

TROON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLY YEARS CENTRE



LITERACY AND ENGLISH

PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

The following guide provides tips and ideas for games and activities to help your child with literacy activities. It also gives examples of what your child will be learning in school and how you can help to support their learning.

Early – the pre-school years and Primary 1, or later for some

First – to the end of Primary 4, but earlier or later for some

Second – to the end of Primary 7, but earlier or later for some

Supporting Your Child's Learning

Literacy and English at Early Level CfE: A Guide for Parents

What Is Literacy and English?

Literacy and English is divided into three areas; 1) Listening and Talking, 2) Reading and 3) Writing. Teachers look at these three areas when looking at children's progress in language although these areas are closely linked and are taught in different subjects across the curriculum.

Reading

Your child will probably bring a school reading book to share with you at home. Take time exploring the school reading book with your child. Talk about the title, pictures on the cover, the blurb, the author and the illustrator. Ask questions about what clues the pictures, blurb and title give about the story. When your child starts reading, if they get stuck on a word give them time to work it out – don't just tell them the answer! Let them look at the shape of the word, sound out the letters and use the pictures and rest of the sentence for clues. Children learn to read using different strategies and need time to put them to use.

It is very important that children have access to books other than their school reading book.

Reading is not just about what the words on the page say, it's about developing a love of books. Have books around your house, join your local library and encourage your child to read by finding what interests them – you could try books, comics or graphic novels.

If your child is a reluctant reader, read a book to them. Reading a more difficult book aloud lets your child develop their understanding of more complex vocabulary. Talk to your child about tricky words and what they think they mean.

Phonics

Phonics develops a reader's understanding of the sounds of the letters of the alphabet. Children learn the sounds and then blend them together to make words.

Spelling

Children will often be given spelling lists of common words that appear in every day reading books and are difficult to sound out.

Phonemes

Phonemes are sounds made from multiple letters, e.g. sh, ee, th, igh. You can support your child's learning by looking for these at the start and end of words in books they are reading.

CVC Words

CVC or Consonant – Vowel – Consonant words are three letter words that your child will practise reading and writing by sounding out. Encourage them to sound out words that they don't know.

Early Level Goals

- Use the cover, title, author and/or illustrator to choose books for enjoyment.
- Watch, read or listen to different texts, including stories, songs and rhymes and share likes and dislikes.



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Writing

Letter Formation

Spend time with your child when they carry out written tasks and check that they form letters in the correct way. Spending time on letter formation is helpful at early level as correct formation is important when children begin to join their handwriting as they get older.

Pencil Grip

Encourage your child to hold pencils, pens or crayons correctly and practise so that their grip feels comfortable. Elastic bands, triangular pencils and pencil grips can help your child feel more at ease when writing. Do lots of fun drawing and writing activities together using different types of pencils, crayons and chalks.

Sentences

Encourage your child to write simple sentences using familiar words from spelling and reading books.

Stories

Encourage your child to talk about their feelings and experiences and use their imagination to create their own stories and characters. They could draw pictures to show ideas and feelings and write simple words next to them.

Early Level Goals

- Write for enjoyment, to convey ideas, messages, information, experience and feelings. Write in a range of play, imaginative and real contexts.
- Use a pencil with control and form most lowercase letters legibly, write from left to right and leave a space between words when writing.
- Attempt to spell familiar words correctly, leave a space between words and use a capital letter and a full stop in at least one sentence.

Talking and Listening

Your child will take part in talking and listening activities across all curricular areas in school. They might share news in class or at assembly, talk about work they have been doing or explain a task. Children will be encouraged to speak and answer questions and will also be encouraged to listen and ask questions of others.

Songs and Rhyme

Share songs and rhymes with your child and use your voice to help them recognise the rhyme in the words. For example, Jack and Jill went up the hill. Leave out words and see if they can fill in the blanks.

News Time

Take time to talk to your child about what has happened that day. Encourage conversation and questioning by sharing your day with them too!

Digital Literacy

Watch films or TV programs with your child and talk about what you have seen. Ask them to tell you about the story and talk about any changes they would make. Would they change the ending or the characters?

Play

Encourage your child to talk before, during and after play. What have they been doing/making/thinking or creating in their play? This can be chat about football, dolls, Lego, board or even computer games!

Early Level Goals

- Take turns and contribute at the appropriate time when talking with others.
- Listen and reply in a respectful way, for example, by nodding or agreeing, asking and answering questions.

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Reading

Take time to listen to your child read and encourage your child to read lots of different books. Try to spend time listening to your child read their school reading book and also other books of their own choice. When your child is reading aloud, listen for accuracy, pace, fluency and expression. You can take turns at reading different pages and let your child comment on your reading skills! Can they spot if you are reading accurately or missing out or making mistakes with words? Can they tell if you are reading at a good pace or is your reading too fast or too slow? Do they read fluently with expression or sound like a robot? Reading aloud to your child helps introduce them to tricky vocabulary and encourages reluctant readers to enjoy stories.

Phonics

Children continue to be introduced to sounds at First Level and should be encouraged to talk about these sounds when they see them in words in their reading books. Look for sounds at the beginning and at the end of words and encourage your child to use their phonics knowledge to help them sound out and decode unfamiliar words.

Vocabulary

Reading together gives parents an excellent opportunity to talk about the meanings of tricky words. Can your child explain what a difficult word means? If they can't explain it, can they act out what it means or suggest another word that would make sense to use in the sentence?

Comprehension

Try to ask your child questions about the text to check their understanding of what they have read. Can they tell you what happened at the beginning, middle and end? Talk about the main ideas in the story or chapter and ask questions where they have to look for clues to find the answer.

Digital Literacy

Reading does not always have to mean books; films or TV programmes can be considered texts too. Watch films or TV programmes together and talk about story, characters and setting. Try reading books that have been made into films and talk about the differences between them.

First Level Reading Goals

- Use information about the cover, title, author, illustrator and blurb to choose texts.
- Use punctuation and grammar to read familiar texts with expression.
- Recognise an increasing number of common, key reading and topic words.
- Decode unfamiliar words using phonics knowledge of letter patterns and blends.
- Find information using content page, index, headings and diagrams.
- Identify the main ideas in a text and use headings to make notes.
- Respond to literal, inferential and evaluative questions about texts.
- Identify fact and opinion in text and talk about the difference between these.
- Give personal views on characters, language, structure, setting and writer's message.



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Writing

Your child will be given many opportunities to write as part of their school week. In addition to story writing, sentence, grammar and handwriting activities in literacy, they will also write in different areas of the curriculum. They might write a science report, a topic fact file or create presentations on computer or tablet. You can encourage your child at home by making writing fun and showing the relevance of writing in daily life. Talk about times when you need to write; this can be writing lists, filling in forms or sending texts or emails. Using coloured pens and pencils, a computer or apps in the writing process can all help to make writing more enjoyable. Remember that all types of writing are valuable and should be encouraged. Encourage your child to write in different ways; they could enter a competition, create instructions for a favourite game including pictures, make a comic strip or change the ends of stories or movies. If your child is reluctant to put pencil to paper; they could even use a speech to text app and then edit what they have recorded.

Reluctant Writers

Some children struggle to complete written homework tasks independently in a reasonable amount of time. To encourage your child to work quickly, try using a stopwatch to give your child a target time to complete tasks.

Connectives

Encourage your child to make their sentences longer and more interesting by using connectives in their sentences. Ask them to read over their work and challenge them to improve it by adding words like: and, so, but and because.

Vocabulary

Help your child to extend the vocabulary they use in their writing by getting them to reread their sentences and add in additional vocabulary. Can they add in adjectives or adverbs? Have they read any interesting words recently that they could use in their own writing?

Spelling

Children are often given weekly spelling lists to work on in class and at home. Take time to talk about the words in their lists and help your child identify any spelling patterns or rules they contain. Use different strategies to help them learn these words. Can they sound them out, write them in different ways or use a spelling app to test if they know them?

First Level Writing Goals

- Create texts by selecting subject, purpose, format and resources.
- Spell common words and use phonics knowledge and spelling strategies.
- Use a dictionary/reference source to help spell difficult or unfamiliar words.
- Use capital letters, full stops, question or exclamation marks.
- Vary sentence starters, use conjunctions and interesting vocabulary.
- Review writing to check it makes sense.
- Present writing clearly and legibly, with images and other features as appropriate.
- Plan and organise ideas and information using an appropriate format.
- Use notes to plan writing, create new texts and include relevant information.
- Organise writing in a logical order and as appropriate to audience.
- Use appropriate vocabulary and language.
- Share personal viewpoints and make one or two attempts to persuade the reader.
- Use appropriate language to describe feelings, thoughts and events in a logical order.
- Create stories, poems and plays with features of genre and evidence of structure.
- Describe the appearance and feelings of characters.

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Talking and Listening

Talking and listening activities occur across the whole school curriculum. Children are encouraged to listen in different ways which can include listening to the teacher in class, video clips, staff, children and visitors at assembly and other children during group and class activities. As they get older, children are encouraged to take notes when listening to check that they have understood the main ideas and also so that they can use what they have learned in further pieces of work. In addition to developing listening skills, children are encouraged to participate in talking activities in order to build confidence in speaking in front of others and develop skills for life, work and learning. Talking activities might include presenting to the class or in assembly, reading or performing at school shows or talking and asking questions during group, class or individual tasks.

Questioning

Take time to talk to your child about individual and family interests. Try to ask open ended questions about your child's day to open up discussion. Encourage your child to be an active listener by getting them to ask questions about your day too!

Note Taking

Encourage your child to take notes when watching online videos to help record information. Let them pause the video at key points to write down information. This could be done to help with homework tasks or even to find information on how to complete favourite games.

Speaking Aloud

Record your child on your phone or tablet and let them listen to see if they can hear themselves clearly. Watch and listen to videos of their favourite celebrities or vloggers and talk about what makes a good video. Can they hear the person clearly? Are they using objects or pictures to keep the viewer interested? Can they make their own videos about what interests them?

Instructions

Develop your child's listening and talking skills through everyday activities that take place in your home. When you are cooking or carrying out household tasks, give your child instructions to get them involved. Get your child to repeat what you have told them, encouraging them to retell instructions in their own words.

First Level Talking and Listening Goals

- Identify the purpose and main ideas of spoken texts and use the information gathered for a specific purpose.
- Make notes under given headings and use these to create and sequence new texts.
- Ask and answer different types of questions to show main ideas of spoken texts.
- Recognise the difference between fact and opinion in spoken texts.
- Communicate clearly and audibly.
- Contribute to discussion, engaging with others.
- Share ideas/information using appropriate vocabulary in a logical order.
- Use resources such as objects, pictures and photographs to engage with others.



Supporting Your Child's Learning

Literacy and English at Second Level CfE: A Guide for Parents

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Reading

One of the most important things you can do to develop your child's reading is to encourage them to read a book other than their school reading text. Ideally, your child should spend 20 minutes per night reading for enjoyment. You could show your child the value of reading by quietly reading your own book at the same time. If your child is a reluctant reader, spend time reading aloud to them. You might think that your child is now too old for you to read to them but this is a very valuable way to develop vocabulary, talking and listening skills and encourage a shared interest in books. It is also still important to hear your child reading out loud as this is a useful way for you to help with their fluency skills and check their understanding of a text.

Decoding Strategies

Encourage your child to use different decoding strategies to work out the meanings of unknown words. They could look to see if there is a word they know within the unknown word or read the text around the word for clues. Encourage your child to show or act out what they think the word means as sometimes children do have an understanding of the meaning of a word but struggle to describe it.

Vocabulary

Help develop your child's vocabulary when they are reading by talking about the meanings of tricky words and phrases. As well as talking about what the word means, also chat about why the author might have chosen a particular word. Would you have used the same word and can you think of an alternative that would fit in its place? Keep a note of unusual or tricky words and encourage your child to use them in their speech or writing.

Comprehension

Help your child to develop their comprehension skills by answering and creating higher order questions. Children are often very good at remembering what happened in texts and answering literal questions but have more difficulty with inferential questions. Talk about finding the clues that lead you to an answer, for example, what do the character's actions tell us about their feelings? Challenge your child to create tricky questions for you to answer.

Digital Literacy

Checking email, using a search engine, online reading and watching programmes can all help your child develop their reading skills. Help your child find accurate information when they are carrying out searches online. Ask questions about fact, opinion and truthfulness of online data and show your child how to check the reliability of what they find on the internet. Watch digital versions of popular books and compare these with what they have read in the text.



Supporting Your Child's Learning Literacy and English at Second Level CfE: A Guide for Parents

Second Level Reading Goals

- Select texts for enjoyment or to find information
- Explain preferences for particular texts, authors or sources
- Read with fluency, understanding and expression using appropriate pace and tone
- Use context clues, punctuation, grammar and layout to read unfamiliar texts
- Apply skimming, scanning, predicting, clarifying and/or summarising skills when reading
- Make and organise notes using own words and use notes to create new texts
- Identify the purpose of a text with explanation and the main ideas with detail
- Comment on features of language like vocabulary, sentence structure and punctuation
- Respond to and create a range of literal, inferential and evaluative questions
- Explain differences between fact and opinion and identify useful and reliable sources
- Recognise that word choice, emotive language, rhetorical questions and/or repetition can be used to influence the reader
- Comment on structure, characterisation and/or setting with reference to the text
- Relate the writer's theme to own and/or others' experiences
- Comment on the writer's style, use of language and other features appropriate to genre

Writing

In school, your child will experience taught writing lessons as part of language work and will also be given opportunities for writing across the curriculum. They will have opportunities to create many different types of writing including reports, imaginative, poetry, recount, leaflets, articles and scripts. Model writing at home when you are taking notes, writing emails, texts or making documents or presentations for work. Talk about favourite writers and find out more about the reasons behind their writing. Encourage a love of writing by getting your child to attend author events and enter writing competitions.

Reluctant Writers

Children who are not keen to put pencil to paper often have great ideas for writing. Encourage your child to record their ideas in different ways through the use of digital technology. Writing apps let children be creative in their writing by making it easy to make books, add pictures and produce comics. Computers and speech to text software can also help make the writing process easier and more fun.

Vocabulary

Look at the words your child has used in their written work and challenge them to see if they can replace some of them with more unusual, ambitious vocabulary. Use newspaper articles and reading books to look for interesting and unusual words. Talk about connectives, adjectives and adverbs. Ask your child to edit their writing by adding in more descriptive language when starting sentences or describing characters or events.

Punctuation

Listen to your child reading their work aloud and record them doing this. When playing it back talk about full stops, commas, exclamation marks, speech marks and paragraphs. Does the playback of their work have punctuation in the correct place? Could the sentence structure be improved? Often it is difficult for children to identify mistakes in their written work on the page but they can hear the mistakes when they are read aloud.

Spelling

Your child should be increasingly familiar with spelling patterns and be able to use known patterns to help accurately spell words. If your child has made a mistake in their spelling, talk to them about the spelling rule and give examples of similar words that might help them correct their error. Encourage your child to identify their own mistakes and work independently using online search or dictionary to make corrections.

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Second Level Writing Goals

- Select appropriate genre, form, structure and style to create texts for a range of purposes
- Spell most words correctly using knowledge of spelling patterns, rules and strategies
- Use a range of punctuation, for example, capital letters, full stops, commas, inverted commas, exclamation marks, question marks and/or apostrophes
- Write most sentences in a grammatically accurate way
- Use sentences of different lengths and types and vary sentence openings
- Link sentences using conjunctions and use paragraphs to separate thoughts and ideas
- Write in a fluent and legible way
- Edit writing to ensure it makes sense, is technically accurate and meets its purpose
- Make appropriate choices about layout and presentation, including in digital texts, to engage the reader, for example, headings, bullet points, fonts, graphics and/or captions
- Use notes and/or other sources to develop thinking and create new texts
- Acknowledge sources making clear where the information came from
- Select relevant ideas and information and organise information in a logical way
- Use subject-specific vocabulary to suit purpose and audience
- Create a range of short and extended texts regularly for different purposes
- Engage and/or influence the reader through vocabulary and/or use of language appropriate to genre

Talking and Listening

Spoken texts are used increasingly as part of our online world. We might look up videos on the internet for instructions on how to do something or watch and listen to celebrities and gamers. The online world allows children to watch, listen and question the live stream events of authors, engineers and other professionals. Encourage your child to be part of an online search for information. Talk about what makes the presenter interesting by looking at their body language and the way they speak. Use this information to help with talking and listening skills at home. You could even try making your own videos and talk about the features of film that engage the audience.

Questioning

Spend time talking to your child about their life, encouraging them to ask questions about yours in order to contribute to discussion. Talk about things that interest them; including films, games, website apps and what has happened to them during the day.

Note Taking

Look for video instructions or recipes online and get your child to take notes as the person talks. Help your child review these to ensure that only relevant information has been included. Audio books are also useful for note taking; encourage your child to bullet point the main ideas then replay to check for missing information.

Speaking Aloud

Your child will be encouraged to take roles of responsibility in school events like assemblies, performances, class talks and meeting visitors to the school. Encourage your child to practise speaking aloud at home. They could recite a poem, read aloud or give a talk on something that interests them.

Second Level Talking and Listening Goals

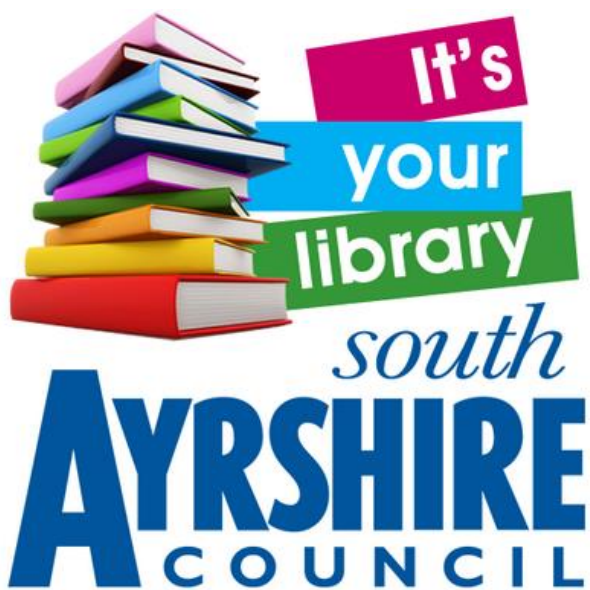
- Select spoken texts regularly for enjoyment or to find information
- Contribute relevant ideas, information and opinions when engaging with others
- Show respect for the views of others and offers own viewpoint
- Build on the contributions of others by asking or answering questions, clarifying points or supporting others' opinions or ideas
- Apply verbal and non-verbal techniques in oral presentations and interactions, for example, vocabulary, eye contact, body language, emphasis, pace and/or tone
- Recognise that vocabulary, emphasis, tone and/or rhetorical questions are used to engage or influence the listener
- Identify the purpose and main ideas of spoken texts with suitable explanation
- Make relevant notes using own words and use these to create new texts
- Demonstrate understanding of spoken texts by asking and responding to literal, inferential and evaluative questions
- Identify the difference between fact and opinion with suitable explanation
- Communicate clearly, audibly and with expression in different contexts
- Plan and delivers an organised presentation/talk with relevant content and structure
- Use suitable vocabulary for purpose and audience
- Select and use resources to support communication



TROON LIBRARY

EVERY CHILD A MEMBER

Please don't forget, we have the most valuable resource to help develop literacy skills right on our doorstep – Troon Library. We often visit the library during the year, or have the librarians in school to work with the children. Sometimes whole classes will visit and on other occasions small groups of children to take part in reading sessions, author visits, Discover Reading Boost Groups, vote for a favourite new book or just to visit and share a story together.



We would encourage you to drop in at the library every week if you can, read with your child or children and take some books home to share at bedtime. The library also holds so many other children and family activities – Bookbug sessions for our youngest children, ebooks, use of computers, homework help, coding clubs, Lego clubs and much more including adult groups and activities too.

Remember, it is free to join the library and helps promote a lifelong love of reading and literacy. Find out more here:

<https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/libraries/branches/troon-library.aspx>

<https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/libraries/childrens-library.aspx>

CLICK HERE TO JOIN NOW!

<https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/libraries/join-library.aspx>

HELPFUL WEBSITES

POPULAR WEBSITES, GAMES AND BOOK LISTS TO HELP

BOOK TRUST

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/our-recommendations/100-best-books/>

SCOTTISH BOOK TRUST

<https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/book-lists>

WATERSTONES

<https://www.waterstones.com/category/childrens-teenage>

LOVE READING FOR KIDS

<https://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/>

NON-FICTION AND FACT: BOOK TRUST YOUNGER CHILDREN

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/booklists/n/non-fiction/>

NON-FICTION AND FACT: BOOK TRUST OLDER CHILDREN

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/booklists/n/non-fiction-9-12/>

TEACH YOUR MONSTER TO READ

https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/accounts/sign_in

ROY THE ZEBRA

<https://www.roythezebra.com/>

SPELLING & PHONICS LINKS:

TOP MARKS

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/words-and-spelling>

READING EGGS

<https://readingeggs.co.uk/articles/2016/05/19/homeschool-spelling-activities/>

SPELLING CITY

<https://www.spellingcity.com/spelling-games-vocabulary-games.html>