



Dreghorn Primary School
Literacy Parental Prompts



ABC

We hope you have found these Literacy Parental Prompts useful.
Should you feel that there is anything that we could add to make
these more helpful please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mrs Emma Reeves
Head Teacher
Dreghorn Primary School

Dreghorn Primary School Parental Prompts



A Parents' Guide to Literacy

ABC



Promoting the Positive

In order for the children to be successful learners in literacy it is vital that we promote reading, writing and spelling in a positive way to encourage a life-long love of language. Praise and encouragement are important. We want children to have fun with language. It is important that children realise that it is OK to make mistakes and we can work together to improve.

We hope that in this Literacy Parental Prompt booklet you find some information that you may find useful when speaking to and working with your child.

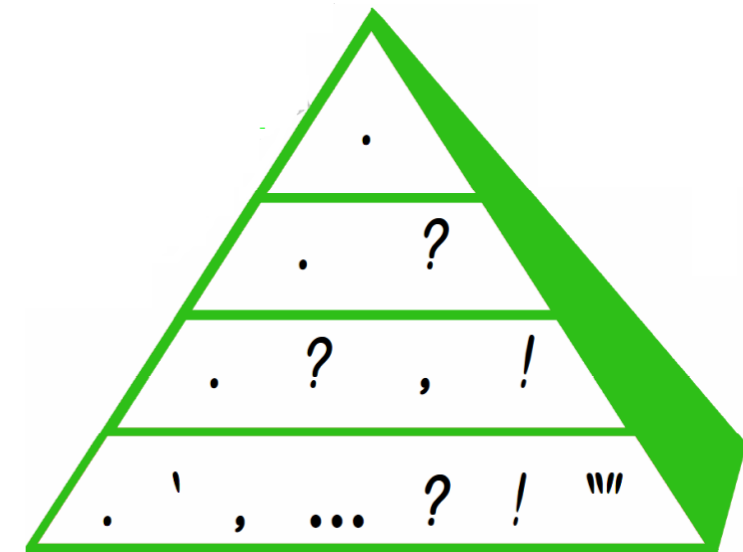
Inside you will find guides on:

- Phonics
- Early Reading
- Shared Reading
- How to support your child at home with reading
- Questions to help you and your child explore reading
- Spelling Ideas and Activities
- Early Writing and Mark making
- Writing - Different Genres
- What is V.C.O. P



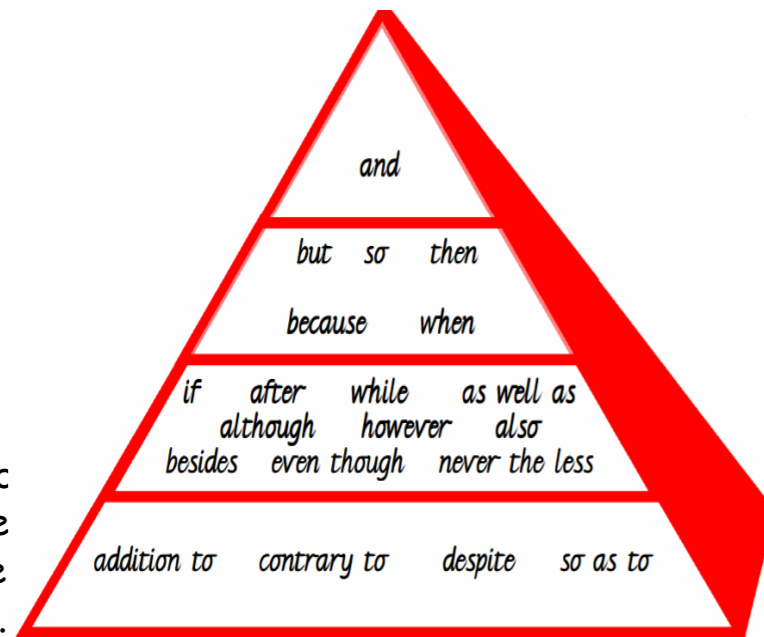
Punctuation

Your child is introduced to different forms of punctuation and taught how to use these in their writing. They are encouraged to spot these in stories which they read too, for example as they reach a full stop it is time for to take a breath! The forms of punctuation which we use are shown on the punctuation side of the V.C.O.P pyramid below. Within the early stages of writing we only look at the top section of the pyramid and, as with the other areas of V.C.O.P, move down the pyramid as the skills of the writer progresses.



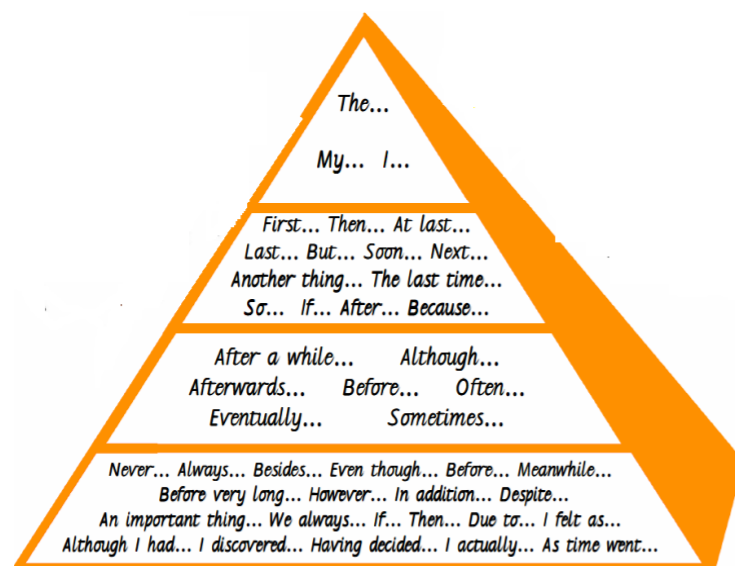
Connectives

Connectives are words which make sentences longer by joining two short pieces of information together. Children are initially encouraged to use the connectives from the top of the connectives side of the V.C.O.P pyramid below and again progress down the pyramid once they are ready to use more complex vocabulary.



Openers

Openers are words or phrases of a sentence then to begin the of opening words. side of the V.C.O.P pyramid. Primary 1 pupils are introduced to the words at the top of this pyramid with them progressing down the pyramid as they grow in confidence and ability in their writing.



We use the Jolly Phonics scheme to teach phonics in Dreghorn Primary School. Learners are introduced to the characters Bee, Inky and Snake who help them to learn letters and sounds. Learners are taught each letter and sound using rhymes, stories, songs and practical activities in the classroom.

Letter Order

Letters of the alphabet are taught in an order that helps learners to build words. This order is as follows:

s,a,t,i,p,n
c,k,e,h,r,m,d
g,o,u,l,f,b
j,z,w,x,y,qu(q needs u to make it's sound qu),v



This means that even from the beginning they can read and spell short words such as, sat, tin, pat, sit etc.

Letter Sounds

Learners learn the sound of the letter, not it's name. For example a as in ant, not a as in aim. Similarly, the letter n should be nn (as in net), not en. This will help in blending. The names of each letter can follow later.

Blending

Blending is the process of saying each individual letter of a word and running them together to make the word. For example d-o-g spells dog. To begin with, learners blend short, 3 letter words. They use CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words. Some helpful words to use when a learner is at the early stages of blending words



- Sound out the word for them to see if they can hear it, give the answer if necessary.
- Say the sounds quickly to make it easier to hear the word.
- Say the first sound slightly louder.

Once learners become more confident with blending sounds, they can begin to match CVC words to pictures, listen to a CVC word and write it down and read CVC words in stories. A CVC word is a three letter word made up of three simple sounds e.g. cat, dog, pin, top

Diagraphs

Diagraphs are sounds with two letters e.g. ee and ai. These sounds are introduced once all the letters of the alphabet have been learned. When blending words which include these sounds, learners should sound out the diagraph.

You will find it helpful to be able to distinguish between a blend (such as st) and a digraph (such as sh). In a blend the two sounds, s and t can each be heard. In a digraph this is not so. Compare mishap (where both the s and h are sounded) and midship (which has the quite separate sh sound).

Tricky Words

Some words in English have an irregular spelling and cannot be read by blending, such as said, was and one. Unfortunately, many of these are common words and are used regularly with writing and reading. The irregular parts have to be remembered. These are called the 'tricky words'.

Identifying Sounds in Words

The easiest way to know how to spell a word is to listen for the sounds in that word. Even with the tricky words an understanding of the letter sounds can help. Start by having your child listen for the first sound in a word. Games like I-Spy are ideal for this. Next try listening for the end sounds, as the middle sound of a word is the hardest to hear.



V.C.O.P

Once your child becomes a more confident writer they will be introduced to the writing process using the V.C.O.P model. V.C.O.P are the four core targets we use to teach writing. These letters stand for:

Vocabulary

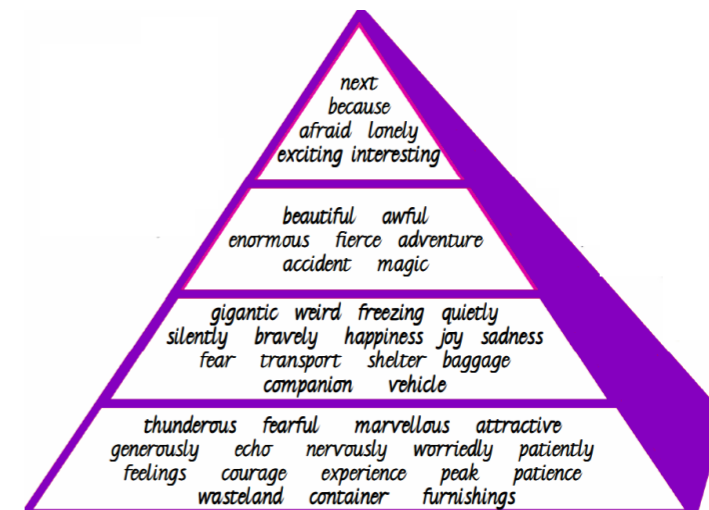
Connectives

Openers

Punctuation

Vocabulary

We promote the use of 'wow' words in children's writing. 'Wow' words are words which are ambitious for children to use and help to make the child's writing more exciting to read. Examples of this type of vocabulary are shown on the V.C.O.P pyramid below. Primary 1 pupils would only be expected to use vocabulary from the top of the pyramid. As the children progress in their writing they move down within the pyramid, exploring more complex language and vocabulary.



Children often write stories when writing imaginatively. We try to get them to be creative during these lessons.

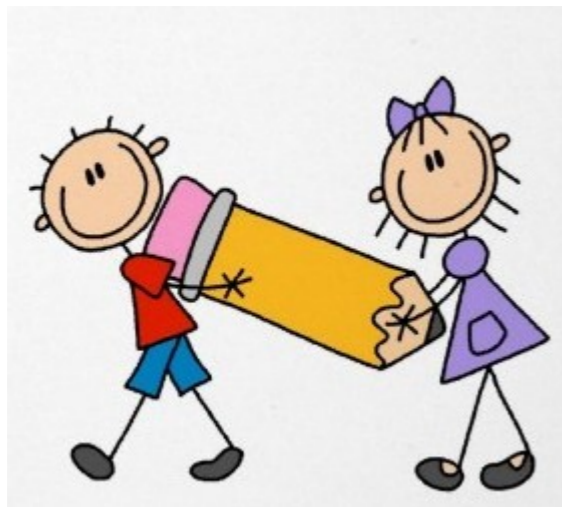
Functional

Functional writing is writing that is meant to fulfil a real life purpose. For example, writing a letter, an invitation, a greetings card or a shopping list. These writing activities should resemble those done in real life for practical purposes.

Personal

Personal writing is writing which tells a true story of something that happened to the writer. Examples of this are diary entries and reports.

No matter what type of writing children are doing it is important that they are confident in 'having a go'. We try to encourage them to add interest for their audience, or reader, and to always remember that there writing must be sequenced correctly with a clear beginning, middle and ending.



Even before children learn to read themselves, they can enjoy books and become aware of many other texts on signs, notices, phones and other screens. Reading is important for finding the information we need in our daily lives, and as a tool for learning.

Make looking at books, magazines, comics or newspapers part of your daily routine, for example reading a newspaper at home or the notice board in the doctor's surgery. This will help your child to understand what different texts can be used for.

Read inside and outside. Have fun reading shop signs, labels on items in the supermarket, the menu in the restaurant and mail that comes through the door. Your child will start to recognise words and letters that they see regularly.

Encourage your child to explore the sounds different letters make as you tidy up together by saying for example 'Let's put away something beginning with d'. This will help your child to recognise sounds and match them to the object. Remember to say the initial letter sound and not the letter name.





Dreghorn Primary School
Literacy Parental Prompt
Shared Reading



Shared reading increases your child's confidence in himself/herself and provides the support he/she needs, at the early stages of learning to read. It gives your child a positive role model for reading and also is an enjoyable bonding experience.

By reading stories you:

- Teach your child new words
- Let them hear the way sentences are put together in books
- Help them to understand that words have meaning
- Encourage/sustain your child's interest in books/reading



Shared Reading is a way to help improve your child's reading skills. Here are some simple steps in how to ensure it is a positive experience for you both:

1. Choose a quiet time and place.
2. Sit side by side.
3. Talk about the cover or story title.
4. Read the first page to your child.
5. Encourage your child to continue reading the simple words.
6. Look at the pictures and talk about the characters where they are, what they are doing now, how they are feeling.
7. Encourage your child to guess what might happen next in the story, before turning the page.
8. Ask your child to say if they liked/disliked particular parts of the story and why.



Dreghorn Primary School
Literacy Parental Prompt
Writing - Different Genres



When we write, we have aspects.

to consider a number of

- We need to know what the purpose of our writing is and for whom we are writing.
- We need to think about the content and what form our writing will take, for example, is it a shopping list, a report, a letter to a friend, an e-mail?
- We then need to think about the structure appropriate to the purpose and form of our writing - the use of sentences, paragraphs and punctuation.
- We then select the vocabulary that will best convey our meaning.
- Finally, we think about how to spell the words we write.

Children can find writing a real challenge; they need encouragement, support and praise for their efforts. You can best support them by encouraging them to write on every possible occasion, praising their efforts and, more importantly, by letting them see you writing whenever possible.

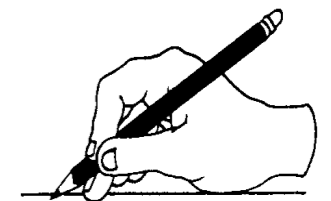
Genres of Writing

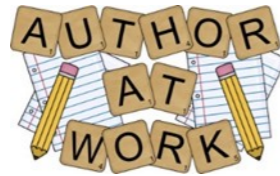
During writing lessons we teach the skills needed across three different areas, which we call genres. These are:

- Imaginative
- Functional
- Personal

Imaginative

This type of writing is writing which expresses ideas or thoughts in an imaginative way. It can also be known as 'the art of making things up.'





The marks and drawings
expressions of their thoughts
support, your child will continue to build on these early stages to become an enthusiastic writer.

children make act as ex-
and ideas. With your sup-

Encourage your child to write in everyday situations. This will help your child to understand the purpose of writing. Involve your child as you write shopping lists, notes, birthday cards or appointments on the calendar.

Carry pens and paper in your bag so that your child can have fun using them in different situations, such as at the bank or post office.

There are different ways we can write to our friends and family. If you are writing emails or text messages talk about what you are doing and involve your child.

Ensure there are plenty of writing materials around the house for your child to experiment with and enjoy, such as pens, pencils, crayons and paper. Old diaries, calendars and notebooks make useful paper for writing on.

Letter formation

Learner must hold their pencil in the correct way. The pencil should be held in the 'tripod' grip between the thumb and first two fingers. If a child's hold starts incorrectly, it is very difficult to correct later on.

- A child needs to form each letter the correct way. The letter c is introduced in the early stages as this forms the basic shape of some other letters, such as d.
- Particular problems to look for are: the o (the pencil stroke must be anticlockwise, not clockwise), d (the pencil starts in the middle, not the top), and there must be an initial down stroke on letters such as m and n.
- A good guide is to remember that no letter starts on the baseline.



Reading together not only helps your child be is also fun and relaxing. There are many things you can do at home to support your child when reading.

Try to encourage your child to:

- Show an interest in stories, books and pictures
- Recognise familiar signs, logos and labels
- Understand that the print means something e.g. it tells the reader something
- Know the difference between a number and a letter
- Recognise and name letters, words, sounds and numbers
- Choose stories, poems and non-fiction texts to listen to/watch/read
- Say what they like/dislike about the text
- Know that print runs from left to right and the top to the bottom of page.



Try to make reading fun by:

- Enjoying songs, poems and rhymes
- Repeating familiar stories
- Generating words beginning with same sound
- Saying and ordering the alphabet

Regularly try to:

- Use blending to read and spell
- Read All Aboard stage words and tricky words
- Use pictures to understand words
- Find words inside words
- Read aloud known texts and new texts using increasing fluency and expression. This should include using punctuation cues e.g. stopping at a stop
- Retell the story/events
- Sequence the story
- Talk about the characters



full

- Talk about the things that happened in the story and if they agreed/disagreed
- Make simple predictions which will show an understanding of the story, eg 'What do you think is going to happen next?'
- Share their feelings about the events in the story or the characters in the story
- Answer questions about the story
- Show an understanding of the characters, setting and event e.g. draw a picture of the scary part, act out ...,
- Draw/write about the story/text
- Begin to self-evaluate their reading and find ways to improve.

It is also helpful if your child understands the vocabulary of books:

- Title - name of the book
- Author - the person who wrote the book
- Illustrator - the person who drew the pictures
- Contents - the section at the front of the book that can direct you to a page of interest
- Index - the section at the back of the book that tells you which page to look at for a particular word
- Blurb - the summary of information on back of book

There are many websites that are helpful when reading at home with your child. Here are just a couple of examples:

BBC Cbeebies - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories>

Children's Story Books Online - <http://www.magickeys.com/books/>

Oxford Owl - <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/reading>

Woodlands Primary School - <http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/onlinestory.htm#talk>



- **Identifying the Tricky Bit**
Talk to your child about the tricky part of the word and highlight where the letters don't do the sounds they know e.g. in 'vegetable' the tricky bit is the 'e' in the middle because you can't hear it.
- **Sparkler Writing**
Ask your child to close their eyes and imagine they are writing a word in the air with a sparkler as you spell it.
- **Mnemonics**
A mnemonic can be helpful in memorising some tricky words e.g. because - big elephants can always understand small elephants
people - people eat orange peel like elephants
- **Dictation**
The children are given the opportunity to practise their spelling words through writing within a context. The teacher reads aloud and the children write what has been heard.



- **Syllables**

Divide the word into syllables and encourage your child to say each syllable as they write the word e.g. re-mem-ber

- **Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check**

Look at the word and say it out loud, then cover it, write it and check to see if it is correct. The main point with this strategy is that the child is not 'copying' the word, but trying to recall the spelling pattern/word from memory.

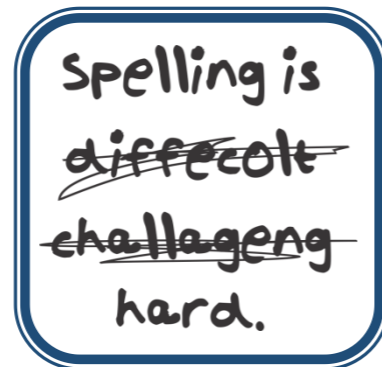
- **Build It Up/Sailboat Write:**

Build up a word letter by letter e.g.

w
wh
whe
wher
where

- **Rainbow Writing**

Write the word and go over the letters with different colours to make a 'rainbow word'.



- **ABC Order**

Write your spelling words in alphabetical order.

- **Words in Words**

Try to find short words within longer ones e.g. can you see a rat in separate? What word can you see in when?

- **Speed - Write**

Give your child 30 seconds to correctly write a word as many times as possible.



Questions to help you and your child explore reading

The following are questions on the different reading skills we are teaching in school. These questions are only suggestions and can help your child understand what they are reading at a deeper level. They also offer the opportunity to open up a discussion on different themes.

Main Idea

What is the main idea or plot?

Can we sort the story into beginning/middle/end?

Is it a good title?

Let's make a new one.

Supporting details

What other details help us understand the main idea?

Can we sort the different thought, ideas and events in the passage?

Can you find the areas of conflict or problems in the passage?

Sequencing

In what order did the events happen in the story?

What did the character think of first?

Can you find words that tell where and when the story/action/setting happened?

Can you tell me in order everything the main character did in each place they went?

Have fun making up a new character who could have changed the sequence of events.

Literal comprehension

What happened to the character?

Why do you think this happened?

What words tell us about when things happened?

Discuss how the story began/ended.

Character Analysis

What events caused the character to do certain things?

How did the character make these choices?

Was he right?

Why do you think this?

If he had made another decision, what could have happened?

How would this have affected the rest of the story and characters?

Contextual Clues

Can you find another word for...

Look at the words before and after...

Can you work out what that means?

Think about the whole sentence, what words would the other words sense?



Vocabulary

Could you think of a better word to use then ... ?

Why do you think the author chose to use that word? Why?

What good words has the author used for the setting/character/action?

Scanning

I'll time you to see how quickly you can find the word...

Let's see who's first to find something funny/sad/scary

Skimming

Lets read together and see who gets the jist of the story first, then we can explain to each other what we think of the story and use each others' ideas to build up a deeper understanding of the story.

Fact and Opinion

Let's make up statements about the story and test each other and see if we can catch each other out.

Do you think the author is telling the truth?

Why do you think that?

Where is your evidence?

What words does the author use to make you believe him OR not trust that character?

Cause and Effect

How did the main event happen?

Who started this event and why?

Who was involved in this event/problem?

Why were they involved?

Who helped solve this problem?

What do you think each character thought about this?

Prediction

What will happen next and why do you think this?

What will the character do next and why?

What key words help us or give us an idea of what will happen next?

How will the story develop? Why do you think so?

Read on, then look back and discuss your original idea/prediction. Were you correct?

Inference (reading between the lines)

If you met the character today, what would he look like/say/do?

What clues from the passage gave you these ideas?

What lessons can we learn from the story?

Is there a message or moral to the story?

Do you think the author did this on purpose? Why?

Author's Craft

What words/phrases make you feel sad/happy/excited?

How did the author do this?



Dreghorn Primary School Literacy Parental Prompt Spelling Ideas and Activities



The English language is a r **ABC** language and despite its complexity, 85% of the English spelling system is predictable. Your child will learn the rules and conventions of the system and the spelling strategies needed to become a confident speller.

Most of us, even if we consider ourselves to be good spellers, make mistakes at some point. What is important is that we know what to do when we get stuck and how to correct mistakes.

Spelling Patterns

In the initial years of school the emphasis on 'spelling' is learning our sounds and spelling patterns in order to build words, read and write. These spelling patterns if learned correctly will continue to help us spell different words as we progress throughout our school lives.

Try to use the 'sound' that letters make, not the letter name. This may be single sounds or a few sounds put together which can be used to build words. For example: when saying 'chair' you should say ch-ai-r as 'ch' and 'ai'. Spelling rules and patterns can be used to spell and read unfamiliar words which follow the same spelling pattern. Children should be aware that not all words can be 'sounded out'.



Some of these strategies can be used to help children with their spelling by reinforcing the pattern in interesting ways.

- **Sounding Out**

Break the words down into phonemes e.g. c-a-t, sh-e-ll etc. It is important to remember, however, that many words cannot be sounded out so other strategies are needed.