a pencil with an effective grip ▪ Form lower-case letters correctly – <i>starting and finishing in the right place, going the right way round, correctly oriented</i> ▪ Have clear ascenders (<i>'tall letters'</i>) and descenders (<i>'tails'</i>) ▪ Form capital letters correctly

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Y2	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say, write and punctuate simple and compound sentences using the connectives <i>and, but</i> and <i>or</i> Use sentences with different forms: statement, question, command, exclamation Use commas to separate items in a list Use apostrophes for contracted forms e.g. <i>don't, can't, wouldn't, you're, I'll</i> Use subordination for time e.g. <i>When we had finished our writing, we went out to play. We went out to play when we had finished our writing.</i> Other time connectives: <i>while, as, before, after</i> Use subordination for reason e.g. <i>I put my coat on because it was raining. Because it was raining, I put on my coat.</i> Other reason connectives: <i>so, if, then, for, unless</i> Select, generate and effectively use verbs Use past tense for narrative, recount (e.g. <i>diary, newspaper report, biography</i>) and historical reports Use present tense for non-chronological reports and persuasive adverts 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and discuss what to write about e.g. <i>story mapping, collecting new vocabulary, key words and ideas</i> Use specific text type features to write for a range of audiences and purposes e.g. <i>to instruct, inform, entertain, explain, discuss, persuade</i> Write about real and fictional events Write simple poems based on models Edit and improve their own writing in relation to audience and purpose Evaluate their writing with adults and peers Proofread to check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation Read aloud their writing with intonation to make the meaning clear 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many correctly Learn new ways of spelling phonemes for which one or more spellings are already known Learn some words with each spelling, including a few common homophones Learn to spell common exception words Learn to spell more words with contracted forms Distinguish between homophones and near-homophone Add suffixes <i>ness</i> and <i>er</i> to create nouns e.g. <i>happiness, sadness, teacher, baker</i> Select, generate and effectively use adjectives. Add suffixes <i>ful</i> or <i>less</i> to create adjectives e.g. <i>playful, careful, careless, hopeless</i> Use suffixes <i>er</i> and <i>est</i> to create adjectives e.g. <i>faster, fastest, smaller, smallest</i> Use suffix <i>ly</i> to turn adjectives into adverbs e.g. <i>slowly, gently, carefully</i> 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another use upper case letters appropriately e.g. <i>not always writing A as a capital, not using capitals within words</i> write upper case letters of the correct size relative to lower case letters start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Select, generate and effectively use nouns▪ Add suffixes <i>ness</i> and <i>er</i> to create nouns e.g. <i>happiness, sadness, teacher, baker</i>▪ Select, generate and effectively use adjectives▪ Add suffixes <i>ful</i> or <i>less</i> to create adjectives e.g. <i>playful, careful, careless, hopeless</i>▪ Use suffixes <i>er</i> and <i>est</i> to create adjectives e.g. <i>faster, fastest, smaller, smallest</i>▪ Use suffix <i>ly</i> to turn adjectives into adverbs e.g. <i>slowly, gently, carefully</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher that include words and punctuation taught so far	
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	Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation	Composition	Spelling <i>(see also the Lancashire Supporting Spelling document for further detail and advice)</i>	Handwriting
Y3	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and identify main and subordinate clauses in complex sentences Explore, identify and create complex sentences using a range of conjunctions e.g. <i>if, while, since, after, before, so, although, until, in case</i> Identify, select, generate and effectively use prepositions for where e.g. <i>above, below, beneath, within, outside, beyond</i> Select, generate and effectively use adverbs e.g. <i>suddenly, silently, soon, eventually</i> Use inverted commas to punctuate direct speech (speech marks) Use perfect form of verbs using <i>have</i> and <i>had</i> to indicate a completed action e.g. <i>I <u>have</u> washed my hands. We will <u>have</u> eaten our lunch by the time Dad arrives. Jack <u>had</u> watched TV for over two hours!</i> Use the determiner <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> according to whether the next word begins with a consonant or vowel e.g. <i>a rock, an open box</i> 	<p>As above and:</p> <p>Plan their writing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and analysing narrative, non-fiction and poetry in order to plan and write their own versions Identifying and discussing the purpose, audience, language and structures of narrative, non-fiction and poetry for writing Discussing and recording ideas for planning Creating and developing settings for narratives Creating and developing characters for narrative Creating and developing plots based on a model Generating and selecting from vocabulary banks e.g. <i>noun phrases, powerful verbs, technical language, synonyms for said</i> appropriate to text type Grouping related material into paragraphs Using headings and sub headings to organise information <p>Evaluate, and edit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proofreading to check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation in own and others' writing 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them Spell further homophones Spell words that are often misspelt Use the first two letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary Write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far. Learn to spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them. Understand how to place the apostrophe in words with regular plurals (e.g. <i>girls', boys'</i>) Spell words as accurately as possible using their phonic knowledge and other knowledge of spelling, such as morphology and etymology. 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form and use the four basic handwriting joins Write legibly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore and collect word families e.g. <i>medical, medicine, medicinal, medic, paramedic, medically</i> to extend vocabulary ▪ Explore and collect words with prefixes <i>super, anti, auto</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussing and proposing changes with partners and in small groups ▪ Improving writing in the light of evaluation <p>Perform their own compositions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using appropriate intonation, tone and volume to present their writing to a group or class 		
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Y4	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create complex sentences with adverb starters e.g. <i>Silently trudging through the snow, Sam made his way up the mountain.</i> Create sentences with fronted adverbials for when e.g. <i>As the clock struck twelve, the soldiers sprang into action.</i> Create sentences with fronted adverbials for where e.g. <i>In the distance, a lone wolf howled.</i> Use commas to mark clauses in complex sentences Use inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech e.g. <i>The tour guide announced, "Be back here at four o' clock."</i> Identify, select and effectively use pronouns Explore, identify, collect and use noun phrases e.g. <i>The crumbly cookie with tasty marshmallow pieces melted in my mouth.</i> Explore, identify and use Standard English verb inflections for writing e.g. <i>We were</i> instead of <i>we was</i>. <i>I was</i> instead of <i>I were</i>, <i>I did</i> instead of <i>I done</i>. <i>She saw it</i> instead of <i>she seen it</i>. 	<p>As above and:</p> <p>Plan their writing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and analysing narrative, non-fiction and poetry in order to plan and write their own versions Identifying and discussing the purpose, audience, language and structures of narrative, non-fiction and poetry for writing Discussing and recording ideas for planning e.g. <i>story mountain, story map, text map, non-fiction bridge, story board, boxing-up text types to create a plan</i> <p>Draft and write by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing settings and characterisation using vocabulary to create emphasis, humour, atmosphere, suspense Planning and writing an opening paragraph which combines the introduction of a setting and character/s Organising paragraphs in narrative and non-fiction Linking ideas within paragraphs e.g. <i>fronted adverbials for when and where</i> 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them Spell further homophones Spell words that are often misspelt Use the first three letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary Write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far. Learn to spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them. Understand how to place the apostrophe in words with irregular plurals (e.g. children's). Spell words as accurately as possible using their phonic knowledge and other knowledge of spelling, such as morphology and etymology 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write with consistency in size and proportion of letters, e.g. <i>by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use apostrophes for singular and plural possession e.g. <i>the dog's bone and the dogs' bones</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating and select from vocabulary banks e.g. <i>powerful adverbs, adverbial phrases, technical language, persuasive phrases, alliteration</i> appropriate to text type <p>Evaluate and edit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proofreading to check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation in own and others' writing Discussing and proposing changes with partners and in small groups Improving writing in light of evaluation <p>Perform own compositions for different audiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriate intonation, tone and volume to present their writing to a range of audiences. 		
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Y5	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create complex sentences by using relative clauses with pronouns <i>who, which, where, whose, when, that</i> e.g. <i>Sam, who had remembered his wellies, was first to jump in the river. The robberies, which had taken place over the past month, remained unsolved.</i> ▪ Create and punctuate complex sentences using <i>ed</i> openers ▪ Create and punctuate complex sentences using <i>ing</i> openers ▪ Create and punctuate complex sentences using simile starters ▪ Demarcate complex sentences using commas and explore ambiguity of meaning ▪ Explore, collect and use modal verbs to indicate degrees of possibility e.g. <i>might, could, shall, will, must</i> ▪ Use devices to build cohesion within a paragraph e.g. <i>firstly, then, presently, subsequently</i> ▪ Link ideas across paragraphs using adverbials for time, place and numbers e.g. <i>later, nearby, secondly</i> ▪ Identify and use brackets and dashes 	<p>As above and:</p> <p>Plan their writing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying the audience and purpose ▪ Selecting the appropriate language and structures ▪ Using similar writing models ▪ Noting and developing ideas ▪ Drawing on reading and research ▪ Thinking how authors develop characters and settings (in books, films and performances) ▪ Draft and write by: ▪ Selecting <i>appropriate</i> grammar and vocabulary ▪ Blending action, dialogue and description within and across paragraphs ▪ Using devices to build cohesion (see VGP column) ▪ Using organisation and presentational devices e.g. <i>headings, sub headings, bullet points, diagrams, text boxes</i> ▪ Evaluate and edit by: ▪ Assessing the effectiveness of own and others' writing in relation to audience and purpose ▪ Suggesting changes to grammar, vocabulary and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spell words that they have not yet been taught by using what they have learnt about how spelling works in English. ▪ Use further prefixes and suffixes and understand the guidelines for adding them ▪ Spell some words with 'silent' letters, e.g. <i>knight, psalm, solemn</i> ▪ Continue to distinguish between homophones and other words which are often confused ▪ Use knowledge of morphology and etymology in spelling and understand that the spelling of some words needs to be learnt specifically ▪ Use dictionaries to check the spelling and meaning of words ▪ Use the first three or four letters of a word to check spelling, meaning or both of these in a dictionary ▪ Use a thesaurus ▪ Use suffixes <i>-ate, -ise, -ify</i> to convert nouns and adjectives into verbs ▪ Investigate verb prefixes e.g. <i>dis-, re-, pre-, mis-, over-</i> 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Write fluently ▪ Choose when it is appropriate to print or join writing e.g. <i>printing for labelling a scientific diagram</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use suffixes <i>-ate, -ise, -ify</i> to convert nouns and adjectives into verbs ▪ Investigate verb prefixes e.g. <i>dis-, re-, pre-, mis-, over-</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring consistent and correct use of tense throughout a piece of writing ▪ Ensuring consistent subject and verb agreement ▪ Proofreading for spelling and punctuation errors ▪ Perform own compositions for different audiences: ▪ Using appropriate intonation and volume ▪ Adding movement ▪ Ensuring meaning is clear 		
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Y6	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulate sentences to create particular effects Use devices to build cohesion between paragraphs in persuasive, discursive and explanatory texts e.g. <i>on the other hand, the opposing view, similarly, in contrast, although, additionally, another possibility, alternatively, as a consequence</i> Use devices to build cohesion between paragraphs in narrative e.g. <i>in the meantime, meanwhile, in due course, until then</i> Use ellipsis to link ideas between paragraphs Identify and use colons to introduce a list Identify and use semi-colons to mark the boundary between independent clauses e.g. <i>It is raining; I am fed up.</i> Investigate and collect a range of synonyms and antonyms e.g. <i>mischievous, wicked, evil, impish, spiteful, well-behaved</i> Explore how hyphens can be used to avoid ambiguity e.g. <i>man eating shark</i> versus <i>man-eating shark</i> 	<p>As above and:</p> <p>Plan their writing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying audience and purpose Choose appropriate text-form and type for all writing Selecting the appropriate language and structures Drawing on similar writing models, reading and research Using a range of planning approaches e.g. <i>storyboard, story mountain, discussion group, post-it notes, ICT story planning</i> <p>Draft and write by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selecting <u>appropriate</u> vocabulary and language effects, appropriate to task, audience and purpose, for precision and impact Introducing and developing characters through blending action, dialogue and description within sentences and paragraphs e.g. <i>Tom stomped into the room, flung down his grubby, school bag and announced, through gritted teeth, "It's not fair!"</i> Using devices to build cohesion Deviating narrative from linear or chronological sequence e.g. <i>flashbacks, simultaneous actions, time-shifts</i> 	<p>(see also the Lancashire Supporting Spelling document for further detail and advice)</p> <p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be secure with all spelling rules previously taught Write increasingly confidently, accurately and fluently, spelling with automaticity Use a number of different strategies interactively in order to spell correctly Develop self-checking and proof-checking strategies Use independent spelling strategies for spelling unfamiliar words 	<p>As above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write with increasing speed Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. <i>quick notes, letters</i>)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Punctuate bullet points consistently ▪ Explore and collect vocabulary typical of formal and informal speech and writing e.g. find out – discover, ask for - request, go in – request ▪ Identify the subject and object of a sentence ▪ Explore and investigate active and passive e.g. <i>I broke the window in the greenhouse</i> versus <i>the window in the greenhouse was broken</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combining text-types to create hybrid texts e.g. <i>persuasive speech</i> ▪ Evaluating, selecting and using a range of organisation and presentational devices for different purposes and audiences ▪ Finding examples of where authors have broken conventions to achieve specific effects and using similar techniques in own writing – e.g. <i>repeated use of 'and' to convey tedium, one word sentence.</i> ▪ Make conscious choices about techniques to engage the reader including appropriate tone and style e.g. <i>rhetorical questions, direct address to the reader</i> ▪ Use active and passive voice to achieve intended effects e.g. <i>in formal reports, explanations and mystery narrative</i> <p>Evaluate and edit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflecting upon the effectiveness of writing in relation to audience and purpose, suggesting and making changes to enhance effects and clarify meaning ▪ Proofreading for grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors <p>Evaluate and improve performances of compositions focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intonation and volume ▪ Gesture and movement ▪ Audience engagement 		
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Word lists

Y3/4					
accident(ally)	circle	famous	island	peculiar	sentence
actual(ly)	complete	favourite	knowledge	perhaps	separate
address	consider	February	learn	popular	special
answer	continue	forward(s)	length	position	straight
appear	decide	fruit	library	possession(ion)	strange
arrive	describe	grammar	material	possible	strength
believe	different	group	medicine	potatoes	suppose
bicycle	difficult	guard	mention	pressure	surprise
breath	disappear	guide	minute	probably	therefore
breathe	early	heard	natural	promise	though/although
build	earth	heart	naughty	purpose	thought
busy/business	eight/eighth	height	notice	quarter	through
calendar	enough	history	occasional(ly)	question	various
caught	exercise	imagine	often	recent	weight
centre	experience	increase	opposite	regular	woman/women
century	experiment	important	ordinary	reign	
certain	extreme	interest	particular	remember	

Word lists

5/6					
accommodate	communicate	environment	individual	prejudice	stomach
accompany	community	equip(ped)	interfere	privilege	sufficient
according	competition	equip(ment)	interrupt	profession	suggest
achieve	conscience*	especially	language	programme	symbol
aggressive	conscious*	exaggerate	leisure	pronunciation	system
amateur	controversy	excellent	lightning	queue	temperature
ancient	convenience	existence	marvellous	recognise	thorough
apparent	correspond	explanation	mischievous	recommend	twelfth
appreciate	criticise	familiar	muscle	relevant	variety
attached	(critic+ise)	foreign	necessary	restaurant	vegetable
available	curiosity	forty	neighbour	rhyme	vehicle
average	definite	frequently	nuisance	rhythm	yacht
awkward	desperate	government	occupy	sacrifice	
bargain	determined	guarantee	occur	secretary	
bruise	develop	harass	opportunity	shoulder	
category	dictionary	hindrance	parliament	signature	
cemetery	disastrous	identify	persuade	sincere(ly)	
committee	embarrass	immediate(ly)	physical	soldier	

For further information please contact:

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