



Year 5

A guide for parents and carers

September 2026

Year 5 is an important step towards the end of primary school. Children read more widely and deeply, write with greater control and style, and work with large numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages. This guide explains what your child will learn and how you can help at home.

Reading every day, talking about books and news, and using maths in real life make the biggest difference this year.

The year ahead

Including secondary school

Reading

Fluency and good questions

Spelling

Year 5–6 patterns and word list

Writing and grammar

Relative clauses, parenthesis, cohesion

Maths

Fractions, decimals, percentages

Useful websites

Including online safety

The year ahead

In Year 5, children study all the national curriculum subjects, with a strong daily focus on reading, writing and maths. Much of the English curriculum is set out for Years 5 and 6 together, so this year lays the foundations for Year 6.

Children learn English, maths, science, history, geography, design and technology, art and design, music, physical education, computing and a modern foreign language, alongside relationships and health education and religious education.

Looking ahead

Secondary school: applications for a secondary school place are made in the autumn of Year 6, with a national closing date of 31 October. Many schools hold open events during the summer and autumn, so Year 5 is a good time to start looking. You apply through your local council.

Year 6 national tests: next year your child will take the Key Stage 2 national tests in reading, grammar, punctuation and spelling, and maths, currently timetabled for 8 to 11 May 2028. Secure learning in Year 5 is the best preparation.

How you can help most

- **Keep reading together.** Even confident readers benefit from being read to and talking about books, including more challenging texts than they would choose alone.
- **Talk about ideas and the news.** Discussion builds the vocabulary and background knowledge that make reading easier.
- **Keep times tables sharp.** Your child should now know all their tables to 12×12 ; quick recall makes fractions, decimals and percentages much easier.
- **Use maths in real life.** Discounts, recipes, timetables and holiday money are all great practice.
- **Support growing independence.** Help your child organise homework and belongings, ready for the bigger steps ahead.

Reading

In Year 5, children read a wide range of books, including classics, modern fiction, poetry, plays and non-fiction, and learn to discuss and evaluate how writers create meaning and effects.

What Year 5 readers learn to do

Reading widely

- Read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books.
- Read myths, legends, traditional stories, modern fiction, classic fiction and books from other cultures and traditions.
- Recommend books to others, giving reasons.
- Learn a wider range of poetry by heart, and perform poems and plays with clear intonation, tone and volume.
- Use knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes to read and understand new words.

Understanding and evaluating

- Infer characters' feelings, thoughts and motives, justifying views with evidence.
- Predict from details stated and implied.
- Summarise the main ideas of more than one paragraph, identifying key details.
- Discuss how authors use language, including figurative language, and its effect on the reader.
- Tell the difference between fact and opinion.
- Find, record and present information from non-fiction.
- Take part in discussions and debates, building on others' ideas and challenging views politely.

Building reading fluency

Fluent reading is still important in Year 5, especially with more complex texts. Echo reading and paired reading remain very effective.

Echo reading

1. Choose a challenging passage, such as a poem, a speech from a play or a gripping chapter opening.
2. Read a section aloud, showing how pauses, emphasis and tone bring out the meaning.
3. Your child reads it back, matching your phrasing and expression.
4. Talk about how the reading helped show what the writer meant.

Paired reading

1. Your child reads aloud for a minute or two.
2. You say what went well and suggest one improvement, such as "show the character's anger in your voice".
3. Your child re-reads, trying the improvement.
4. Discuss the passage together.

Other ways to help

- Offer books on lots of topics, by a wide range of authors who write in different styles.
- When your child meets an unfamiliar word, look it up together, then see who can use it most in conversation that week.
- Encourage silent reading, but talk about what your child has read to check their understanding.
- Read harder texts together. You don't need to know all the answers; learn together.

Good questions to ask

- Would you recommend this book? Why, or why not?
- Are there any themes running through this story?
- How is this book different from the last one you read?
- Can you summarise what you've just read?
- Were there any words you didn't know? How could we find out?
- Why do you think the author used subheadings here?
- How do you think... is feeling? How do you know?
- Why do you think... acted that way?
- How might... say this line? What is the feeling here?
- Is that a fact or an opinion? How can you tell?
- I think... Do you agree? What evidence supports your view?
- Can you recite any poetry? Shall we learn some together?

Looking for book ideas? Our separate Year 5 Reading List has books linked to our topics, plus adventure stories, modern classics and more books to try.

Spelling

In Years 5 and 6, children learn more complex spelling patterns, including how a word's meaning and origin can help with its spelling, and 100 words that are often misspelt.

Year 5 and 6 spelling patterns

Pattern	What it means	Examples
-cious, -tious	Endings that sound like /shus/	vicious, precious, delicious, suspicious; ambitious, cautious, nutritious
-cial, -tial	Endings that sound like /shul/	official, special, artificial; partial, confidential, essential
-ant, -ance, -ancy	Related word endings	observant, observance; hesitant, hesitancy; tolerant, tolerance
-ent, -ence, -ency	Related word endings	innocent, innocence; decent, decency; confident, confidence
-able, -ably	Often added to complete root words	adorable, adorably; changeable, noticeable, dependable, comfortable, reasonable
-ible, -ibly	Often used when the root is not a complete word	possible, possibly; horrible, terrible, visible, incredible, sensible
Words ending in -fer	Double the r if the -fer is still stressed	referring, referred, preferring, transferring; but reference, preference
Hyphens	Joining a prefix ending in a vowel to a root starting with one	co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own
ei after c	i before e except after c (when the sound is /ee/)	deceive, receive, perceive, ceiling (exceptions: protein, seize)
ough	One of the trickiest spellings, with several sounds	ought, bought, rough, enough, cough, though, through, thorough, plough
Silent letters	Letters that are written but not heard	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight
Homophones and near-homophones	Words that sound alike but are spelt differently	advice/advise, practice/practise, affect/effect, past/passed, principal/principle, stationary/stationery, desert/dessert, who's/whose

The Year 5 and 6 word list

These are the 100 words children are expected to spell by the end of Year 6. We will focus on some of them this year and the rest in Year 6.

accommodate	accompany	according	achieve
aggressive	amateur	ancient	apparent

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

Check the Year 3 and 4 words too. Make sure your child can confidently spell the 100 words on the Year 3 and 4 list, such as *separate*, *February*, *occasionally*, *particular* and *surprise*, as these appear in almost everything they write.

Helping with spelling at home

- **Find the root.** Knowing that *sign* is in *signature* helps with the silent *g*; *muscle* links to *muscular*.
- **Make a memory hook.** Children remember *necessary* as “one collar, two sleeves”.
- **Look, say, cover, write, check.** Still one of the best routines for tricky words.

- **Use a dictionary and thesaurus.** Check spellings and meanings, and explore where words come from.

Writing and grammar

In Year 5, children write for a wide range of audiences and purposes, choosing vocabulary, grammar and punctuation deliberately to create effects and make meaning clear.

Handwriting

Children write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed, choosing whether or not to join letters, and choosing the right writing tool for the task.

Plan, draft, evaluate, edit

- 1. Plan.** Identify the audience and purpose, choose the right form, and use similar writing as a model. Draw on reading and research.
- 2. Draft.** Choose grammar and vocabulary carefully; describe settings, characters and atmosphere, and use dialogue to show character and move the action on. In non-fiction, use headings, bullet points and other devices.
- 3. Evaluate and edit.** Improve vocabulary, grammar and punctuation; keep tenses consistent; make sure subjects and verbs agree; and choose the right level of formality.
- 4. Proofread and perform.** Check spelling and punctuation, then read the writing aloud with expression.

Grammar and punctuation in Year 5

This is what the national curriculum sets out for Year 5. Children keep using everything they learnt in Years 3 and 4, including fronted adverbials, speech punctuation and apostrophes.

Area	What your child learns	Example
Words	Turning nouns or adjectives into verbs with -ate, -ise, -ify	motive → motivate; real → realise; intense → intensify
Words	Verb prefixes dis-, de-, mis-, over-, re-	disagree, deactivate, misunderstand, overflow, rebuild
Sentences	Relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that (or no pronoun)	Tom, who had arrived late, asked to borrow a pen.
Sentences	Showing how likely something is with adverbs (perhaps, surely) or modal verbs (might, should, will, must)	Perhaps it will rain. They must be home before dark.
Texts	Building cohesion within a paragraph	then, after that, this, firstly
Texts	Linking paragraphs with adverbials of time, place and number, or tense choices	Later, ... Nearby, ... Secondly, ... He had seen her before.
Punctuation	Brackets, dashes or commas for parenthesis	I looked up (squinting because of the sun) as the birds flew by.
Punctuation	Commas to make meaning clear and avoid ambiguity	After leaving my aunt, Jo went home.

Words your child will learn to use: modal verb, relative pronoun, relative clause, parenthesis, bracket, dash, cohesion, ambiguity.

Helping with writing at home

- Encourage writing with a real audience: a letter to a newspaper or councillor, a review, a blog for the family, a speech for a special occasion.
- Play “add the extra”: take a sentence and add information in brackets, dashes or commas.
- Talk about how formal or informal writing needs to be for different readers.
- Praise precise word choices, and ask “Is there an even better word?”

Maths

In Year 5, children work with numbers up to 1,000,000, use formal written methods for all four operations, and develop a deep understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages.

Our year at a glance

Autumn 1

- Place value
- Addition and subtraction

Autumn 2

- Statistics
- Multiplication and division
- Perimeter and area

Spring 1

- Multiplication and division
- Fractions

Spring 2

- Fractions
- Decimals and percentages

Summer 1

- Decimals
- Properties of shape
- Position and direction

Summer 2

- Converting units
- Volume

Number facts to know

By Year 5, children should know all their times tables to 12×12 . The focus now is using them fluently: for example, knowing $7 \times 8 = 56$ means they also know $0.7 \times 8 = 5.6$ and $70 \times 80 = 5,600$. This year they also learn square numbers, cube numbers and prime numbers.

Square numbers

- $1^2 = 1$
- $2^2 = 4$
- $3^2 = 9$
- $4^2 = 16$
- $5^2 = 25$
- $6^2 = 36$
- $7^2 = 49$
- $8^2 = 64$
- $9^2 = 81$
- $10^2 = 100$
- $11^2 = 121$
- $12^2 = 144$

Cube numbers

- $1^3 = 1$
- $2^3 = 8$
- $3^3 = 27$
- $4^3 = 64$
- $5^3 = 125$

Prime numbers to 19

- 2, 3, 5, 7
- 11, 13, 17, 19
- A prime number has exactly two factors: 1 and itself

By the end of Year 5, your child should be able to...

Number and place value

- Read, write, order and compare numbers to at least 1,000,000.
- Count forwards and backwards in powers of 10, and use negative numbers in context.
- Round any number up to 1,000,000 to the nearest 10, 100, 1,000, 10,000 or 100,000.
- Read Roman numerals to 1,000 (M), including years.

Calculation

- Add and subtract numbers with more than 4 digits using column methods, and mentally with larger numbers.
- Find factors and multiples, and know prime numbers up to 19.
- Multiply numbers up to 4 digits by a one- or two-digit number, including long multiplication.
- Divide numbers up to 4 digits by a one-digit number using short division, and interpret remainders.
- Multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1,000.
- Recognise and use square numbers (2) and cube numbers (3).

Fractions, decimals and percentages

- Compare, order and find equivalent fractions, and convert between mixed numbers and improper fractions.
- Add and subtract fractions with related denominators, and multiply fractions by whole numbers.
- Read, write and order decimals with up to three decimal places, and round them.
- Understand per cent as “parts per hundred”, and know the equivalents of $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{2}{5}$ and $\frac{4}{5}$.

Measurement

- Convert between metric units, and know approximate equivalents for inches, pounds and pints.
- Find the perimeter of composite rectilinear shapes, and the area of rectangles in cm^2 and m^2 .
- Estimate volume and capacity.
- Solve problems involving time, and money using decimals.

Geometry

- Identify 3-D shapes from 2-D drawings.
- Estimate, draw and measure angles in degrees, including acute, obtuse and reflex angles.
- Know angles on a straight line total 180° and angles at a point total 360° .
- Distinguish between regular and irregular polygons.
- Describe reflections and translations.

Statistics

- Solve problems using line graphs, and read and interpret tables, including timetables.

Maths at home

Shape and angle walk

On a walk around South Hill Park or your neighbourhood, spot acute, obtuse, right and reflex angles, lines of symmetry, and parallel and perpendicular lines.

Sale shopping

What is the sale price with 10% off? With 25% off? Which is the better deal?

Holiday money

Use online exchange rates to convert pounds into another currency, and back again.

Fantasy shopping spree

Give your child a £20 budget on an online shop. What would they buy, and how much change would they have?

Kitchen maths

Read scales accurately, convert between grams and kilograms, millilitres and litres, and compare metric and imperial measures in older recipes.

Everyday problems

"It's 170 miles to London and we've done 53: how far is left?" "40 books, 9 in each box: how many boxes do we need?" Board games and puzzle books are great too.

Useful websites

A small number of free, reliable sites and the apps we provide. Screen time is best kept short and purposeful, and nothing replaces reading and talking together.

PiXL Times Tables and PiXL Unlock apps – times tables fluency and vocabulary building. Your child has a school username and password that works for both apps; download them from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Topmarks – maths games sorted by age and topic.
[topmarks.co.uk](https://www.topmarks.co.uk)

White Rose Education – short home maths practice, including the free 1-Minute Maths app.
[whiteroseeducation.com](https://www.whiteroseeducation.com)

BookTrust – book recommendations by age and interest.
[booktrust.org.uk](https://www.booktrust.org.uk)

GOV.UK: Apply for a secondary school place – how applications work and key deadlines.
[gov.uk/apply-for-secondary-school-place](https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-secondary-school-place)

GOV.UK: The national curriculum – what children learn at each key stage, and the Year 6 national tests.
[gov.uk/national-curriculum](https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum)

Staying safe online

Many children start to want their own phone or social media in Year 5 and 6. Most social media and messaging apps, including WhatsApp in the UK, have a minimum age of 13. Keep devices in shared spaces, use parental controls, and talk regularly about what your child does online and what to do if something worries them.

UK Safer Internet Centre – advice for parents and carers.
[saferinternet.org.uk](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

Internet Matters – guides to parental controls, apps and first phones, including WhatsApp.
[internetmatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org)

Learn, believe, achieve together

Thank you for your support this year. If you have any questions about your child's learning, please speak to their class teacher.

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