



Gem Federation

Core Curriculum Handbook

2026-2027

Contents

Writing	Page 3
Spelling	Page 7
Punctuation and Grammar	Page 8
Handwriting	Page 8
Mathematics	Page 10
Reading and Phonics*	Page 14
Home Reading	Page 15
'Book Club'	Page 19
Whole Class Reading	Page 21
High Quality Texts	Page 25

* Please refer to the Early Reading and Phonics Handbook for further detail

Writing

Planning

- As a federation, we subscribe to the '*The Literacy Tree*', and teachers have logins to enable them to download the units of planning.
- For each year group, there is a chosen spine of texts ([available in the 'English' folder on the shared drive](#)), which ensures coverage of text types, grammar and texts that meet the '*Plagues of Reading*', as well as ensuring the diversity of the schools' communities and wider society are reflected.
- Every term, one English unit **must** be a *Literacy Tree* unit. Any supplementary text that term has been chosen by the year group, and may be topic based. However, any changes to a taught text can only be done after consultation with the English lead.
- The *Literacy Tree* planning should be kept to as closely as possible, with additional lessons **added** to enable effective learning of the grammar skills, for planning, editing and publishing of the main writing outcomes, and for additional oracy lessons to support in the embedding of grammatical structures prior to writing. It is possible that a 3-week unit is stretched out to cover an additional week of lessons.

Learning Questions and Success Criteria

- Every lesson requires a learning question, differentiated success criteria and a date. The level of independence and any support given to the children, whether through the use of adults or word banks/sentence starters, should also be clearly recorded.
- If there is no written evidence for a lesson, a task box and/or photographs should be evidenced in a child's book.
- All learning questions need to be generic and transferable *i.e.* '*I can write a set of instructions*' rather than '*I can write a set of instructions for a pizza*'.
- Most of the success criteria within a writing lesson should be spelling, punctuation and grammar related.
- Success Criteria should be differentiated 3 ways -differentiation should focus on SPaG.
- Children who are working below ARE need to be tracked and provided with individual writing targets which are displayed in the English book and reviewed regularly.

Extended Writing

- Within a unit, independent extended pieces of writing need to be planned for which enable children to demonstrate their understanding from that unit's teaching, and that include the chance to show if they are meeting the SPaG objectives for the year group (or for those below ARE, their own SPaG targets).

- There may be more than one extended write within a unit if the unit takes place over 3 weeks or more.
- These independent writes are used to gauge a child's progress against their writing targets and age-group expected outcomes ([refer to assessment documents for these targets](#)).
- Children should have the chance to create a plan beforehand to support them, and have time after to proof-read and edit their own work.
- Children below ARE should have supportive resources (such as visual cues/word banks) available when completing extended pieces.
- Children complete either a science or history/geography extended piece at the end of each topic, which has a specific non-fiction text type focus - see [End of Unit Write Document](#).

Marking

- All English work (except independent pieces used for assessment) needs to be marked against the success criteria in **green pen** prior to the next English lesson. Any achieved success criteria should be **highlighted** or **ticked✓**. Quality examples within a piece of work where the children have met the success criteria should also be **highlighted**.
- At the end of a lesson children are encouraged to read through and edit their work using a **red pen**.
- KS1 teachers use multiple colours of highlighters, with a different colour for different success criteria.
- Independent extended pieces of writing which are to be used for assessment purposes do not need to be text-marked but must be read. A comment should be recorded at the end with a next step i.e. *An interesting letter - well done! Next time, I would like you to use a range of sentence types.* 
- Additionally, success criteria should not be given as the children should be expected to apply the skills that have been taught throughout that unit of work and previous writing experiences. Only independent pieces of writing are to be used for assessment.
- The children should be set models and envelopes as a means of improving their writing and/or meeting any unachieved success criteria.
- For 5 minutes at the start of every lesson, the children should be given time to respond to marking and edit their work using a **red pen**.
- The children need to be taught how to appropriately edit their work and re-draft first copies. They should be shown how to self-assess and to identify their next steps.

- The following codes for editing should be applied when marking. In years 1 - 4 the codes should be recorded in the margin adjacent to the error. In years 5 and 6 the codes should be recorded at the end of a paragraph. Again, teachers will need to use their discretion as to whether this is appropriate for all children in a class i.e. *lower- attaining or SEND groupings*.

S	Spelling
P	Punctuation
T	Tense
V	Vocabulary
NP	New Paragraph

It is imperative that marking throughout a unit of work is detailed and enables children to develop the skills needed in order to produce quality independent pieces of writing. Planned opportunities for extended pieces of writing should be apparent throughout a unit of work and purposeful in building towards independent pieces.

Environment

- Every classroom needs to have an English Working Wall linked to the current text being used. These need to be purposeful and relevant to what the children may need during the English lesson and as a means of enabling the children to make choices about the quality vocabulary/sentence starters/sentence types/punctuation that they may wish to use in their writing.
- Each class needs a Magpie Board and a Word of the Week display.
- Writing should be celebrated through the displaying of published written work both in the classroom and around the school.
- SPaG terminology for the current year group, and those for the year group below should make up part of the English display. See the [SPAG progression document](#).

Assessing in Writing

- Assessments in writing are based on the independent writing that children produce.
- Children working below age-related expectations (those who are WT on the tracker, or working below year group expectation) must have their progress tracked against the writing performance indicators in the assessment document found in the Gem shared folder [G:\Shared Drives\Gem Federation\Planning\1. Curriculum\4. English\5. Writing\2. Assessment Materials Writing 2026](#)

Year 1	SWT (Working Towards)	ME (Meeting Expectation)	EE (Exceeding Expectation)
Composition (Planning)	- Can plan their writing using a simple plan. - Can plan their writing using a simple plan.	- Can plan their writing using a simple plan. - Can plan their writing using a simple plan.	- Can plan their writing using a simple plan. - Can plan their writing using a simple plan.
Composition (Drafting)	- Can write a simple sentence. - Can write a simple sentence.	- Can write a simple sentence. - Can write a simple sentence.	- Can write a simple sentence. - Can write a simple sentence.
Composition (Editing)	- Can identify a simple sentence. - Can identify a simple sentence.	- Can identify a simple sentence. - Can identify a simple sentence.	- Can identify a simple sentence. - Can identify a simple sentence.
Grammar	- Can use a simple sentence. - Can use a simple sentence.	- Can use a simple sentence. - Can use a simple sentence.	- Can use a simple sentence. - Can use a simple sentence.
Punctuation	- Can use a simple sentence. - Can use a simple sentence.	- Can use a simple sentence. - Can use a simple sentence.	- Can use a simple sentence. - Can use a simple sentence.

- Children who are working within age related expectations (ME), or at greater depth (exceeding expectations, EE) do not need to be individually tracked, but there is an expectation that class teachers closely monitor their progress against the success criteria in each lesson, and the quality of their independent extended writing to ensure that they are continuing to work within age-related expectations, and are being challenged sufficiently if working at greater depth.
- If a child is assessed as not maintaining the level they are expected, then the teacher should start tracking that child using the above assessment materials.

- All children who are 'WT' or below should have personal writing targets, accessible in their English books, which should be reviewed at least every half term.

[G:\Shared Drives\Gem Federation\Planning\1. Curriculum\4. English\5. Writing\4. Writing target templates for inside Eng books](#)

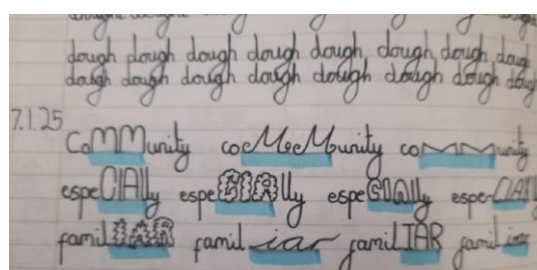
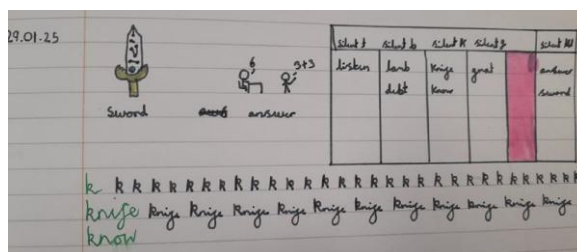
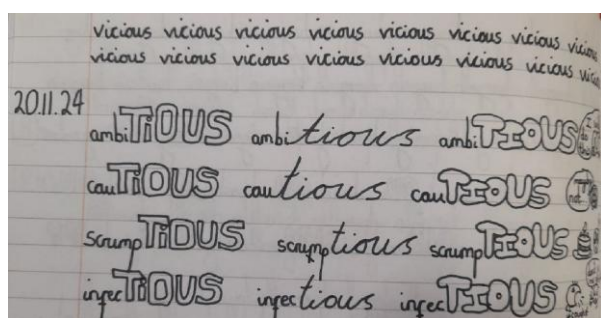
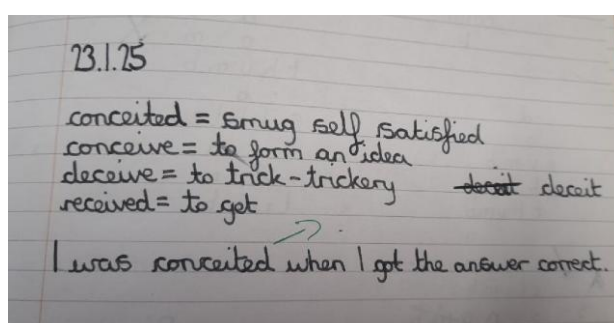
Children should be aware of their targets and be encouraged to work on these in every writing opportunity.

NAME	My Autumn 2 Writing Targets	Achieved
1) I can join my letters and extend ascenders and descenders.	Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz	
2) I can use a commas for pauses in my writing to aid flow.		
3) I can write clearly and neatly.		
4) I can get more writing done on my own in a lesson.		



Spelling

- From Years 2-6 we use Pathways to teach spelling. Medium Term Plans and lesson PowerPoints are found in the [Gem Shared folder](#).
- Children in KS2 should have 3x 15 mins sessions per week.
- English marking should focus on the spelling pattern being studied that week.
- Spelling tests should ***always be collaborative***.
- Differentiation should focus on the number of words/complexity of words for the test.
- Common exception word mats/banks should be displayed on the children's tables for them to refer to and to identify their own spelling mistakes.
- The children need to be shown how to use a dictionary to correct spelling mistakes. They should learn to correct the mistakes for themselves rather than being shown the correct spelling of any misspelt words.
- Where children continually make errors with the spelling of high-frequency words, this should be supported through the use of a word bank.
- Spelling homework is set each week, based on the words/pattern that children are learning in class, and shared in Google Classroom.
- Spelling activities in books should be varied and support the learning of that particular rule or pattern. Teachers should circulate during lessons, ensuring that misspelt words are addressed.



Punctuation and Grammar

- The children need to be taught how to say, identify and apply the correct English terminology ([see the English Glossary of the National Curriculum](#)). Teachers should use the correct terms within their lessons and ensure these are explicitly taught.
- Punctuation and grammar should be embedded in the context of a quality text and across a range of genres and text types. The Literacy Tree planning incorporates this.
- The children should be then given the opportunity to apply taught grammatical structures through a quality piece of extended writing i.e., *the children are taught how to use relative clauses linked to the class text, they then record their own examples as practise and then apply to an extended piece of writing linked to the same text either during the same or subsequent lessons*. SPaG needs to be applied through writing.
- Guided Writing should be used to teach specific language, punctuation and grammatical structures to targeted groups within a lesson i.e., *a group of children who need extra support with including full stops to end a sentence*.
- Grammar objectives and success criteria for a given text type will be different dependent on a child's ability and the National Curriculum objectives that they are being taught i.e., *the success criteria used for children writing a letter will not be the same for all children in a class and throughout the school*.
- Use the [SPaG progression](#) document to support differentiation of grammar objectives when planning for children working out of year group.

Handwriting

- It is essential that children are given ample opportunity, through regular high quality handwriting lessons, to acquire a neat, legible, joined script which will support them to achieve in all other curriculum areas.
- Teachers should check children are sitting correctly and have the correct tripod [pencil grip](#) whenever writing.
- Teachers should actively model handwriting during handwriting lessons, on a flipchart with a pen, and provide models in books for children who are struggling.
- Teacher's handwriting should be a model to children, using the correct cursive joins whenever modelling writing across the curriculum.
- The school uses elements of the [Letter-join](#) handwriting scheme.
- Children have access to Letter-join Home Edition to enable them to practise their handwriting at home.
- The children need to record their handwriting in a handwriting book (Years 1 and 2), or their Spelling and Handwriting book (Year 3 upwards)

- The handwriting joins should be taught through the spellings that are being taught that week.
- We follow the [handwriting progression document](#). However, teacher judgement should be used and children move from print to cursive when they are ready.
- Children who write in a legible and cursive style are awarded with a Pen Licence and are given a handwriting pen. Handwriting should be consistent throughout all lessons, including across the curriculum. Pen Licences should be taken away from a child if a joined, cursive style is not maintained.
- The lines in a child's English workbook need to reflect the child's handwriting ability.

Year Group	Spelling	Handwriting
Reception	Tricky word lessons weekly	On whiteboards - daily
Year 1	Tricky word lessons weekly	In handwriting books - daily
Year 2	Begin Spelling Pathways Autumn 1	In handwriting books - daily
Year 3-6	Spelling Pathways	In combined spelling and handwriting books 3x weekly

Maths

- Maths should be taught every day and should largely follow a structure of a short mental/arithmetic starter followed by the core lesson. Lessons are grouped into units by subject.
- The units and order of lessons should follow the medium-term plans / schemes of learning as set out in White Rose Maths (below left is a year 2 example). Lessons should be based on the small steps as set out (below right). It is at a teacher's discretion through assessment whether they want to spend longer on topics to secure understanding.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Autumn	Number: Place Value		Number: Addition and Subtraction					Measurement: Money		Number: Multiplication and Division	Consolidation	
Spring	Number: Multiplication and Division			Statistics		Geometry: Properties of Shape		Number: Fractions				
Summer	Measurement: Length and Height	Geometry: Position and Direction	Consolidation and problem solving		Measurement: Time		Measurement: Mass, Capacity and Temperature		Consolidation			

Counting forwards and backwards within 20

Tens and ones within 20

Counting forwards and backwards within 50

Tens and ones within 50

Compare numbers within 50

Count objects to 100 and read and write numbers in numerals and words

Represent numbers to 100

Tens and ones with a part-whole model

Tens and ones using addition

Use a place value chart

Compare objects

Compare numbers

Order objects and numbers

- Planning should follow the mastery structure (as set out in schemes such as White Rose) of starting with varied fluency before moving onto reasoning and problem-solving. When children are secure in the fluency skills studied in the lesson, they should then move onto reasoning and problem-solving tasks which should become progressively more challenging.
- Formative assessment such as in-lesson marking should be used to determine whether children are ready to move onto reasoning and problem-solving. If children are not secure in the fluency, then they should either re-visit the questions they have already completed with the assistance of an adult or resources, or complete further fluency questions.
- Most children in the class should start the lesson in the same place with the same questions. However, if there are children who have additional needs or are significantly behind age-related expectations, then their teacher may feel it necessary to simplify the first fluency sheet. Any further differentiation should be set out as above.

- Where possible, all children should be learning objectives from their year group and adult assistance and resources should be used to help close gaps. However, if they are working more than a year below age-related expectations, they may work on objectives from the relevant year group and use that year group's workbook.
- Resources (such as number lines, place value counters, dienes) should be made available in any lesson where relevant and should form part of the teaching.
- During independent work, relevant resources should be made available to children to choose from to support their own learning.
- Where possible, the teaching of fluency skills should be varied and follow the order of concrete, pictorial, abstract. This means starting whole class teaching using resources, before moving onto questions with pictures as aids and then, when more secure, onto tasks that are numerical/worded only. This structure can be seen in White Rose in the varied fluency section of the lessons. Below are from year 3 lessons.

Here is part of a bead string.



Complete the sentences.

There are _____ tens and _____ ones.

The number is _____.

Represent 45 on a bead string and complete the same sentence stems.

Match the number to the correct representation.



One ten and five ones

Thirty-five

25

Represent 67 in three different ways.

Use bundles of straws in tens, bead strings and Base 10 to explore how many tens make a hundred. Children use the equipment to count up and down in tens to make 100

There are 3 tens this is thirty.

There are _____ this is _____.

There are _____ tens in one hundred.

There are 100 sweets in each jar.



How many sweets are there altogether?

Write your answer in numerals and words.

Complete the number tracks.

200	300		500			800	
-----	-----	--	-----	--	--	-----	--

	900	800			500		
--	-----	-----	--	--	-----	--	--

- Lessons should have a learning question based on the main objective of the lessons (e.g., Can I add 4-digit numbers?). The success criteria should be then based on the skills/ smaller steps needed to complete the main task. (e.g., I can line up numbers in the correct place value; I can mentally add 2 / 3 numbers; I can exchange when I have more than 10 in one column).
- Alternatively, the success criteria could be presented as 'steps to success' in which case they are ordered steps set out as instructions (with images, where relevant) explaining exactly how to complete the task.
- Fluency sheets for all year groups need to either have the tile or a border in red, further fluency should be blue and reasoning and problem solving should be green.

- All maths work needs to be marked prior to the next maths lesson. In years 3-6 (and the end of year 2), Fluency should be peer-marked within the lesson to determine whether children are secure enough to move on.
- Peer marking involves the children marking in groups (ideally 3) with a **red pen** and using discussion and peer support to determine whether answers are correct. Teachers should model, assist and oversee this process. Children should correct their answers in red pen before moving on.
- For children in KS1, fluency should be marked by the teacher or teaching assistant in **green pen** within the lesson where possible.
- After a lesson, teachers should check any peer marking and then mark any reasoning and problem solving completed in the lesson. Any achieved success criteria should be **highlighted** or **ticked**.
- Where appropriate, as part of the marking, the children should be set models and envelopes to help them with an area they are not secure in or a success criteria they have not met. If appropriate, this could be through verbal feedback (in which case the teacher should write VF and the area of feedback e.g., VF exchanging).
- For 5 minutes at the start of every lesson, the children should be given time to respond to marking and correct their work using a **red pen**. Where groups of children have similar verbal feedback, this can be done as a group task with the teacher.
- Every 2-3 weeks, all classes should carry out a practical investigation. These should be based on current learning and should be completed in mixed ability groups. Adults should ensure that all pupils are taking part and guiding pupils with SEND or working significantly below age-related expectations to ensure they can access the learning. They should be recorded in books through photos.
- Every classroom needs to have a maths Working Wall linked to the current unit being studied. These need to be purposeful and relevant and should consist of models, information and vocabulary the children may need during the maths lessons. Work on topics relevant across different topics (e.g., place value / 4 operations) should stay displayed in the classroom throughout.
- Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will use Mastering Number as their main starters to be taught a minimum of 4 times per week.
- The children will complete a written arithmetic starter at least once per week in years 3-6 to practise written calculations for the 4 operations.

Mathematics Homework:

All children (years 1-6) will be presented with a Math's Rocket Card containing mental math's objectives relevant to their year group. Each week the class will focus on a different target. This target will be the basis of any homework set and an activity relevant to it should be posted weekly on Google Classroom allowing the children to practise at home for years 3-6. Math's homework is not intended to be returned to the teacher for marking, but to support the development of children's mental math's skills.

Assessing in Maths

- At the end of each unit, all children should complete the White Rose end of unit assessment. This should link to the work they have been completing; i.e. the majority should be completing the assessments for their correct year group, with a small minority of pupils with SEND or working significantly behind age-related expectations completing the work the appropriate year group.
- These should all be completed independently.
- The scores from these assessments need to be added to the separate school's math's assessment trackers and these can be used inform the teacher assessment, along with a child's performance within lessons.
- In Summer 2, all children in years 1-5 will complete an end of year assessment which will consist of an arithmetic paper and a reasoning and problem-solving paper. The scores will be added to the assessment tracker and be used to help inform final data.
- A level for each child is added to the Compass tracker three times a year, for Autumn, Spring and Summer.

Reading and Phonics

Refer to the separate Early Teaching of Reading and Phonics Handbook for details on how we teach reading and phonics from Little Stars to Year 2.

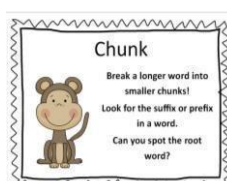
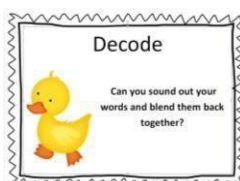
Explicit phonics teaching starts in Reception. Nursery children are exposed to Phase 1 (listening to, distinguishing between and exploring environmental sounds) in preparation for structured phonics teaching in Reception.

Below is a brief overview of what phonics and reading looks like for each year group:

Year Group	Phonics	Reading
Nursery	(Phase 1 x3 weekly)	Book Club weekly
Reception	Daily GPC's +Tricky words	1-1 /Book Club every other week
Year 1	Daily GPC's +Tricky words	1-1 /Book Club weekly
Year 2	Children who didn't pass the phonics test - daily phonics lessons Main cohort begin Spelling Pathways	1-1 everyone x1 weekly 1-1 more frequently for children not on track 2-3 sessions of Book Club (see section on 'Book Club') Begin 'Whole Class Reading' - based on class English Book
Year 3-6	Children not confident in phases 3-5 require intervention in phonics	1-1 'daily' reading for children not on track 2-3 sessions of Book Club (see section on 'Book Club') 2-3 sessions of 'Whole Class Reading' - based on class English Book

KS2 children not on track in reading

See Early Teaching of Reading and Phonics Handbook on how to support children who are not on track.



Home Reading

Each child in Nursey- Year 6 will receive a reading record and take part in the whole school home reading reward scheme as follows:

Number of reads	Prize
5	Bronze sticker
10	Silver sticker
15	Gold sticker
20	Bronze sticker
25	Silver sticker
30	Gold sticker
35	Bronze sticker
40	Silver sticker
45	Gold sticker
50	Certificate presented in class
55	Bronze sticker
60	Silver sticker
65	Gold sticker
70	Bronze sticker
75	Silver sticker
80	Gold sticker
85	Bronze sticker
90	Silver sticker
95	Gold sticker
100	Certificate presented in assembly

Home Reading Diaries

The following phases have home reading expectations to stick in the front of reading diaries

- Nursery 5 terms and 4 terms
- Reception (EYFS)
- KS1
- KS2



[G:\Shared Drives\Gem Federation\Planning\1. Curriculum\4. English\4. Reading\6. Reading Diaries](#)

Expectations for Home Reading

- Children are given a levelled (if on the reading scheme) reading book to read at home or a 'free reading' book, pitched appropriately if they are beyond the reading scheme.
- All children are expected to read at home daily.
- If still decoding, (and reading up to a green level) it is recommended that parents are encouraged to read a reading book with their child 3 times. Once for decoding, understanding and then fluency (Early readers).
- Parents/Carers are expected to record each home read in the reading diary and sign the reading record to earn rewards for the frequency of their reading.

Date	Book Title	Teacher Guidance	Rewards	Parent to sign

- Reading records should be marked weekly by teachers and used for assessment. Teachers should have a folder to monitor home reading and record weekly reads.
- When teachers are completing individual reads with the children they (when appropriate) can complete the Teacher Guidance section of the reading record, giving next steps or advice as to what the children need to work on.
- Teachers are expected to use a green pen to record the teacher's read every week.
- Sharing Books and Home Readers should be recorded in reading diary to ensure they are returned.

- If books are returned to school damaged an email must be sent to the office to request a letter home. Each damaged book is £5 charge for parents. Teachers must communicate this to the parents.

[G:\Shared Drives\Gem Federation\Planning\1. Curriculum\4. English\4. Reading\7. Damaged Books Letter](#)

- Children should be given reading books that are appropriately matched to 'just below' their Phonics level to ensure good progress in reading.
- If beyond phonics, reading books need to be matched to children's fluency, comprehension and reading stamina.

Parental Engagement

It is expected that children read as a minimum five times a week and if children are not that teachers follow up with their parents.

If children are not having their reading diary signed at home regularly enough, teachers need to follow the staged process for tracking home readers.

Reading Corners

Will be monitored as part of the monitoring cycle and Reading lead's monitoring duties. Reading corners will be judged on the following format which can be found at

[G:\Shared Drives\Gem Federation\Planning\1. Curriculum\4. English\4. Reading\8. Reading Area checklist](#)



Classroom Reading Area- checklist		
Item	e.g.	Met?
Books are grouped and labelled in a way that makes them easily accessible.	Boxes/ labelled areas for: • Colour band books • Early chapter books • Challenging Reads • Selected authors • Topic texts • Non- Fiction • Comics • Newspapers/ magazine	
There is not an overwhelming number of books on display.	Quality books have been selected and these can be viewed easily (i.e. not piled up on top of each other). Unsuitable (very old or non-age appropriate) books have been removed.	
There is a balance of quality texts from a range of genres.	Including: • Fiction (adventure, comedy, classics, fantasy, mystery etc.) • Non-fiction (history, geography, science etc) • Newspapers • Magazines • Comics • Poetry	
The reading is clearly signposted as an area for reading.	Reading area/ book corner signage or similar.	
The reading area is a welcoming and comfortable place to read.	The focus is not on elaborate decorations or themes, but rather creating an area that encourages engagement with quality books. Pillows, rugs, throws etc. may encourage children to sit in this area and read.	
There is an interactive element within the reading corner.	This could be: • a 'book of the week' selected by the teacher, and/or children, which children are invited to rate. • simple book review forms that children can fill in and look at for peer recommendations	
Recommend texts have been sign posted by the teacher	A small selection of high-quality books have been displayed in an eye-catching way to encourage children to try them.	
Reading wall displays		
Key Stage 1	• Gem Federation display of all phase sounds needed in your class.	
Key Stage 2	• Gem Federation Reading strategies on display • Reading Vipers on display • Key reading question prompts on display	
Recommendations:		

Reading Books

BIG CAT Letters and Sounds reading scheme book order:

Big Cat Colour Scheme

	Colour	Phonics Phase	Band	Year Group Exp
Big Cat - Decodable Letters and Sounds *It is important that these books are the Letters and Sounds Version to go along with the phonics scheme	Lilac	Phase 1		Nursery
	Pink 1A	Phase 2	Band 1A	Reception
	Pink 1B	Phase 2	Band 1B	Reception
	Red 2A	Phase 3	Band 2A	Reception
	Red 2B	Phase 3	Band 2B	Reception
	Yellow	Phase 4	Band 3	ELG
	Blue	Phase 4	Band 4	End of Reception/Year 1
	Green	Phase 5	Band 5	Year 1
	Orange	Phase 5	Band 6	Year 1
	Turquoise	Phase 5/5+	Band 7	End of Year 1/ Year 2
Big Cat Non- Decodable	Purple		Band 8	Year 2
	Gold		Band 9	Year 2
	White		Band 10	Year 2
	Lime		Band 11	Year 2/Year 3
	Copper		Band 12	Year 3
	Topaz		Band 13	Year 3
	Ruby		Band 14	Year 4
	Emerald		Band 15	Year 4
	Sapphire		Band 16	Year 5
	Diamond		Band 17	Year 6

Children on our phonics scheme or reading below Topaz must continue to reading the BIG CAT Letters and Sounds reading scheme.

Children reading Topaz or above teachers have the following options:

- Remain on the BIG CAT reading scheme to support a child's fluency or comprehension if there are concerns
- Move onto free reading chapter books.

'Book Club' in EYFS & KS1

Children begin book club in nursery and continue to have book club sessions up until they are in Year 6.

Book club in EYFS and KS1 is slightly different to the book club in KS2 but follows most of the same principles as outlined below.

Key differences:

- Adult to engage in book club in groups while children are in free flow provision
- Books are complex in nature and support children's comprehension
- The teacher reads the book to the children as books will not be pitched to their phonics level, but instead chosen for their language, and ability to support discussion and comprehension skills.
- See [Early Teaching of Reading and Phonics Handbook](#) for further information.

'Book Club' KS2

Core Structure

- **Text Selection:** Texts used must not be the main book being read in English lessons, and should vary across genres.
- **Grouping:** Groups should be broadly ability-based and do not need to have equal numbers.
 - *Example:* Your highest group may have 8 children, while your lowest group may only have 2 or 3.
- **Targeted Support:** If children are working 2 or more years below age-related expectations, use this time to read 1:1 with them instead of placing them in a group.
- **The rest of the class:** Children, except those doing their pre-reading task and the group working directly with the teacher, must engage in silent free reading.

Pre-Reading Task (Day 1)

- **Task Assignment:** One group each session is given 1-2 discussion-based questions to review. They will answer these the following day during their guided session with their teacher
 - *KS1 Example:* "Why is Jaime cross in the book? How do you know?"
 - *KS2 Example:* "How is time represented throughout the chapter?"
- **Recording:** Children work independently to formulate and research ideas. They can jot down thoughts to assist their upcoming discussion, but this is not a requirement and must not be done in comprehension books. There is no expectation to formally record answers; this is purely time to connect with the text.

Book Club Session with the Teacher (Day 2)

- **Guided Discussion:** Children answer the previous day's questions in a guided group.
- **Teacher Role:** Facilitate conversations only where necessary. The ultimate goal is for the discussion to be child-led.
- **Skill Development:** Encourage children to uplevel their answers and respond directly to each other. The core objective is peer-to-peer conversation and collaborative development.
- **Recording & Assessment:** No formal written work is required from the children. Teachers should take their own notes to inform formative assessment.

Rest of the class - Reading for pleasure

All other groups will be, using class library, home reading books, diverse books, comics. Anything the children want to read.



Whole Class Reading Session (WCR)

Session Structure:

- **Frequency:** 2-3 sessions per week.
- **Timing:** Approximately 20 minutes per lesson (structured as a short input, reading time, answering 3 questions, modelled marking, and upleveling).
- **Text Selection:** Based on the text currently being used for English lessons (or another suitable text if this is not possible).
- **Teacher Modelling:** The teacher and children unpick the text together. The teacher models how to answer 2 or 3 questions, demonstrating specific strategies for different question types.

WCR Tasks & Question Design

- **Quantity:** Maximum of 3 or 4 questions per session.
- **Question Split:** 2-3 basic questions (1-2 marks), followed by a final question that requires evidence from the text.
 - **Evidence-based marking:** 2 marks for Years 2,3 & 4; 3 marks for Years 5 & 6.
 - **Upleveling:** The evidence-based question must be modelled by the teacher during marking. Children must actively uplevel their answers in **red pen**.
- **Book Maintenance:** All WCR tasks must be kept in dedicated Whole Class Reading Books.
- **Layout:** Vary the presentation of questions once the style has been explicitly taught (e.g., multiple choice, tick-box, matching lines). These must mirror the official SATs layout style.
- **Question Types:** Vary questions using the VIPERS framework and label them clearly (e.g., *Retrieval (R)*, *Inference (I)*, *Evaluative (E)*, *Vocabulary (V)*).
- **Marking Progression (Year 3+):**
 - Questions must explicitly display how many marks they are worth.
 - When answering explanation or summarising questions, Middle Attainers (MA) and High Attainers (HA) must explicitly use the text to evidence their answers.

Marking & Feedback

- **Self-Marking:** Children are to mark their own work during the modelled feedback section.
- **Teacher Validation:** Teachers must provide an acknowledgment in the WCR books (a simple tick in **green pen** is sufficient).

LAYOUT OF QUESTIONS- IN GR BOOKS

LQ: Can you answer questions about a text?			Tests pages 21-26	READING ASSESSMENT			Tests pages 21-26
☐ Achieved	☐ Independent	Date: 10.3.23		☐ Achieved	☐ Independent	Date: 10.3.23	
☐ Working towards	☐ With Assistance			☐ Working towards	☐ With Assistance		
☐ Did not achieve	☐ Pairs/Groups			☐ Did not achieve	☐ Pairs/Groups		

Q	V	Page	Question	marks
1.	V	Page 3	What do the words ... and ... suggest about the character?	2 marks
2.	P	Page 4	From the cover, what do you think the text is going to be about?	1 mark
3.	R	Page 4	What do we learn about this character's appearance? Match the noun to the description. Legs short and pointed Skin curly Beard shaped like a goat Hair reddish	2 marks
4.	V	Page 6	Drops of rain drowsily float like feathers. Pick a word below that's closest to the word 'drowsily' in meaning. (Circle one) cheerfully slowly quickly brightly	1 mark

Question numbers

Question Type, using VIPERS

Page Number

Amount of marks a question holds

Variety of layouts Years 2-5

Assessment

- **Assessment Tool:** Teachers will utilise blind comprehension tasks from the *Rising Stars Reading Assessments* for Year 2 (starting in the Spring term when formal comprehension begins) and upwards.

These can be found in the [Gem shared reading curriculum folder](#).

- **Frequency:** Administered 4 times across the academic year:
 1. Early Autumn 1: Entry data
 2. End of Autumn 2: Assessment data
 3. Spring 2: Assessment data
 4. Summer 2: Assessment data
- **Data Entry & Storage:** Assessment results must be input directly into the tracking spreadsheet located in the staff drive:
- **Evidence:** The physical assessment sheets should be stuck into the children's Whole Class Reading books to support and validate teacher assessment judgements.

Story Time - Reading for Pleasure

All classes should be spending 10 mins each afternoon (usually at the end of the day) to read a class book for pleasure.

Currently, this is teachers/children's choice either to support topic or a book that the class are interested in.

Guided Reading Skills - VIPERS (Year 2+)

VIPERS is an acronym to aid the recall of the 6 reading domains as part of the UK's reading curriculum. They are the key areas which we feel children need to know and understand in order to improve their comprehension of texts

KS1

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Sequence

KS2

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Summarise

The 6 domains focus on the comprehension aspect of reading and not the mechanics.

They allow the teacher to track the type of questions asked and the children's responses to these which allows for targeted questioning afterwards

KS1

Children's reading skills are taught and practised in Year 2 using KS1 VIPERS during Whole class and Guided Reading sessions (Autumn 2)

KS1 Content Domain Reference	VIPER
1a draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts	Vocabulary
1b identify/ explain key aspects of fiction and non-fiction, such as characters, events, titles and information.	Retrieve
1c identify and explain the sequences of events in texts	Sequence
1d make inferences from the text	Infer
1e predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far	Predict

KS2

Children's reading skills are taught and practised using VIPERS during Whole class and Guided Reading sessions

KS2 Content Domain Reference	VIPER
2a Give/explain the meaning of words in context	Vocabulary
2b retrieve and record information/ identify key details from fiction and non-fiction	Retrieve
2c summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph	Summarise
2d make inferences from the text/ explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text	Infer
2e predict what might happen from details stated or implied	Predict
2f identify/explain how information/ narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole	Explain
2g identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases	Explain
2h make comparisons within a text	Explain

To see how VIPERS Skills progress from Year 2 - Year 6 use the [Vipers progression document](#):

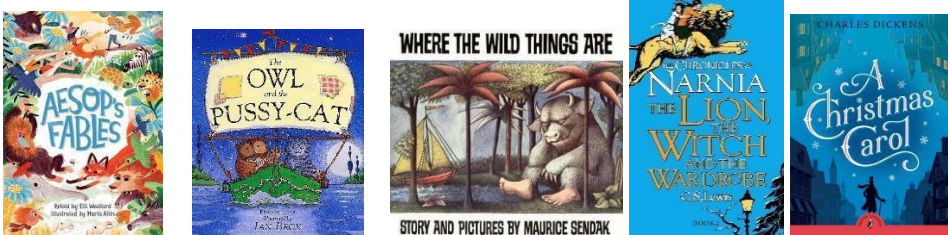
Inference	Answer "why" questions to develop understanding of story context and simple motivations.	Make inferences on the basis of what is being said and done.	Draw inferences, such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts, and motives from their actions, justifying with evidence.	Make inferences about characters, events, and themes, justifying them with evidence from the text.	Make inferences about the meaning and context of the text, justifying answers with textual evidence and reasoned explanations.
Prediction	anticipate phrases in rhymes and stories"	Anticipate events in stories based on pictures or previous experiences with similar stories.	Predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far.	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied, evaluating the accuracy of predictions as the text unfolds.
Explanation		Explain preferences for particular stories, characters, or events.	Explain clearly their understanding of what is read to them.	Discuss words and phrases that capture interest and imagination, explaining their effect.	Explain and discuss how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning, considering the author's purpose.
Retrieval		Recall characters, settings, and major events in stories with guidance and support.	Retrieve basic information by discussing the who, what, where, and when of the text.	Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction, using key details.	Retrieve, record, and present information from a range of sources, synthesizing main ideas.
Sequencing and summarising		Retell stories and narratives using their own words and understanding of sequence.	Sequence events in the order they occur in a text.	Summarise the main ideas from a text, using their understanding of sequence and structure.	Summarise main ideas drawn from multiple paragraphs, identifying key details and evaluating how the sequence affects meaning.
Poetry and Performance	- Listen to and enjoy poems and nursery rhymes, participating through actions, gestures, and joining in with key phrases. - Develop an awareness of rhythm, rhyme, and sound patterns in poems and songs.	- Learn to recite simple poems and rhymes by heart, with increasing fluency and expression. - Use voice expressively to recite known poems, focusing on rhythm and rhyme.	Continue to build a repertoire of poems learned by heart, showing some expression and appropriate intonation. - Recite poetry to an audience with confidence, using appropriate volume and clarity	- Prepare poems to read aloud and perform, focusing on the meaning of the text. - Develop use of intonation, tone, and volume to clarify the meaning for listeners.	- Prepare and perform poems with growing sophistication, using tone, volume, and pace to enhance meaning. - Analyze how authors use rhythm and structure in poetry, experimenting with these elements in performance.

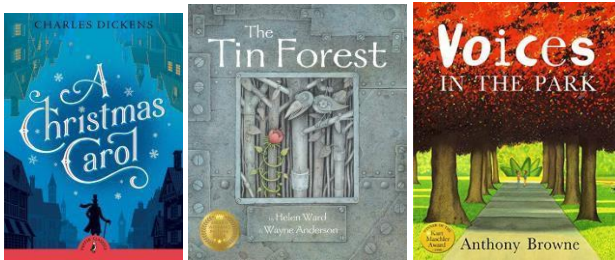
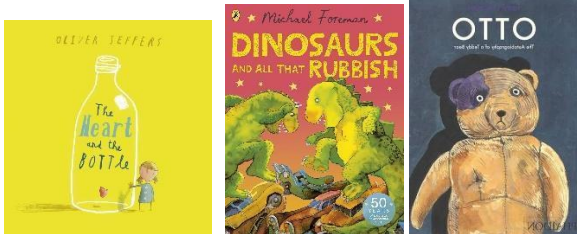
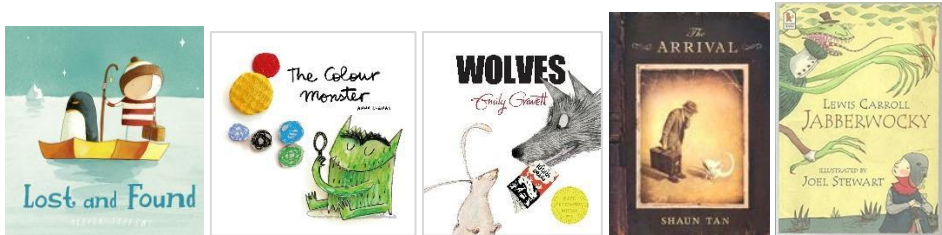
High Quality Texts

In order for children to be equipped with a strong command of spoken and written language and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment, the Gem Federation is committed to using 'High Quality' texts to support the delivery of the reading curriculum. A 'High Quality' text in the context of our Federation, means a text that address any of the following criteria:

- be used to develop vocabulary, punctuation and grammar skills due to the quality of the content.
- positively reflect children's interests and backgrounds
- deal with important themes.
- use language in lively and inventive ways.
- be written by skillful and experienced children's writers and illustrators.
- be used to promote discussion and reflection. • be a traditional or contemporary classic
- have different cultural settings.
- be multi-layered/capable of being read at different levels.

[Doug Lemov, refers to 5 plagues of reading](#) that children should have access to, in order to navigate reading with confidence.

Plague	
Archaic Language	• Vocabulary and expressions are antiquated • Old fashioned phrasing • Traditional tales or contemporary classics 

Non-Linear Time Sequences	• Language is used in lively and inventive ways • Time moves in fits and starts • Narration is nuanced to create an image. 
Narratively Complex/ Misleading	• Stories narrated by an unreliable narrator • A non-human narrator • Multiple narrators • Multiple intertwined and (seemingly) unrelated plot lines 
Figurative /symbolic texts	• Moral or hidden meanings • Complex plot, symbolism • For example, folk tales and fables 
Resistance Texts	• written to deliberately resist easy meaning-making by readers • most poems fall into this category • meaning assembled around 'nuances, hints uncertainties and clues' 

Diverse and Inclusive Texts:

It is important to us that our chosen texts reflect the diversity of the wider school community, therefore we ensure that within each year group, we are also choosing texts that:

- include different cultural settings;
- are inclusive of children's interests and backgrounds;
- deal with important themes;
- include authors/characters from diverse racial backgrounds;
- include gender diverse texts that can be used to promote discussion and reflection

