

English at Droxford Junior School

At Droxford we believe in an English Curriculum which is driven by high quality, rich, inspiring texts pinned on a theme or text. An example of how this works is in Year 5/6 children explore texts under the theme title '**A Long Way from Home**'. This unit is based on immigration and the children read **Floella Benjamin**'s autobiography and make comparisons to Shaun Tan's picture book '**The Arrival**'. They also look at Windrush and refugee poetry and news articles. This unit is taught at the same time as Caribbean Connections in Geography and the 'Paint Jamacia Project' in Art so that deeper links can be made. These rich texts form a basis for the reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. The journey across the school allows for skills to be built upon. Some other texts studied include: **Lob, Varjak Paw, Shakleton's journey** in Year 3 and 4 and '**Floodland**', **An Eagle in the Snow, Until I met Dudley** in Year 5/6.

Reading

Reading is the backbone of the English Curriculum. Children will study a broad range of text types: **stories, reports, poetry, discussions, picture books and animations** within each unit of work. Reading is generally taught at whole class level (unless specific differentiation is required) with a deep level of open questioning and areas for discussion and partner talk. From time to time, teachers will focus on a smaller groups or individuals in order to aid specific discussions or to provide assessments. **VIPERS** (Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarise) skills are taught throughout the school as well as the year group reading skills objectives. Children are also encouraged to read at home and in school and this is tracked in a reading diary. Children have a reading buddy in another class and they meet up to read to one another. Staff are encouraged to share what they are reading with the class. There are annual author visits and, three times a year, children can buy books through the Roving Book Shop. All children have access to the school library (run in part by Year 6 librarians), class reading corners (designed to promote the love of reading) and free Ebooks. Children needing more support with reading continue with phonics schemes or fluency projects and can read to the school dog.

Writing

All writes are closely linked to the theme or text they are studying. For example, in Year 3/4 they write an explanation leaflet about deforestation whilst reading '**The Great Kapok Tree.**' Writing is built upon using skills and prior learning as they progress through the school. A typical writing journey includes these steps: examining examples of the genre- looking at key features (eg persuasive language), learning writing skills that will help towards their write (how to build tension with short sentences), creating a success criteria as a class, writing their piece (maybe in smaller taught sections) and editing and improving. A clear understanding of **purpose, audience, style and tone** is developed throughout. Shorter writes focus on practising skills needed for longer, more substantial writes. Scaffolding is provided for children needing more support with their writing and all children practise handwriting. Writing is also developed in the foundation subjects eg. explanations about volcanos in geography.

Vocabulary

Words are the building blocks of language. Vocabulary is at the heart of reading and writing. The fundamental aim of the reader is word recognition, while for the writer it is choosing the right word. At Droxford, we believe that a wider vocabulary across the curriculum equates to better reasoning and inference skills, stronger writing outcomes and, ultimately, higher academic success. Therefore, children are introduced to at least five new words, across the curriculum, a week. In English, these words primarily come from the main text stimulus. These words are considered to be '**tier 3**' vocabulary which means that they are not in a child's natural vocabulary and definitions need to be taught discretely. Vocabulary lessons include

game playing, drama and etymological research. Children are then expected to apply these words into their independent writing.

Grammar

Where possible grammar is taught alongside the reading and writing. For example, looking at the use of semi colons within a book and then practised as a writing skill for an upcoming write. Where it lends itself better, grammar is taught discretely.

Spelling

The **Babcock Scheme** is followed at Droxford Junior School. This is a progressive spelling framework which enables children to build on the skills they've learnt in previous years. Particularly in years 3 and 4, spelling rules are taught discretely and applied in spelling practice lessons. All children are given weekly spellings to practise; all of which follow a particular rule or are taken from the statutory word lists. Differentiated spellings may be given to some pupils where deemed appropriate.

