

**Forest Hill School**  
**English Department**  
**KS3 Skills Pack**



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## KS3 English and Media Department.

The aim of this guide is for you to be able to support and further your son's knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar and to instil confidence and therefore progress in your son's learning and love of English. In addition, there is also a list of websites that you can use to help develop your son's learning at home.

### **How to use this guide.**

There are so many ways to use this guide. Here are a few suggestions:

You could look through your son's book and see if there are any areas that your son needs to improve or increase his understanding and look for the corresponding section. You could work through a section at a time with your son. You could even use one of the websites alongside this pack.

### **Websites:**

1. KS3 National Strategy on Spelling.

<http://www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/secpartners/Resources/KS3%20Yr7%20Spelling%20Bank.pdf>

2. A useful website that has printable worksheets on different areas of English.

[www.parentsintouch.co.uk](http://www.parentsintouch.co.uk)

3. A useful website for your so to learn, secure and revise all aspects of KS3 English.

[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/english/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/english/)

4. An excellent website, for you and your son to work through activities together. It also includes a suggested reading list for your son.

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk>

## Words and their Function in a Sentence.

These are the functions – or jobs - words do in sentences. Words can do different jobs; so at different times they can be different parts of a sentence.

**Collective nouns:** are the words or names given to a group of people or things.  
e.g. a **herd** of horses, a **band** of thieves, a **flock** of birds, a **swarm** of bees

**Pronouns:** are the words that replace a noun, or that refer to a noun without naming it directly. e.g. **She** got **it** and gave **it** to them.

**Proper nouns:** are words that name particular people, places and things; they therefore always have a capital letter e.g. **Catford**, **Callum**, **English**.

**Adjectives** are the words that describe nouns. e.g. **blue** book, **large** fields

**Adverbs:** are the words that describe verbs and often end in **-LY** (but not always!) e.g. *She ran **quickly**. He shouted **loudly**. They spoke **fast**. He **worked** hard.*

**Conjunctions:** are the words we use to join sentences together to make them more interesting e.g. *The rain fell **and** we all went home.*  
e.g. **and**, **but**, **with**.

**Nouns:** are naming words. e.g. **dog**, **chair**, **Paul**, **book**

**Verbs:** are doing or being words. e.g. **run**, **drive**, **were**, **is**, **imagine**

## What is a sentence?

**Sentences:** are a group of words that makes complete sense by itself.

They:

- Begin with a capital letter;
- Contain a noun or pronoun;
- Contain a verb in the past, present or future tense;
- Then **must** end with a full stop. (Which is also found in an ! and ?)

### Simple sentences:

Contain **one piece of information**, use **one noun** and **one verb**:

e.g. *James ran home.* **Or:** *The dog chased the postman.* **Or:** *I am hungry.*

### Compound sentences:

These are **simple sentences joined by a conjunction**:

E.g. *James ran home **because** his dinner was ready.*

Or:

*The dog chased the postman **and** bit him on the bottom!*

### Complex sentences:

A **complex sentence** contains **a main clause** and **at least one subordinate clause**. The main clause can come at the start, at the end, or somewhere in the middle of the sentence. The **main clauses are in bold** print and the **subordinate clauses are underlined**.

***I'll meet you tonight at six**, if I can.*

*When Ceri speaks, **everyone listens**.*

### Subordinate clauses:

**Subordinate** clauses are **extra bits of information in a sentence**. The sentence makes sense without the clause, but it makes the sentence more interesting. E.g. *The dwarves, gasping and sweating, ran into the cave.*

### Tenses:

There are three main tenses in English:

#### **PAST**

(Yesterday)

I was

#### **PRESENT**

(Today)

I am

#### **FUTURE**

(Tomorrow)

I will be

I bought	I buy	I will buy
Keep to the same tense in narratives (stories).		

## Punctuation

### Semi-colons (;)

These can be used to separate main clauses. *The guide opened the door; he showed us into the room.*

Or can break up lists containing more than one word, like a comma:

E.g. *Before the picnic we packed everything: a box for the plates and cutlery; cartons of sandwiches; two bottles of lemonade; a table cloth and serviettes.*

Both parts of the sentence should make sense on their own, without the semi-colon.

**N.B. Semi-colons are half way between a comma and a full stop.**

### Commas (,)

These are used to separate actions or adjectives in a sentence or to separate items in a list:

E.g. *remember to buy one pineapple, 4kg of bananas, and some ice-cream for tea tonight.*

*I arrived home feeling tired, hungry and generally pleased.  
My dad is the richest, most extravagant, most demanding chef in the world.*

**Do not use a comma where there should be a full stop!**

### Capital Letters

A capital letter must mark the beginning of every sentence; they are also used with proper nouns (names of people, places, days of the week and months)

E.g. *Once upon a time there was...London, Jenny, France, July, Friday*

### Exclamation marks (!)

Are used to indicate a voice raised or a strong emotion of shock, surprise, unhappiness etc.: e.g.: *"Help!" she cried.*

**REMEMBER:** Question and exclamation marks **already have their own full stop.**

### Colons (:)

Introduce a list or a set of details e.g. *you will need: scissors, paper and a pencil.*

Or it tells you to expect more detail e.g. *the ingredients are: eggs, butter, flour and milk.*

### Question marks (?)

Are used at the end of sentences which ask a question:

E.g. Where is your blazer?

### Speech marks (" ")

Use speech marks when writing down what people actually say.

Only the words actually spoken – the direct speech – go inside the speech marks.

Introduce speech using a comma.

\* Punctuation should go inside the speech marks.

There are three basic patterns to know:

Pattern 1: *He said, "Hello."*

Pattern 2: *"That is my book," he said.*

Pattern 3: *"Hello," he said, "my name is John."*

**REMEMBER: every time there is a new speaker you must start a new line.**

### Apostrophes (')

They can be used for two different reasons:

a) Apostrophes are used to indicate where two words have been made into one (**contracted**) and a letter or letters have been left out. The apostrophe goes where the missing letter/letters should be.

e.g. *I have = I've*      *you are = you're*

b) They can be used to show that one thing belongs to another. This is called **possession** or ownership.

The apostrophe is placed on the word that does the owning.

If there is one owner the apostrophe goes before the **s**:

e.g.: *The farmer's dog.* (One farmer owning a dog)

If there is more than one owner, the apostrophe goes after the **S**:

e.g.: *The farmers' dogs.* (Several farmers owning several dogs)

### Important exceptions:

**It's** means *it is* or *it has* and does not indicate possession. (use **its**)

**Its** shows possession (there is no apostrophe)

**Who's** means *who is* or *who has* and does not indicate possession. (use whose).

## Paragraphing

A **paragraph** is a **group of sentences** about **one particular subject**. The sentences in a paragraph should be linked in some way because they should all be about the same topic. The **main sentence in a paragraph is called the topic sentence**. **Every new idea needs a new paragraph**. Paragraphs help us because they break up the text into smaller, more readable parts.

You should begin a **new paragraph** when there is:

- *A change of time*
- *A change of speaker*
- *A change of place*
- *A change of topic*
- *A new point being made.*

The first word in a new paragraph should be about 1 cm away from the margin. **You must always use paragraphs in your work, whatever subject you are writing for.**

The fourth line below shows how to start a new paragraph:

**Dudley** had spent most of the summer in the kitchen, his piggy little eyes fixed on the screen and his five chins wobbling as he ate continually.

**Harry** sat down between Dudley and Uncle Vernon, a large, beefy man with a very little neck and a lot of moustache hair and refrained from wishing Harry a happy birthday. None of the Dursleys made any sign that they had noticed Harry enter the room, but Harry was far too used to this to care.



## Other useful terms to know.

**Vowels** are the letters: **A E I O U**. In English two vowel sounds one immediately after the other, such as in "a apple", is avoided by using **an** instead - "an apple".

**Consonants** are all the other letters of the alphabet, apart from AEIOU.

**Prefixes** are the letters added to the beginning of a word. E.g. **dis** added to **appear** makes **disappear**.

**Suffixes** are the letters added at the end of a word e.g. **ed** added to **walk** makes **walked**.

**Synonyms** are words which are very similar in meaning e.g. **asked, enquired, observed, or noticed**.

**Antonyms** are words which are opposite in meaning e.g. **love, hate or good, bad**.

**Imagery** creates vivid pictures or sensations in the mind by likening one thing to another; it includes metaphors and similes.

**Symbols** are objects or a set of objects that stands for some idea. E.g. a **dove representing peace**.

**Syllables** are the smallest unit of pronunciation produced by a single breath. They are like beats in a word e.g. in **biggest** there are two: big-gest.

## Useful memorising strategies for spelling words.

When you come across a new word ALWAYS use:

**LOOK** - **THINK** - **COVER** - **WRITE** - **CHECK** method to memorise it.

**LOOK** carefully at the new word. How can you break it into smaller bits? Do any of the smaller bits remind you of the patterns of letters from other words?

**THINK** about the parts of the words, which might cause problems - double letters for instance, or a vowel that isn't pronounced as you would expect.

**COVER** the word and close your eyes. Try to see it in your mind's eye.

**WRITE** the word down without looking back.

**CHECK** to see if you're right. If not, look carefully at where you went wrong and try again.

**Mnemonics** are useful for particularly tricky words, or for key spelling patterns:

- Ould – **Oh, you, lucky duck** (should, could, would)
- Ound – **Oh you naughty duck** (ground, found)
- Laugh – **Laugh At Ugly Goat Hair**
- Because – **Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants**
- Island – an island **is land** surrounded by water
- Necessary – 1 **collar** and 2 **sleeves** are **necessary**
- Piece – a **piece** of **pie**
- Parliament – **Liam** went to the Houses of **parliament**
- Separate – there is **a rat** in **separate**
- Secretary – a good **secretary** can keep a **secret**

- Terrible – **R**ibs feel **t**errible
- Business – going by **b**us is good **b**usiness
- Rhythm – **r**hythm gets your **2** hips moving
- Accommodation – **2** cats, **2** mice, **1** dog - **a**ccommodation
- Soldier – sol**d**iers sometimes **d**ie in battle
- Quiet – keep **q**uiet about my **d**iet
- Guitar – I only play **g**uitar when I’m drinking **f**ruit **j**uice

## Key spelling patterns

### The importance of syllables in spelling

All good spellers are skilful at breaking words up into syllables.

care-ful  
hos-pit-al  
u-ni-ver-si-ty

Breaking a word into syllables makes it easier to deal with one small bit at a time.

### Prefixes as an aid to spelling

A prefix is a **group of letters** placed at the **start of a root word** to **change its meaning**. Some complicated words are less difficult to spell if you are familiar with prefixes.

Here are some common examples in the following list:

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
anti-	against or opposite to	anticlockwise, antibiotic
auto-	self	autobiography, automat
dis-	not, or away	dissimilar, disconnect
in-	not	insane, inhuman
il-	not	illogical, illegal
im-	not	immature, improbable
ir-	not	irrelevant, irregular
inter-	between	international, intermarry
mis-	wrong	misunderstand, misspell

post-	after	postnatal, postscript
pre-	before	prenatal, prehistoric
pro-	for, or forward	propose, pro-British
re-	again, or back	rewrite, reconsider
sub-	under	submarine, substandard
super-	above	supervisor, superhuman
trans-	across	transport, transplant
un-	not, or in reverse	unfinished, unarmed

## Suffixes as an aid for spelling

A **suffix** is simply **an ending** that's **added** to a base word **to form a new word**.

A **key thing** to know **about a suffix** is **whether it starts with a consonant or a vowel**.

### Adding a suffix to "magic e" words

When you **add a consonant suffix** the **base word doesn't change**.

When you **add a vowel suffix, drop the silent e**. Remember to drop the e when adding a vowel suffix. (Note that y is regarded as a vowel suffix, so laze + y = lazy)

Base word	+consonant suffix	Base word	+vowel suffix
hope	hopeless	note	notable
state	statement	calculate	calculation
spite	spiteful	reserve	reservation
late	lately	late	latest

extrem e	extremely	expense	expensive
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## Adding suffixes to words ending -ce and -ge

There are exceptions to the above "magic e" rule – which is why it's probably better to call it a pattern rather than a rule.

Here's the main one:

Where the base word ends in -ce or -ge, then you keep the silent e before -able and -ous. So:

enforce	ce	+	able	=	enforce	ceable
notice		+	able	=	notice	able
service		+	able	=	service	able
courage	ge	+	ous	=	courage	ous
outrage		+	ous	=	outrage	ous

## When should you use doubling consonants when adding a suffix?

Luckily there's a very useful pattern to help us.

If the base word has:

one syllable

one short vowel

one consonant at the end

you double the final consonant when you add a vowel suffix

bed	+	ing	=	bed	d	ing	,	flat	+	est	=	flat	t	est
fun	+	y	=	fun	n	y		hot	+	er	=	hot	t	er

If the base word has:

one syllable

one short vowel

one consonant at the end  
you keep the base word the same when you add a consonant suffix

bag + ful = bagful, wet + ness = wetness

### Suffixes and Stressed Syllables

If the stress is on the first syllable the base word doesn't change:

<b>Profit</b> - profitable	<b>Enter</b> - entered	<b>Order</b> - ordering
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If the stress is on the last syllable, **double** the final consonant before adding a vowel suffix.

No change if a consonant suffix is added.

<b>Begin</b> - beginning	<b>Equip</b> - equipped	<b>Regret</b> - regretful	<b>Commit</b> - commitment
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### Adding a suffix to words ending y

There are two important patterns to learn:

\* If the word ends in a vowel +y, the base word doesn't change:

delay + ed = delayed  
employ + ment = employment

\* If the word ends in a consonant +y, when you add any suffix except -ing, then change the y to i:

reply + ed = replied  
busy + ness = business  
pity + ful = pitiful  
but reply + ing = replying

### Spelling words ending ic and ick

Same sound but two spellings. However there is a simple way to spot the difference:

The words with only one syllable end in -ick. Brick

The words having more than one syllable end in -ic. Picnic

There are only a few exceptions to this pattern and these usually happen where two words are joined together as in homesick and candlestick.

## Spelling words ending -er, -or, and -ar

There are lots of words in English which end with the -er sound. But when you listen to these words you can't be sure whether the sound is made by -er, -or or -ar.

There's no easy rule but there are a few helpful word patterns:

- There are more than ten times as many words ending with -er than -or and -ar together.  
So, if you guess -er then there's a good chance that you'll be right!
- Verbs ending in a silent e usually change to nouns by ending -er:  
dive/diver wade/wader write/writer avenge/avenger
- -er is also the most common way of ending a word for someone carrying out an action:

Action	Person carrying out the action
reporting	reporter
playing	player
fighting	fighter

- -or is used when the base word ends in -ate, -ct, -it :

calculate	calculator	create	creator
contract	contractor	reflect	reflector
visit	visitor	exhibit	exhibitor

- There is no especially useful pattern to recognise words that end in -ar except to say that many of them finish with -lar:  
regular popular similar pillar

But other than that it's just a matter of memorizing the -ar words as you come across them. Mispronouncing the ending so that it rhymes with the -ar- in market is a handy memory trick.

## Words ending ical, icle and ace

Adjectives all end with -ical, and the nouns end with -acle or -icle.

**Handy Tip:** Nearly all the words that end with this sound will be adjectives and will therefore end with -ical.

## Fun ways to learn spellings.

A variety of games should help to keep your son interested and motivated. The games below have been designed to use at home.

### 1) Word Search

Create your own word searches using your spelling words. Or use this link to get your computer to do it for you. <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp>

### 2) Air spelling:

Choose a spelling word. With your index finger write the word in the air slowly, say each letter. Your parent needs to remind you that you need to be able to 'see' the letters you have written in the air. When you have



finished writing the word underline it and say the word again. Now get you parents to ask you questions the about the word. For example they could ask 'What is the first letter?' 'What is the last letter?' 'How many letters are there?' etc.

### **3) Media Search:**

Using a newspaper or magazine you have 15 minutes to look for your spelling words. Circle them in different coloured crayon. Which of your spellings words was used the most times?

### **4) Shaving Cream Spelling:**

An easy way to clean those dirty tables is to finger paint on them with shaving cream. Squirt some on the table (with your parent's permission and supervision!) and then practice spelling your words by writing them with your finger in the shaving cream.

### **5) Salt Box Spelling:**

Ask your parents pour salt into a shallow box or tray (about 3cm deep) and then practise writing you spellings in it with your finger.

### **6) Scrabble Spelling:**

Find the letters you need to spell your words and then mix them up in the bag. Get your parents to time you unscrambling your letters. For extra maths practise you could find out the value of each of you words.

### **7) Pyramid Power:**

Sort your words into a list from easiest to hardest. Write the easiest word at the top of the page near the middle. Write the next easiest word twice underneath. Write the third word three times underneath again until you have built your pyramid.

### **8) Ransom Note:**

Cut the letters needed to for your words from a newspaper or magazine and glue them down to spell the words.

### **9) Pipe Cleaners Or Tooth Picks:**

These are just a couple of suggestions of things you could use to for your spelling words.

### **10) Tasty Words:**

Just like above but this time try and find tasty things to spell your words with, like raisins, when you spell them right you get to eat them!

**11) Design A Word:**

Pick one word and write it in bubble letters. Colour in each letter in a different pattern.

**12) Water wash:**

Use a paintbrush and water to write your words outside on concrete or pavements.

**13) ABC Order:**

Write your words out in alphabetical order. Then write them in reverse alphabetical order.

**14) Story Time:**

Write a short story using all your words. Don't forget to check your punctuation!

**15) Simple Sentence:**

Write a sentence for each of your words. Remember each sentence must start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

**16) Colourful Words:**

Use two different coloured pens to write your words, one to write the consonants and one to write the vowels. Do this a couple of times then write the whole word in one colour.

**17) Memory Game:**

Make pairs of word cards. Turn them all over and mix them up; flip over two cards, if they match you get to keep them, if not you have to turn them over again. Try and match all the pairs.

**17) Spelling Steps:**

Write your words as if they were steps, adding one letter each time. (It's much easier doing this on squared paper)

**18) Scrambled Words:**

Write your words then write them again with all the letters mixed up.

**19) Ambidextrous:**

Swap your pen into the hand that you don't normally write with. Now try writing out your spellings with that hand.

**20) Secret Agent:**

Write out the alphabet, and then give each letter a different number from 1 to 26. (a = 1, b = 2, c = 3 etc.) Now you can spell out your words in secret code.

### **21) Missing Letters:**

Ask your mum or dad to write out one of your words loads of times on piece of paper, but each time they have to miss out a letter or two; you have to fill in the missing letters. After you have checked them all, try it again with another word.

### **22) Listen Carefully:**

Ask your parents to spell out one of your words then you have to say what the word is they've spelt out.

### **23) Spell – a – doodle:**

Create a picture and use your spelling words to fill in the detail. Each word must be written three times. E.g. a picture of clouds would have the lines formed with spelling words. You can add to the challenge by giving specific picture topics.

### **Common homophones and confusions**

**A lot/allot**

**choose/chose**

**quiet/quite**

**Advise/advice**

**cloth/clothe**

**sites/sights**

**Affect/effect**

**conscience/conscious**

**source/sauce**

**Allowed/aloud**

**course/course**

**threw/through**

**Bought/brought**

**our/are**

**to/too/two**

**theirs/there/they're**

**practise/practice**

**Using: There, their and they're.**

**There:** Use **there** for a **place** or **position**. 'Look over **there!**' or 'There is the bus.'

**Their:** Use **their** as a **possessive word that shows ownership** of something. 'There were two boys and **their uniforms** looked very smart.'

**They're:** Is a **contraction** of the **two words they are.**

**Using: To, too and two.**

**To:** preposition 'I went **to** school'

**Too:** **also, or in excess.** 'There were **too many** sweets.' 'I ran for the bus and Dave **ran too.**'

**Two:** the number 2. There are **two** choices.

**Have a go! Choose the correct response.**

**They're, Their or There.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ taking a Shakespeare exam soon.
2. They will need to use \_\_\_\_\_ brains!
3. \_\_\_\_\_ are lots of characters that they need to remember.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ spellings are being tested too!
5. \_\_\_\_\_ are three texts to read in the reading paper.
6. Students need to use \_\_\_\_\_ time wisely.
7. The marks available for each question are right \_\_\_\_\_ on the page.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ going to try hard to get lots of questions right!
9. Make sure you know where \_\_\_\_\_ exam will take place.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ you all are. Have you practised lots of speed-reading?
11. It's important that \_\_\_\_\_ all ready for the tests.
12. Do you know \_\_\_\_\_ the important scenes that can be found?

**Spelling list for KS3 English (taken from the National Literacy Strategy)**

accommodation	evidence	possession
actually	explanation	potential
alcohol	February	preparation
although	fierce	prioritise
analyse/analysis	forty	process
argument	fulfil	proportion
assessment	furthermore	proposition
atmosphere	guard	questionnaire
audible	happened	queue

audience	health	reaction
autumn	height	receive
beautiful	imaginary	reference
beginning	improvise	relief
believe	industrial	remember
beneath	interesting	research
buried	interrupt	resources
business	issue	safety
caught	jealous	Saturday
chocolate	knowledge	secondary
climb	listening	separate
column	lonely	sequence
concentration	lovely	shoulder
conclusion	marriage	sincerely
conscience	material	skilful
conscious	meanwhile	soldier
consequence	miscellaneous	stomach
continuous	mischief	straight
creation	modern	strategy
daughter	moreover	strength
decide/decision	murmur	success
definite	necessary	surely
design	nervous	surprise
development	original	survey
diamond	outrageous	technique
diary	parallel	technology
disappear	participation	texture
disappoint	pattern	tomorrow
embarrass	peaceful	unfortunately
energy	people	Wednesday
engagement	performance	weight
enquire	permanent	weird
environment	persuade/persuasion	women
evaluation	physical	

