

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Please find below a glossary of the terminology that children are expected to know by the end of year 6. As you will be able to see, it does get rather technical (especially when children are in KS2), so please do not worry about coming to ask for further clarification if required.

TERM	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
Abstract noun	Name of things you can't touch.	Fear, hope, worry
Active voice	When the subject of a sentence does something to an object.	Jim ate a chicken sandwich at lunch time.
Adjective	Describes the noun.	The cat is happy .
Adverb	Describes the verb.	The cat is extremely happy.
Ambiguity	Something that has more than one meaning.	
Antonym	Words that are opposites.	Hot/cold, fast/slow
Apostrophe	Punctuation mark to show when letters are missing from a word (omission). Punctuation mark to show when something belongs to someone (possession).	He couldn't do the puzzle. The girl's coat was hung on the back of the door.
Autobiography	A text written about your own life.	
Biography	A text written about someone else's life.	
Blending	Linking sounds together and saying the word in one go. Blending is an essential phonics skills that children are taught as part of learning to read.	
Brackets	Used to add extra information in a sentence. If removed the sentence will still make sense.	The man (who was late for his train) was running down the street.
Collective noun	The name of a group of objects.	A pack of wolves.
Colon	Come before a list, definition or quote.	There are many kinds of social networking sites: Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat and Twitter.
Common exception words	Words which the English spelling code works in an unusual or uncommon way.	Friend, school, library

Conjunction	Links two words or phrases together. There are two main types of conjunction: 1. Co-ordinating – links two main clauses. 2. Subordinating – links a main and subordinate clause.	Bat and ball. 1. Joe is young but he can catch a ball. 2. Everyone watches when Gemma does backflips.
Dash	Adds information to the end of a sentence	You may think she's a liar – she isn't.
Decode	Seeing written words on a page and being able to read them correctly.	
Determiner	Modifies the nouns. The, a and an are the most common	The dog found a bone in an old box.
Digraph	Two vowels together to make one sound.	Tail, boat, found, read
Direct speech	Is what someone is saying and is in first person. It has inverted commas around the spoken words.	“Can I have a cake please?” asked Jane.
Ellipsis	Punctuation mark consisting of three dots, used to express hesitation, changes of mood, suspense or thoughts of trailing off.	Why would he do that...?
Exclamation	An expression of shock followed by an exclamation mark.	Oh my goodness!
Expanded noun phrase	Add information to nouns making writing more interesting. They help the reader to build up a picture in their mind.	Noun: house Expanded noun phrase: The large, detached house was situated at the top of a hill.
Fronted adverbial	Fronted adverbials are words or phrases at the beginning of a sentence, used to describe the action that follows.	Before the sun came up , he ate his breakfast.
Future tense	What will happen in the future.	I will be going on holiday next month.
Grapheme	A written symbol that represents a sound. This can be a single letter or a sequence of letters.	Eg: s, t, ai, ow, sh, igh
Homonym	Words that are spelt the same and sound the same when pronounced but have a different meaning.	A dog will bark at strangers, A tree trunk is covered in bark .

Homophone	Words that sound the same are spelt differently and have different meanings.	Bear/bare Road/rode Root/route
Hyphen	Make new words out of two existing words.	Fire-proof Mother-in-law
Imperative verb	A bossy verb, used in instructions and directions.	Cut the onion. Take the exit.
Inverted commas	Go around spoken words in directed speech.	“Can I have a cake please?” asked Jane.
Main clause	A sentence that functions independently, it contains a subject and an object.	Mum is taking me to buy some new shoes.
Modal verb	Express possibility or certainty of a verb.	The bus will come. The bus might come.
Noun	The name of something.	Apple, pencil, house.
Noun phrase	Includes the noun and any words that describe it.	A large, black door.
Passive voice	When the object of the sentence is having something done to it.	At lunchtime, a chicken sandwich was eaten by John.
Past progressive	Puts emphasis on the course of an action in the past.	He was playing football.
Past tense	What has already happened.	John got married last week.
Phoneme	Smallest unit of sound.	
Plural	More than one.	Six dogs.
Prefix	A group of letters at the beginning of a word to change its meaning.	im + possible = impossible un + tidy = untidy
Preposition	Directional, time or position related words.	Up, under, over, on etc
Present progressive	Puts emphasis on the course of an action happening now.	He is playing football.
Present tense	What is happening now.	I am eating a sandwich.
Pronoun	Are used instead of names.	He, she, it, you, we, they, us etc
Proper noun	The name of a person, place, river. Proper nouns begin with a capital letter.	Julie, Liverpool, the Humber.
Relative clause	Clauses that start with relative pronouns (who, that, which, whose, where, when).	A notebook is a computer which can be carried around.
Relative pronoun	Used to connect a clause or phrase to a noun or pronoun.	That, who, which, whoever Eg: The cyclist who won the race had trained really hard.
Reported speech	Is saying what someone has said and is in third person. Inverted commas are not needed.	Jane asked if she could have a cake.

Root word	A basic word with no prefix of suffix added to it.	Root word is happy , with a prefix it could be unhappy, with a suffix it could be happiness
Semi colon	Separates items in a list. Joins two sentences into a single sentence.	He needed oranges; potatoes; bread; eggs and cheese from the supermarket. Dad is going bald; his hair is getting very thin.
Simile	Compares two things that are not similar, usually by using the words 'as' or 'like'.	As cool as a cucumber. As cute as a kitten.
Singular	One thing.	An apple.
Split digraph	When a digraph is split by a consonant.	a-e as in cake i-e as in pipe
Subjunctive	Is used to express intention or proposal about the future.	If I were rich, I would buy a Porsche.
Subordinate clause	Part of the sentence that is dependent on another part – they will not make sense on their own.	When she has finished work , Mum is taking me to buy some new shoes.
Suffix	A group of letters added to the end of the word to change its meaning.	Cheer + ful = cheerful
Syllable	The beats in a word.	'Happening' has three syllables
Synonym	Words which have similar meanings.	Happy/cheerful Sad/unhappy
Trigraph	A single sound represented by three letters.	-tch as in match, -igh as in light, -ear as in bear
Verb	An action word.	Run, skip, laugh, cry