



Ashgate Homework

Key Stage 2 Guidance

Our approach to homework

This year at Ashgate we are refocusing our homework expectations on three key areas which underpin your child's learning: reading, spelling, times tables (and their application). This booklet explains what your child needs to do and gives lots of handy tips for how you can help them.

At Ashgate (in line with statutory guidance), we recommend the amount of homework a child in Key Stage 2 should complete each week is as follows:

Years 3 and 4 – 1.5 hours per week (90 minutes)

Years 5 and 6 – 2.5 hours per week (150 minutes)

How much time should my child spend on each of the three areas?

As a guide, we recommend that this is how that time should be split up each week:

	Reading	Spelling	Times tables
For most children this means:	Reading a book from the Accelerated Reader system aloud to an adult and discussing what has been read	Practising the weekly list of spellings distributed each Monday and tested on Friday	Practising times tables, division facts and other related skills
3 and 4	4 x 10 minutes*	4 x 5 minutes	3 x 10 minutes
5 and 6	4 x 20 minutes*	3 x 10 minutes	4 x 10 minutes
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*Reading for 20 minutes every single day is strongly recommended.

Of course, we recognise that every child is different and will have different strengths and areas for development. Some children may need to focus on one area more than another; if this applies to your child, their teacher will let you know.

Teachers may ask a child to complete an additional or different task to normal if they regard it as necessary to aid the child's learning.

At certain times of the year, such as before holidays or when preparing for SATs, teachers may see fit to distribute homework tasks of a different nature.

This booklet explains what we want our pupils to achieve in each area and provides guidance as to how you can help your child.

Your support with homework is invaluable and really does make a difference.

Reading

Our wish is for Ashgate children to love reading. It is the key to success in school and beyond and creates imaginative, interested and interesting young people. As adults, we know that being able to decode the words on a page is not the same as being able to read. Enjoyment comes from engagement in the text. However, engagement can only be achieved when a child understands what they are reading. In Key Stage 2, decoding is just one of a broader range of skills required for becoming a good reader.

At school, we teach children through the Super 6:



Monitor understanding of the meaning of the text



Make connections with other knowledge from this book, other books and life in general



Constantly ask and answer questions in your head as you read



Make inferences about the text by visualising what is happening



Make inferences about the text to help you make predictions



Summarise only the most important ideas from the text

How you can help your child improve their reading

It is by talking about a text that a child learns the trickier skills, so below are examples of questions which you can use when reading with your child. They are broken down into the eight areas defined in the National Curriculum:

2a	Give / explain the meaning of words in context	What does this word/phrase tell you about the character/setting/mood? In the story, X is mentioned a lot – why? What words has the author used to make you/the character feel happy/sad/frightened/lonely/bitter...? What word could the author have used instead of X?
2b	Retrieve information / identify key details	Where/when did the story take place? Who is telling the story? Who are the characters in the book and what do you know about them? What did he/she/it look like? How did he/she behave and how do you know? What do you think is happening at this point in the book? Which part of the story do you like best and why?
2c	Summarise the main ideas from more than one paragraph	What is the main idea in this paragraph? Can you sum up what happened on this page/in this chapter? Which is the most important point in these paragraphs and how do you know?
2d	Make inferences from the text / explain and justify them with evidence from the text	What makes you think that? Which words give you that impression? How do you feel about X? Can you explain why X? Why do you think the author chose to write X?

2e	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied	What do you think will happen next? Why do you think the author chose this setting and will it change how the story develops? Can you think of any other stories with a similar theme or issue? Are there any other similarities between this book and another you have read? How is character X like someone you know? Do you think they will react in the same way?
2f	Identify and explain how information / narrative content is related and how it contributes to the meaning as a whole	Can you explain why the character did that? Why is a character/setting/event important? What are the clues that a character is liked/disliked/envied/feared/respected...? Can you explain how the character's feelings change during the story? What is similar/different about the two characters? Is there a moral or message to the story? Who do you think the information is for/the story is written for and how do you know? Why do you think the author chose to use a question/bullet point/subheading here?
2g	Identify and explain how meaning is enhanced through the choice of words and phrases	What does the word X tell you about Y? How does the write let you know that X? The writer uses X words/phrases to describe Y – how does this make you feel? Which words do you like best and why? What effect do the similes/metaphors/personification/exaggeration have on the reader?
2h	Make comparisons within the text	What is the difference between how X character and Y character react to an event? Does this remind you of anything earlier on in the book? What do you think about the way the information is organised on page X and page Y? Which is better and why?

Also remember that reading opportunities are everywhere: recipes, websites, information leaflets, magazines and labels all help children learn the importance of understanding what they read.



**The more that you read
the more things you will know.
The more that you learn
the more places you'll go.
– Dr. Seuss**

Spelling

The spelling expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 are very demanding. It is therefore essential that we help children stay on track with spelling requirements throughout the Key Stage.

Once children have completed phonics teaching – usually in Key Stage 1 – there are two strands to the learning of spellings.

The first is learning common spelling patterns and rules; often these are based on vowel sounds, consonant clusters, prefixes and suffixes. These are sets of similar words which we teach in spelling lessons at school.

The second strand is learning to spell a list of 200 statutory words (100 in years 3 and 4, 100 in years 5 and 6) which can be found on the central pages of your child's reading record. These words are very difficult and tend not to follow the rules learnt in other spelling lessons.

Learning what words mean is important too. This will not only increase your child's vocabulary but could also help them embed it into their memory in the long-term.

How you can help your child learn their spellings

Recite aloud	Recite aloud backwards	Look, cover, write, check
Write the words creatively using bubble letters or coloured pens	Create mnemonics, e.g. silly ants in dresses = said	Look, say the word, say the letters, write it down, check it
Jigsaw – write the words on paper, cut them up and reassemble	Race a friend or sibling to write the words correctly fastest or race against the clock.	Remember 2, 3 or more words at the same time and write them down
Alphabetise the word list	Pyramids – c ca cak cake	Chalk the words onto the ground outside
Spell the word wrongly – written or aloud – and get the child to spot the mistake	Draw a picture to go with each word	Type the words out (turn off autocorrect!) on a phone, tablet or computer
Say alternate letters of the spelling with the child	Make up an action for each letter of the alphabet	Assemble the word from magnetic letters or letter cards
Discuss the word, looking at its parts	Find words that rhyme	Make up a silly sentence involving the words then write it out, correctly spelt
Make a crossword or wordsearch involving all the words (there are online puzzle-maker websites)	Use a dictionary to look up the meaning of the word	Video or audio record the child spelling the words
www.topmarks.co.uk	www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/zv48q6f	www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/interactive/literacy

Times tables

The National Curriculum expectations for the learning of times tables are as follows:

Year 1	Count in multiples of 2, 5 and 10.
Year 2	Recall and use multiplication and division facts for the 2, 5 and 10 times tables.
Year 3	Recall and use the multiplication and division facts for the 3, 4 and 8 times tables.
Year 4	Recall and use the multiplication and division facts for all times tables up to 12 x 12.
Year 5	Revision of all times tables and division facts up to 12 x 12.
Year 6	

As you may be aware, year 4 pupils now sit a Government-set times tables test in spring.

There are four levels in our times tables award system. Children work through each level for each times table. As part of their weekly homework, they practise the skill they have agreed with the teacher. Then, when they are ready to be tested, the child lets their teacher know. They will be tested by an adult or peer and, if successful, the award will be ticked off and a new target agreed.

Award	Skills	Examples
Bronze	Recite the times table in order up to its 12 multiple.	$1 \times 3 = 3$, $2 \times 3 = 6$...
Silver	Recall answers with speed when tested randomly and when the question is posed reversed.	$6 \times 3 = 18$, $9 \times 3 = 27$... $3 \times 4 = 12$, $3 \times 8 = 24$...
Gold	Recall related division facts when tested randomly.	$15 \div 3 = 5$, $24 \div 3 = 8$...
Platinum	Apply tables and division facts more widely.	$30 \times 40 = 1200$... $0.8 \times 0.3 = 0.24$... $330 \div 3 = 110$...

How you can help your child improve their times tables knowledge

Recite in order	Fill in the blanks	You Tube videos of times tables songs – try Mr DeMaio
DONKEY – take turns to answer questions. Every time someone gets one wrong they are given a letter. The loser is the person who becomes a donkey first.	Two players take turns to list between one and three multiples of a number. The loser is the person who says the 12 th multiple. E.g. for the 3x table, the loser is the person who says 36.	Draw two cards from a deck and multiply the two numbers. Turn it into a game with the fastest player keeping both cards. The winner is the player with the most cards at the end.
Against the clock – see how many questions can be answered in a minute	Match the question to the answer – could be played as a picture pairs game	Test an adult. Adult intentionally gets some wrong which the child has to spot and correct
Egg box shaker – get a 12 egg box, write numbers 1-12 inside. Shake 2 marbles around, open it and multiply the numbers they land on.	Make up number stories. E.g. there are 6 cats, each with 4 legs – how many legs altogether? Works for division too.	Bingo – players choose 6 answers and tick them off when the matching question is called out or drawn from a bag
Get creative using chalk, paint or felt tips to write out the number facts	Use counters/lego/pasta shapes to make ‘groups’ of a multiple or ‘share’ out a total.	Flash cards – child could make them too
www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/maths/timestable/index.html	www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button	www.timestables.co.uk

