

# Supporting your child's learning

## CONTENTS

How can I help my child with their organisational skills?

How can I help my child develop their listening skills?

How can I help support my child with their spelling?

How can I help support my child with their writing/handwriting?

How can I help support my child with their reading?

How can I help support my child with their numeracy skills?

How can I help my child to learn and remember their times tables?

How to keep your child motivated and positive in spelling.

How can I help and support my child at home with their home learning?

How do I keep my child motivated and happy at school?

Useful equipment for school/home learning.

Useful websites/Online games



## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD WITH THEIR ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS?

- Routine is important. Always pack bags the night before school. If you start this routine whilst your child is young, it is more likely to become a habit.
- When something has to be remembered during the school day, sticky tape the information or list on the inside lid of the school bag so your child will see it every time they open their bag. Similarly, when going on trips, sticky tape a list of things in the bag so they can be checked off before leaving.
- Schoolbags with sections to aid organization of books and materials needed.
- Lost items can sometimes be found if you retrace your steps aloud.
- Smaller boxes can be put into drawers so that small items can have a place of their own. This also teaches children to categorize.
- Tidy desks on a weekly basis so tidying remains manageable.
- Use a calendar and check it together every Sunday evening. Use a wall planner for showing the year's events by month.

[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD DEVELOP THEIR LISTENING SKILLS?

- Listen for sounds (musical notes, scrunching paper, shaking keys etc.)
- Play 'Twister' or non competitive direction games e.g. take two steps to the left, one step back etc. or blindfold and give directions to find an object.
- Play 'Simon Says'.
- Play 'I Spy' (listening for beginning, end and the middle sounds).
- Play rhyming games (what rhymes with ...?).
- Play games of 'What am I?' e.g. 'I have six legs, I am black, I am small ... An ant!'
- Listen to stories on audio CD, then answer questions about them afterwards.



[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW CAN I HELP SUPPORT MY CHILD WITH THEIR SPELLING?

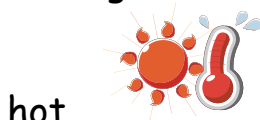
- When writing long words show your child how easy it is to spell them by breaking them into smaller parts or 'chunking' the words using syllables. Eg cob...web, mag...net, cot...ton
- Click this link to take you to a printable practise your spelling template.
- Mnemonics and acronyms can be very helpful for learning small words, which do not follow a regular phonetic pattern e.g. here elephants run everywhere. For 'here'. The mnemonic should start with the word you are trying to learn, and should be accompanied by a drawing to reinforce memory. Use pictures to help recall.



- Use ridiculous pronunciations e.g. 'people (pee...ople)'.  
Rhyming words can often unlock the key to memory. Even if the word is misspelt it will be phonetically based so it can be understood.
- eep: sheep, jeep, beep, weep, sweep, steep

- Letter Cards: Make one of your spelling words into letter cards. Turn the cards face down, muddle them up and then try to create your word by turning up on letter card at a time and putting the letters in the right order.
- Draw my word: Pick a word and draw it without talking. E.g. for the word 'here' you could draw a person pointing, or for the word 'said' you may draw someone with a speech bubble. Get your partner to guess the word, they have 30 seconds and must write their guess correctly to score a point. Take it in turns.
- Break your work into syllables and write the syllables in different colours and/or in bubble writing.
- Find little words in bigger words. Write them in a line underneath the main word. Draw pictures to help you remember.

Eg hotdog



- Wordsearch: Use squared paper. Link your words in a crossword grid. Fill in other random letters to make a word search. See if your partner can find your words.

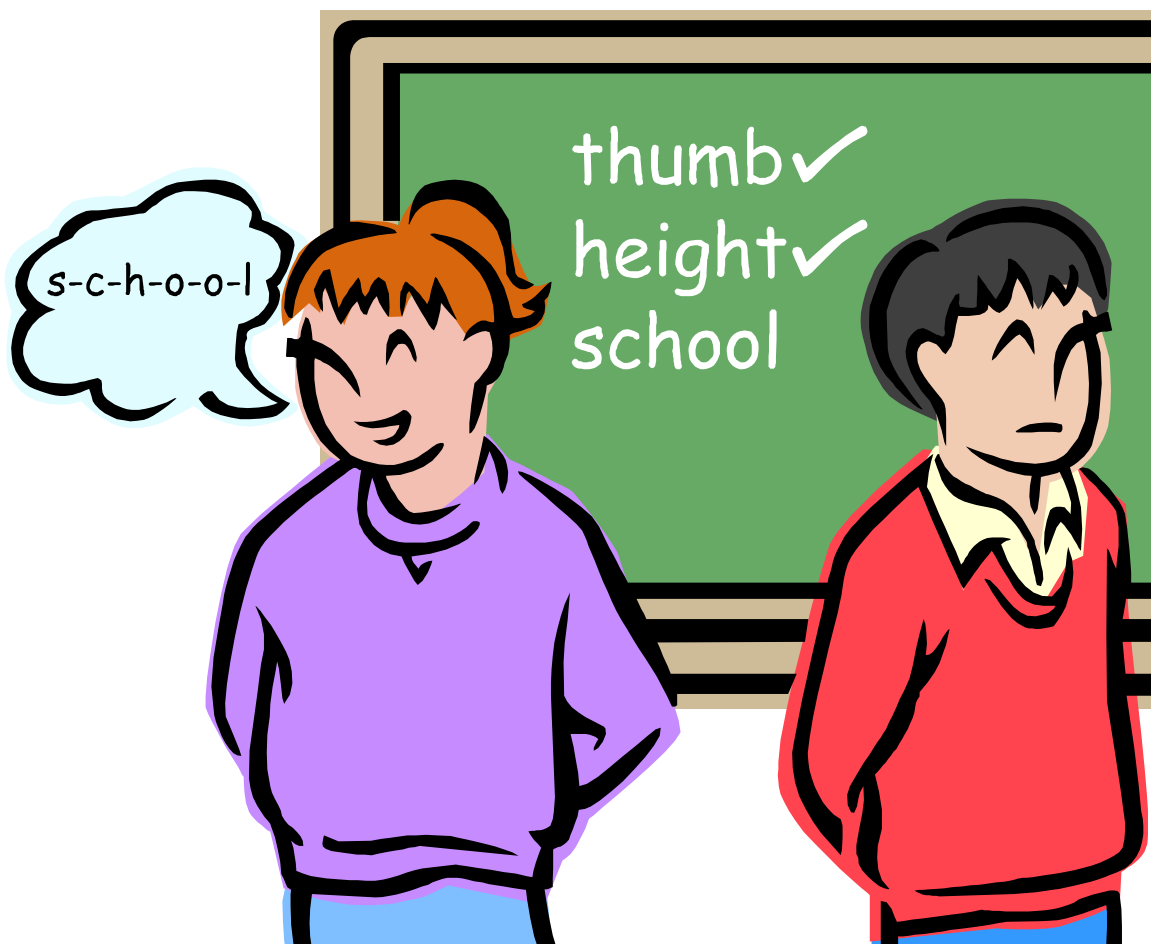
Try this link to a free 'make your own word search' site

<http://www.studenthandouts.com/Assortment-01/Graphic-Organizers/Blank-Word-Search-Puzzle-Grid.html>

- One way crossword: Count the letters in each of your words. Make some clues for your words using a dictionary to help. E.g. An animal that has antlers (4) Answer Deer.

Try this link to a free 'make your own crossword' site:  
<http://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/crossword/>

- Dictation sentences are a good method for practising and testing spellings. Here is an approach you may like to use:-
  1. Dictate the whole sentence.
  2. Ask the child to repeat it.
  3. Dictate it again, saying each word very clearly.
  4. Child writes the sentence saying it clearly as they write it.
  5. Child asked to read aloud exactly what they have written.
  6. Go through together making any necessary corrections.

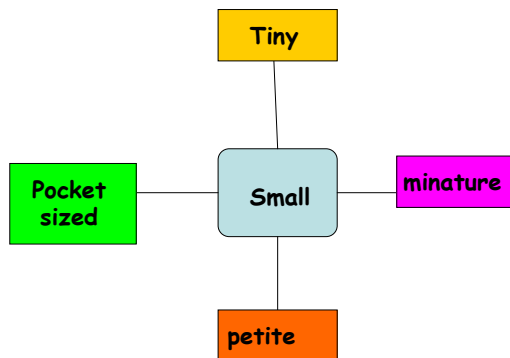


[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW CAN I HELP SUPPORT MY CHILD WITH THEIR WRITING/HANDWRITING?

- Use a whiteboard, or a fridge door, with a dry wipe marker pen for practising spellings.
- If your child's handwriting needs improving, start by using a large, fat crayon or whiteboard pen, then gradually progress to paper. 5 minutes practise every night, counting the number of words written and keeping a graphical record, then giving a reward at the end of the week is a good, regular way to improve writing. Do not forget that writing can be used to make patterns, which can then be coloured in. Borders around drawings can be made in this way and often make interesting designs.
- Give starting sentences and phrases. Often, children have lots of ideas but do not know how to start. Once they have been given a starting sentence they can proceed.
- Brain storm alternative word choices that mean the same thing.

Eg.



- Planning is important. Try mind mapping and then prioritise the points. Each point will become a paragraph.

[Click to return to contents.](#)

**1. The Beginning**

Introduce the main characters and describe the setting. What will your opening sentence be?

**2. The Build-Up**

What things happen? What clues are there? What is said? How do you build up the excitement?

**3. The Problem or Dilemma**

Things might go wrong! Is there a mystery, or do terrible things happen? Are there any disagreements?

**4. The Resolution**

How are things going to be sorted out? Problems have to be solved, and people made happy again.

**5. The Ending**

Does the story end happily ever after? What have people learned? Have characters changed?

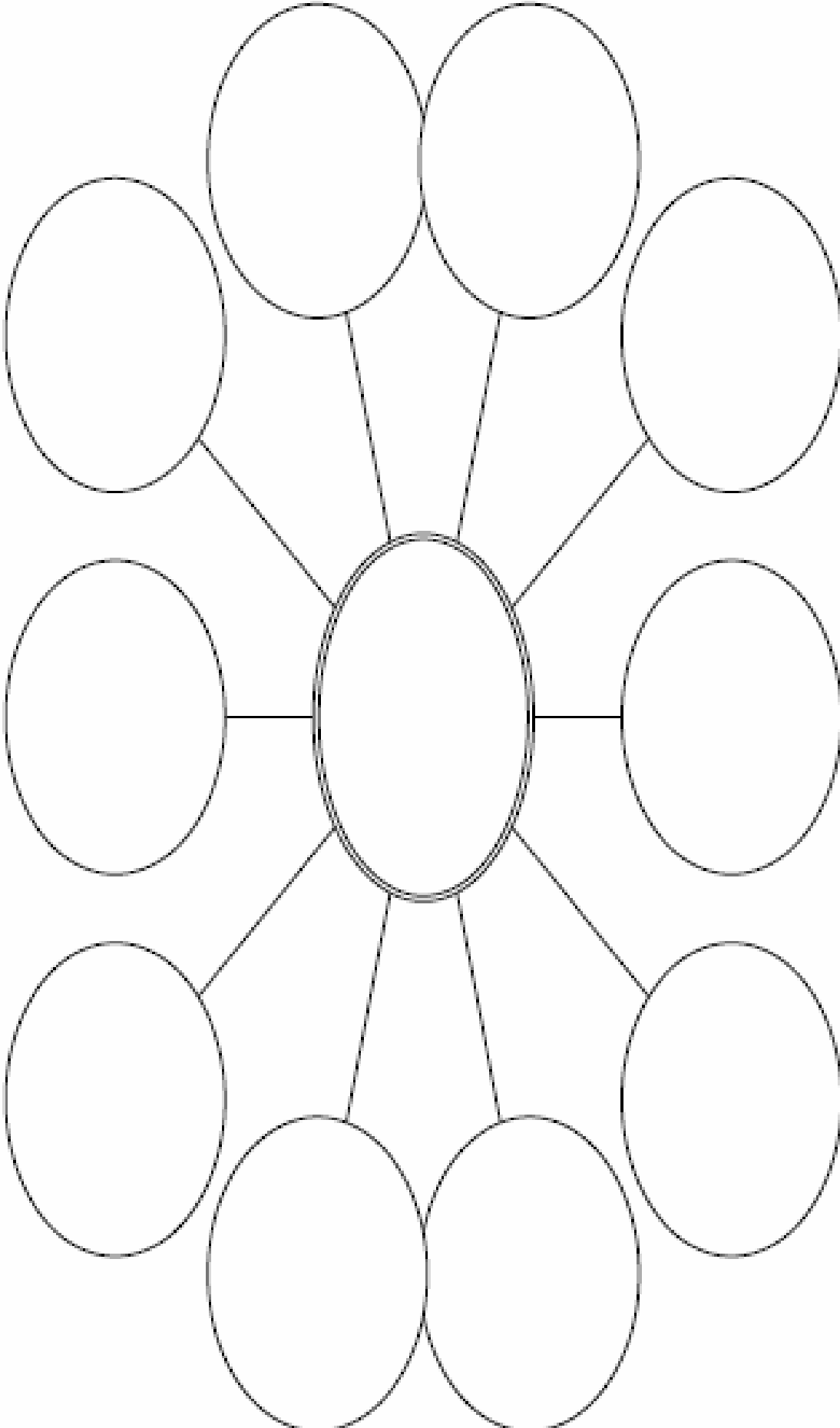
**THE STORY MOUNTAIN PLANNER**

Name ..... Date .....



# Example of a mind map

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## HOW CAN I HELP SUPPORT MY CHILD WITH THEIR READING?

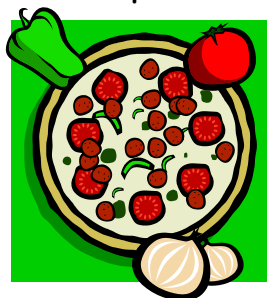
- Check vision with a qualified optometrist every 6 months.
- Use a card to help keep place.
- Paired reading. Read with your child at bedtime and let them read parts to you. Hold your finger under the word being read. When they get tired or come to a hard passage or word you take over. Try stopping at a very exciting stage so that they really want to know what comes next. Perhaps ask your child to draw a picture of this event and together write two or three good words to describe it or write a caption. Stop at suitable points and ask what the child thinks might happen next, or what just happened.
- Choose fun books - comics and magazines are colourful and have short, manageable articles, so they may be more suitable for a child who has difficulty reading for a long period of time.
- The emphasis of reading should be enjoyment. As a love of books develops your child will want to read more.



[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW CAN I HELP SUPPORT MY CHILD WITH THEIR NUMERACY SKILLS?

- Play with dice and dominoes to improve recognition of spot patterns and to encourage counting on and back. E.g. Yahtzee, knock on the box, snakes and ladders, monopoly.
- Explore the language of maths. Broaden your child's mathematical vocabulary as much as possible, using a wide variety of common synonyms for basic maths operations. For example, synonyms for 'subtract' might be 'minus', 'take away', 'less than', 'fewer than', 'decrease(d)', 'take(n) from', 'reduce(d)', 'difference', etc.
- Try to 'visualize' a maths problem. Maybe draw a picture to help understand the problem.
- Read the maths problem out loud and listen very carefully. This allows the child to use their auditory skills as well.
- Try to think of a real-life situation that would involve this type of maths problem.
- Undertake maths problems on graph paper to keep the numbers in line.
- Use rhythm or music to help memorize maths facts.



**In the Kitchen:** There are lots of maths tasks you can do with your child in the kitchen. Some are messy, others are not!

- Calculate how much of an ingredient is needed to prepare for a meal, given the amount for each person.
- How many tablespoons of flour weigh 250g? How many of sugar?

- Cut up cakes or pizza into equal pieces. What fraction has been eaten? What fraction is left?
- How much do you drink a day?
- Calculate the ingredients needed if a recipe is doubled, tripled or halved.
- Calculate the time taken to cook a meal/recipe?



**Birthdays:** Plan a birthday party (real or imagined!)

- How many guests?
- How much food? (quantities/cost)
- Party bags (sharing sweets or gifts, give a total, what could you buy?)
- Plan a timetable for games, food etc. How long do you need?
- Make a cake - what quantities will you need? How many slices?



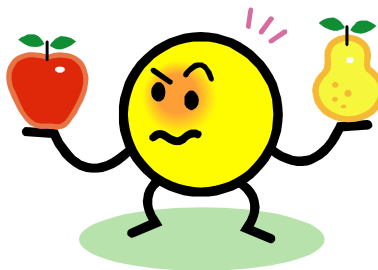
**In the Bathroom:**

- Find different shaped bottles that hold the same amount.
- How many small bottles fill a 1 litre container?
- How many litres of water do you use when you have a bath?
- How many medicine spoons are needed to fill a container?
- How many milliliters does a container hold? (Convert the units)



**Watching television:** Read the television schedule.

- How long before your favourite programme starts? How long is it on for?
- How long do you watch television for each night, week, month etc?
- Set the video for a programme using the 24 hour clock - calculate the duration.



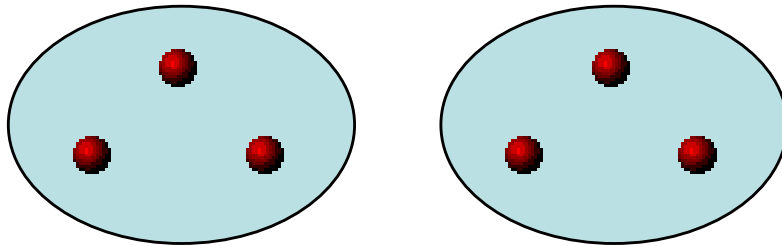
**Shopping:** Let your child help with the shopping by:

- Helping make the shopping list.
- Weighing the fruit and veg (How many apples/tomatoes per kilo?)
- Finding the best way to pack the bags/boxes (consider size, shape, weight etc.)
- Comparing prices and quantities of different brands. Determine which costs less per unit of measure.
- Estimate the amount which will appear on the bill in total.
- Calculate how much is saved on special offers.
- Add up the prices on special offer leaflets - How much is being saved. What would three cost?
- What would you buy if you had £10? What about £20 (The Argos catalogue is good for this).

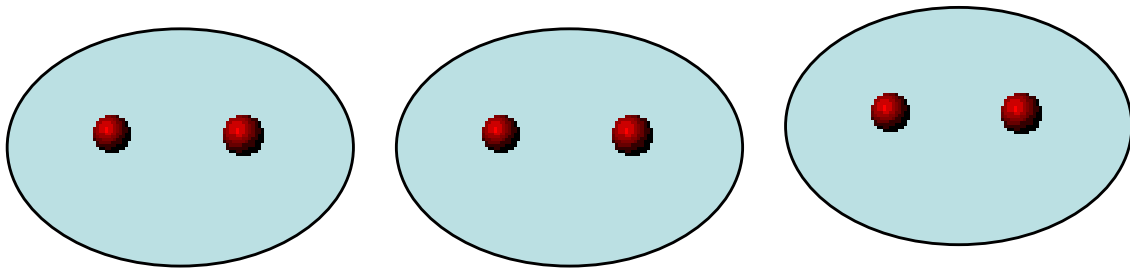
[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD TO LEARN AND REMEMBER THEIR TIMES TABLES?

Before starting to help your child learn their times tables ensure that they have understood the concept that



2 groups of 3 are identical to



3 groups of 2

$$\text{i.e. } 2 \times 3 = 3 \times 2$$

Learning times tables in the following order means that a 'Times table' can be started: 2x 10x 5x

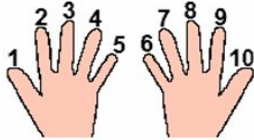
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2</b>	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
<b>3</b>	6			15					30
<b>4</b>	8			20					40
<b>5</b>	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
<b>6</b>	12			30					60
<b>7</b>	14			35					70
<b>8</b>	16			40					80
<b>9</b>	18			45					90
<b>10</b>	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

Some children forget where they are when reciting tables. If, on these easy tables, they tap them out on their fingers **in the correct order**, then they can see which finger corresponds to which times table they are doing.

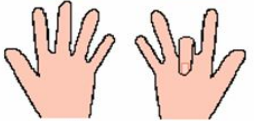
The next table to learn is 9x. Most children think 9x is **really** hard - but not this way!

### Multiplying by nine

Here is a simple way to multiply by nine using your fingers.



Hold both your hands up with palms facing you. Number the fingers from left to right as one to ten.



Now hold down the finger of the number you want to multiply by nine. In this example, we are going to multiply by eight, so the eighth finger is held down.



The fingers to the left as the tens and the fingers to the right are units. In this example, there are seven fingers to the left (marked blue) and two to the right (marked red) which makes 72.

3 Times table comes next.

Take a close look at your fingers - they come in 3 sections.  
Stroke down the fingers in the correct order while speaking the answers.



Now your times table looks like this:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2</b>	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
<b>3</b>	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
<b>4</b>	8	12		20				36	40
<b>5</b>	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
<b>6</b>	12	18		30				54	60
<b>7</b>	14	21		35				63	70
<b>8</b>	16	24		40				72	80
<b>9</b>	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
<b>10</b>	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

4 Times table doesn't seem to cause too much trouble now. Perhaps 'doubling 2' or noting the pattern for 4x, 6x and 8x or stroking fingers as in the 3x down to the palm making 4 sections.

Learn these tables in groups of 5

+ 20	
1x4= 4	6x4=24
2x4= 8	7x4=28
3x4=12	8x4=32
4x4=16	9x4=36
5x4=20	10x4=40

+ 30	
1x6= 6	6x6=36
2x6=12	7x6=42
3x6=18	8x6=48
4x6=24	9x6=54
5x6=30	10x6=60

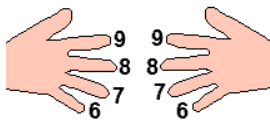
$$\begin{array}{r}
 + 40 \\
 1 \times 8 = 8 \quad 6 \times 8 = 48 \\
 2 \times 8 = 16 \quad 7 \times 8 = 56 \\
 3 \times 8 = 24 \quad 8 \times 8 = 64 \\
 4 \times 8 = 32 \quad 9 \times 8 = 72 \\
 5 \times 8 = 40 \quad 10 \times 8 = 80
 \end{array}$$

The tables that cause most trouble are these:

	6	7	8
6	36	42	48
7	42	49	56
8	48	56	64

9 spaces but only 6 to learn

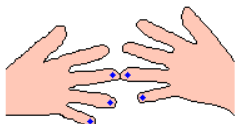
Label fingers 6 - 10 as in the diagram below



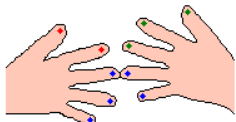
Hold your hands with palms facing you and fingers towards each other. Number the fingers on each hand from bottom to top as six to nine. (The thumb could be ten, but it's easy to multiply by ten, so don't bother!)



Now touch the two fingers of the numbers that you want to multiply. You may need to twist your hand slightly to do this. This example is multiplying eight by seven, so the finger number 8 touches the finger number 7 on the other hand.



Now for the calculation. First you add the fingers below and including the touching ones. These are the tens. Here there are five of them, three on one hand and two on the other (marked blue), so that makes  $5 \times 10 = 50$ .



Then you multiply the fingers on the left hand above the touching ones with the fingers on the right hand above the touching ones. These are the units. Here there are two fingers on the left (marked red), and three fingers on the right (marked green), so that makes  $2 \times 3 = 6$ . Add this to the 50 you've already got, and that makes 56.

$6 \times 6$  and  $6 \times 7$  is a bit more complicated in that  $6 \times 6$  is viewed as  $20 + 16$  and  $6 \times 7$  is  $30 + 12$ .

If you want to recite 6x, 7x and 8x tables, fingers can now be used in sequence using this method.

The completed table!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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<b>3</b>	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
<b>4</b>	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
<b>5</b>	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
<b>6</b>	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
<b>7</b>	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
<b>8</b>	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
<b>9</b>	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
<b>10</b>	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW TO KEEP YOUR CHILD MOTIVATED AND POSITIVE IN SPELLING



### **Set up your child for success.**

Don't even think about sitting down to practise your spelling if your child is cranky, hungry, or has lots of pent-up energy! Go for a brisk walk around the block or send the kids out in the garden to play for 10-minutes. Have a high-protein snack to keep the brain energy up, and get the good endorphins working in your child's favour! By starting 'on the right foot', your child will be more receptive to learning!



### **Work at your child's level.**

It's important to select the appropriate level of spelling instruction for each child. If you start at a level that is above your child's head, he'll start out feeling as if they are already behind, which can promote feelings of inadequacy and stress caused by your child's inability to perform up to the level expected. Try to avoid focusing on class levels. If your child needs to learn the rules for adding Silent E (magic e/split vowel diagraph), go back to that lesson, no matter what "class" he's in.



**Correct mistakes in a helpful, instructive way.**

Tailor your responses to the type of spelling mistake. For example, if your child misspells a word that you feel he should have been able to spell, ask them to self-check their spelling to see if he can spot the mistake on their own. If the mistake is related to your child's pronunciation of the word, remind your child to "pronounce for spelling." You can also review any spelling rules that are applicable to the situation. Encourage your child to practise the misspelled word by spelling it with letter tiles and then writing it on paper. (see tips on spelling)



**Use charts to show progress when practising.**

It's motivating to see where you've been and how much progress you and your child have made together. Take the time to track your advancement on the progress chart and celebrate each accomplishment accordingly. Make cupcakes, go to the beach, or visit Grandma—small celebrations can commemorate the occasion and provide incentive and excitement for future lessons.

**Try this link for free reward charts:**

**<http://www.vertex42.com/ExcelTemplates/reward-charts.html>**



### **Avoid negative comments.**

As motivating as the progress chart can be, you can just as quickly put a damper on your child's enthusiasm by making negative comments. Take steps to minimize negativity, and avoid expressing your own frustration or impatience with your child. Stay away from phrases such as:

"You're not trying."

"I've already taught this to you!"

"I don't think you'll ever get this!"

"Just concentrate."

These types of negative comments are never effective. No child ever thinks to himself, "Oh, you're right. I will improve my concentration right now." Instead, these phrases build frustration and resentment toward spelling, and part of your child's brain shuts down. Give a hug, take a break, and come back to the lesson later, when both of you are ready to approach the lesson with a fresh perspective and your customary enthusiasm.



### **Point out the positive.**

Make it a point to regularly praise your child's good work and progress, which will build your child's confidence and encourage them to strive for further success. During working on your spellings, include positive phrases such as:

"Very good! You are a quick learner!"

"You remembered that from yesterday—great!"

"Way to go!"

"Excellent—you did so well!"

"You are doing great!"

Encouraging words have a positive impact on children, so don't withhold this verbal affirmation of your approval.

The method with which you approach spelling can have a huge affect on your child's motivation.

[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW CAN I HELP AND SUPPORT MY CHILD AT HOME WITH THEIR HOME LEARNING?

- Let your child know that you are interested in their school learning.
- Set up an area for him or her that is free from distractions.
- Home learning should be part of the child's routine and schedule.
- Go over your child's assignments and calculate how much time it will take the child to complete the work.
- Using an egg timer to set the amount of time you work with your child allows you and your child to know when to stop and go and relax. Below is a rough idea of how long your child could focus for:-

Year 1 and Year 2	No more than 10 minutes
Year 3 and Year 4	Up to 20 minutes
Year 5 and Year 6	Up to 30 minutes

- Offer incentives to the child who needs extra motivation with school work. This could include watching a program on television, or playing a game with the parent.
- Understand that children do better when they learn things over a period of time.
- Teach your child how to make notes and how to properly review material.
- Set priorities for homework. If a child has a large project, help him or her figure out how to accomplish it by the due date.
- Take control over the television in your home. Do not allow children to do homework in front of the television. It will only take the child longer to complete the work, and less of it will be retained.



- Figure out a good time for homework. Many children do well working on their homework right after they get home from school. Others need a break of an hour or more to regroup before tackling their homework.
- Look over your child's homework after it has been completed.
- Be available to your child when he or she is doing homework to help. Allow yourself enough time to help your child with their homework
- Hire a tutor, if needed.
- Attend school events like 'TCPs' or school information evenings.
- Offer to help with your child's class on a field trip.
- Attend sports engagements that your child or your child's friends participate in.
- Praise and encourage your child to help boost their confidence.
- Refrain from completing your child's homework for them.
- Use the library.
- Don't get stressed out by homework - if you are, your child will be too.



[Click to return to contents.](#)

## HOW DO I KEEP MY CHILD MOTIVATED AND HAPPY AT SCHOOL?

- Show the child that you are interested in their day at school.
- Know the names of the children in your child's class.
- Listen to your child's stories about school and become an active listener.
- Ask child about his or her friends.
- Encourage your child to become involved with a club or sport.
- Don't hesitate to contact the teacher if you have a question about your child's academic or social health.
- Talk and discuss things with your child that may be concerning him or her.



[Click to return to contents.](#)

## USEFUL EQUIPMENT FOR SCHOOL/HOME LEARNING

Ideally children should have a pencil case which they can use when carrying out work at home.

Below is a suggested list of what they should have:

- Glue



- An eraser



- A pencil
- A pencil sharpener



- A pen



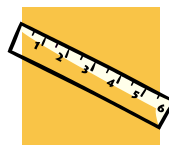
- A set of coloured pencils



- A pair of scissors



- A ruler



- A calculator



- Some plain and lined paper.



[Click to return to contents.](#)

## USEFUL WEBSITES/ONLINE GAMES

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/> Age appropriate, subject specific activities, games, worksheets and experiments. Also has revision activities.

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/> Fun and useful interactive activities for most subjects as well as games for the children.

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/> Contains links to interactive resources based on all subject areas.

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/> Plenty of worksheets and PowerPoint presentations covering most of the core areas of the curriculum

<http://www.ictgames.co.uk/> A whole range of interactive games.

<http://www.mathsisfun.com/> Games and explanation of different concepts.

<http://funbrain.com/brain/MathBrain/MathBrain.html> Fun maths games that can be set to different levels of difficulty. Each 'level' is a different game to the one preceding it.

<http://www.kidsgames4free.com/> A whole range of fun free games for upper KS1 and KS2 children.

[www.gogivers.org](http://www.gogivers.org) Great website focusing on Citizenship, it has lots of helpful information and even educational games for the children.

[Click to return to contents.](#)