

English at Great Moor Junior School

English Writing at Great Moor Junior School

* Writing is based around the class text for the half-term although cross-curricular or other topical pieces of work may also be evident.
* Each class in a year group is working from the same class text in the same half-term and experiencing comparable activities and writing tasks although there may be some variety depending on the needs and areas of interest for specific classes.
* A wide range of resources are used to provide stimuli for writing tasks.
* Children write in a range of genres (fiction and non-fiction). Teachers exploit opportunities for children to write for real purposes e.g sports journalism, reporting on school competitions; writing to local businesses to request information or to support fund raising.
* ICT is used to support writing, either as input or for planning or for secretarial reasons.
* All children (except in exceptional cases) have the opportunity for regular (at least weekly) extended writing tasks. The chance to practise writing is integral to the children making improvement and developing their skills. Writing opportunities are planned on a two-week cycle. In week one, extended writing tasks are still evident but the emphasis is on deepening understanding of the text and responses to reading. In week two, children use their developed knowledge of the text to innovate and create independent pieces of writing,
* Children have the opportunity to be creative with their writing and to innovate.
* Children write independently but also sometimes write or plan collaboratively with Talk Partners or groups.
* Children are encouraged to make choices about the sentences and words in their writing. The “effectiveness” of choices is regularly discussed (e.g. modelled writing using writer’s voice.)
* Time is given to explore words, develop phrases, play with sentences and paragraphs which means that children always consider impact on the reader when they write. The *Word of the Day* display in all classrooms is one way that the development of vocabulary is encouraged.
* Children understand how to improve their work using proofreading to check for accuracy, spelling, punctuation and correct grammar. Children are given the opportunity to discuss and re-draft sections of their work and to make improvements.
* Spelling:
  1. Dotty underline means child has identified an issue and will need time to look it up at the end
  2. Teacher has underlined (with normal marking pen) and provides spelling in margin means the child must copy the word 5 times and add to purple spelling book
  3. A word underlined with a green highlighter by the teacher means the chn must look up a spelling for themselves and add to their purple spelling book.
* Learning objectives are based on the AREs (not genre-based). Marking ladders and success criteria (based on relevant AREs) are often used to support the children in their writing.
* Penpal style writing is the default script for writing unless the genre/task (or exceptionally the needs of the child) dictate otherwise. This is explicitly taught in Year 3. Correct writing posture is encouraged through the National Handwriting Association’s P-checks format and children follow these guidelines when they write.
* Regular assessment (formative and half-termly writing assessment) and high-quality marking is used to determine learning and progress towards mastery. Verbal and written feedback is used to support the children in moving on with their learning. The primary emphasis of marking comments should be based around the ARE L.O.
* Information gathered on areas for improvement are fed-back into subsequent lessons to address areas of weakness. Levels of progress are recorded each term on SIMS and reported to parents in parents’ evenings and half-termly and end-of-year progress reports.
* Misconceptions that arise are also addressed through teacher-led intervention groups and support within the lesson.

English Reading at Great Moor Junior School

* Reading activities are mostly based around the class text for the half-term although cross-curricular or other topical texts are also used.
* Each class in a year group is working from the same core text in the same half-term and experiencing comparable activities and reading tasks although there may be some variety depending on the needs and areas of interest for specific classes.
* A wide range of resources are used to provide stimuli for reading tasks.
* Children read a range of genres (fiction and non-fiction) and different types of text (e.g. written, electronic, visual and aural etc.)
* Reading teaching is planned on a two-week cycle. In week one, extended writing tasks focus more on the children’s reading and aim to deepen their understanding of the text, themes and characters. In week two, children use this developed knowledge of the text to innovate and create independent pieces of writing,
* The school uses the Accelerated Reader programme. This Internet-based software assess children’s reading ability and helps them to choose books that they will enjoy but that will be accessible to them at their current level. Each book has a quiz to ensure that the children are understanding what they are reading. All of the books in the programme in school are labelled with a ZPD level so that children can choose one that suits them or choose one at an appropriate level from home or the library. This is very motivational as children are choosing “real” books that they want to read and they are able to enjoy them because they are at the right level. Awards are also given to recognise progress and achievement.
* Children begin to read using the Reading Scheme but as soon as the child has reached an appropriate reading ability, they are encouraged to choose their own reading books based on individual tastes and interests (within AR). The teacher may guide or support the children to make suitable choices, if necessary.
* Expectations of our readers are high: all children (except in exceptional cases) will read the same class texts. Texts are interesting, rich and challenging and are often intentionally beyond the current independent reading ability of the majority of the class. This is to provide exposure to texts that children would otherwise be unable to access without support. (Teachers provide scaffolding or additional support to enable less-capable readers to access the text.)
* A range of different opportunities to read are provided, including:
  1. whole-class reading
  2. regular independent reading (monitored and supported by teachers through Reading Records and Reading Interviews)
  3. partner- or buddy-reading
  4. home/school reading (parents are encouraged to hear their children read regularly and share progress in the Reading Records)
  5. hearing books read aloud (modelled reading)
  6. choral or echo reading
  7. selecting own texts to read (including ICT texts)
  8. reading in other subjects for example, for research (including ICT texts)
* Much of the programme of study is taught through English lessons but the whole-school ethos celebrates books and reading (events such as World-Book Day or displays or book reviews). Great Moor Junior School promotes reading as an enjoyable activity and a valuable life skill.
* Time is set aside for visiting the library, independent reading, listening to stories and for application of reading skills in practical contexts such as for research.
* Reading skills are explicitly taught and not just tested. One of the ways this is done is through the weekly Whole-class Reading tasks. One session a week is based on the class novel and the other is often based on a text connected to our module studies. The emphasis is on learning *how* to “read” and extract information.
* The Reading Strategies (bookmarks) can be used by the children to help them work out unknown words or meanings.
* Children who are working below age-related expectation (or those who have less opportunity to read at home) are identified as priority readers and given the opportunity to read with an adult in school regularly.
* All Year groups have a well-stocked book area which contain a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
* Reading progress is assessed formatively (by responses in lessons) but also summatively using the Rising Stars Half-termly tests and end-of-year tests. Information gathered on areas for improvement are then fed-back into subsequent lessons to address areas of weakness. Levels of progress are recorded each term on SIMS and reported to parents in parents’ evenings and half-termly and end-of-year progress reports.
* Teachers will also use occasional reading comprehension activities (although the primary emphasis of reading teaching is to develop and understanding of the mechanics of reading rather than to assess.)

English GaPS at Great Moor Junior School

* Phonics is taught in Year 3 and as an intervention. This uses the Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme, Sounds Write.
* Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught as much as possible through the vehicle of the class text.
* GaPS teaching is usually a regular, focussed part of a wider English lesson rather than a whole lesson in itself.
* Teachers ensure that all of the GaPS Age-Related Expectations are planned into teaching through long-, medium-term and weekly plans. Opportune chances to review or develop understanding are also utilised.
* Progress in GaPS is assessed formatively (by responses in lessons) but also summatively using the Rising Stars Half-termly and end-of-year tests. Information gathered on areas for improvement are then fed-back into subsequent lessons to address areas of weakness. Levels of progress are recorded each term on SIMS and reported to parents in parents’ evenings and half-termly and end-of-year progress reports.
* Learning the key word lists is encouraged through regular individual and whole-school spelling tests and competitions. Words on the list are used and discussed regularly in class.
* Spelling (in marking and feedback):
  1. Dotty underline means child has identified an issue and will need time to look it up at the end
  2. Teacher has underlined (with normal marking pen) and provides spelling in margin means the child must copy the word 5 times and add to purple spelling book
  3. A word underlined with a green highlighter by the teacher means the chn must look up a spelling for themselves and add to their purple spelling book.
* Every week, children gather an individual list of 10 spellings to learn and practise. These words should be gathered from:

1. Misspelled words highlighted in work:
2. High-frequency words
3. Year 3/4 or 5/6 wordlist
4. Spelling focus of week words/module words

* Staff take a proactive role in identifying and supporting the children to correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling commensurate to their individual ability. All children have some areas for improvement identified in their work. A primary aim is that all written work is correctly punctuated with capital letters and full stops (via green pen improvement if necessary.) High-frequency word errors and other basic grammar and punctuation errors are actioned by the teacher and children.
* Oral grammatical mistakes and misuse of language are also addressed by staff.