

Ottery St Mary Primary School

Homework at Ottery St Mary Primary School

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1. Why do we set homework activities?

At Ottery St. Mary Primary School, we believe that pupils who have an opportunity to consolidate their school learning at home, make better progress at school overall.

It is with this view that we focus our homework activities. By setting homework activities we aim to encourage a strong and positive partnership between home and school; to enable parents to support classroom work and to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.

Home learning throughout the school is focused predominantly on the development of English and Mathematics skills with a particular focus on reading.

In school we aim to create a reading culture where children are exposed to a range of high-quality texts in a variety of contexts. Pupils will have opportunities to browse literature and make a personal choice about what they read in addition to participating in structured reading activities. They will build their preferences in reading and recognise the authors and styles which they enjoy reading. They will engage in discussions about the things they have read with adults and peers and participate in a culture of sharing and recommending books. Pupils begin their reading journey at the 'point of success' in order to gain mastery of their own voice and become readers that enjoy reading. Pupils are exposed to high quality texts throughout their time at school.

We strongly believe that a love of reading will open the doors to learning across the curriculum as children will be able to select, understand and process a range of information using this fundamental skill. In this respect, one of the most important things that families can do is to take time to enjoy books together and foster a love of and confidence in reading.

In order to supplement the recommended core English and mathematical skills and to build on children's love of reading, we also set up **voluntary homework activities** which are directly linked to class based topic work and allow children to approach homework in a varied and creative way.

Families may wish to help by giving pupils plenty of encouragement and praise for their efforts.

They can also help by providing a good routine and suitable working space that will encourage focused working.

Above all, home learning should be enjoyable, meaningful and support pupil progress.

2. How homework activities are organised and set

Homework activities are organised and set via two strands: **recommended** weekly activities to support reading, writing and maths and termly or half termly **voluntary** topic based activities.

Recommended weekly activities:

Recommended weekly activities can support and consolidate learning in reading, writing and maths. These activities often focus on key skills such as spelling, number bonds or multiplication tables but may also include other elements of the subject to deepen children's knowledge and understanding or to prepare them for upcoming work in class. Examples of such activities vary across different year groups and could include:

- Reading with an adult
- Practising phonics
- Practising common exception words in spelling
- Sharing spellings and strategies
- Practising number bonds
- Practising multiplication tables
- Activities directly linked to individual SEND targets

Voluntary topic based homework activities:

Throughout the school year we will also set **voluntary topic based homework activities** which are provided to give children and families an opportunity to explore around the topic being covered in class if they so wish. These activities will cover a range of approaches and skills allowing children to further explore their learning and have more choice over how they do this. As well as deepening their knowledge of the topic, this approach allows children to self-select tasks and gain experience in organising and presenting their work independently.

Each year group will set their topic homework regularly across the year (usually at the beginning of a new topic). The topics covered in school are:

| Year group | Autumn | Spring | | Summer |
|------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| EYFS | Tapestry | | | |
| 1 | Ottery St Mary | The Moon / India | | Animals and habitats |
| 2 | Great fire of London / Bonfire Night | Africa | | Knights and Castles |
| 3 | Egyptians | Volcanoes / Stone age | | Rainforests |
| 4 | World War II | Explorers | | The Vikings |
| 5 | Victorians | Rivers | | Ancient Greece |
| 6 | Romans / Celts | | Mayans / Chocolate | |

3. When homework activities are celebrated in school

Each year group will set out at the beginning of the year how they will arrange their celebrations of homework to best fit in with their timetables.

Recommended core weekly homework activities

Recommended core weekly homework activities could include:

- Reading with an adult
- Practising phonics
- Practising common exception words in spelling
- Sharing spellings and strategies
- Practising number bonds
- Practising multiplication tables
- Activities directly linked to individual SEND targets

These recommended core weekly homework activities are designed to support children in their English and maths work and promote improvements across these lessons. Such improvements in lessons may be rewarded through class based reward systems such as house points and dojos. Improvements may be evident:

- Through weekly spelling assessments
- Through improvements in spelling within writing across the curriculum
- Through evidence of independent editing and checking of written work
- Through improved performance in maths assessments
- Through evidence of applying knowledge of number bonds or multiplication facts in problem solving

Voluntary homework activities

These activities are used as a valuable part of our topic work each term. They provide children and families with an opportunity to further develop and deepen their learning through the completion of voluntary tasks that cover a range of skills.

This part of our homework provision is entirely voluntary, and children may attempt them across the year as their time and interest allows. We do recognise that not all children and families have the same access to time or resources to complete them. Therefore, although all completed voluntary homework activities are celebrated in class, they are not rewarded in the same way as the core weekly homework tasks, rather they are celebrated in class allowing those children who have completed them an opportunity to showcase their work while their peers enjoy their efforts.

4. Homework and wellbeing

Supporting pupil wellbeing:

Advice and support for parents and carers regarding supporting pupil wellbeing is available on the wellbeing section of our website (in the parent hub).

https://www.otteryprimary.co.uk/parent-and-carers-hub/wellbeing/

While we recognise the importance of homework in developing independent learning and organisational skills, we also recognise that all children and families are different and may not all have equal access to time or resources in order to complete homework tasks. Many children may already attend after school clubs and societies during evenings and weekends.

All children need free time in order to process their learning and experiences and everyone benefits from down time to relax and recharge. It is for this reason we have split our approach to homework into the two strands outlined in **Section 2** above.

Although homework is a valuable tool in developing lifelong learning skills, it should not be seen as a weight for children and families to be burdened with. We would always encourage and celebrate the voluntary aspects of our homework approach and a focus on the recommended weekly activities will support children's learning and development as they move through their time in school with us.

See also **Appendix J** below.



APPENDIX A: Examples of some possible homework activities in EYFS

Tapestry

We make use of Tapestry to support home learning in the EYFS

Homework in EYFS consists of reading books, weekly phonics homework, tricky words and maths home learning.

- The reading books are sent home weekly after being read 3 times in school as recommended by Little Wandle.
- Phonics is a sheet linking to the work we have done in taught sessions that week with relevant sound cards that children can use to build words to practise blending and segmenting.
- -Tricky words are personal to each child. They are regularly checked in school and given new words when they can sight read the ones they have.
- -Maths homework is set on Tapestry and is something practical they can do at home that supports the learning we have been doing in school. We often print this out and add it to our maths floor books.

We also encourage parents to post things they have been doing at home on Tapestry, and will sometimes ask for things linked to learning in school eg when covering festivals, cultural events or learning about the world around us. Children then share this in school.

The communication between staff and parents that Tapestry enables, helps build a shared understanding of how every child can reach their full potential, from birth to the end of primary school. When your child joins school you will be provided with login details for the system. You can then access it through the Tapestry website: https://tapestryjournal.com/

Alistair Bryce Clegg emphasises the importance of facilitating talk in 'Best Practice in the Early Years'. He describes some of the talk skills in use in role play and small-world play:

Role Play Talk Skills: Talk for.... Small-world Play Talk Skills: Talk for... social interaction size comparison making choices / being curious cooperation / collaboration developing language sharing and turn taking developing negotiation / communication exploration of role play with small world expressing emotions characters recalling own experiences naming of familiar objects developing mathematical concepts developing descriptive language describing day-day activities positional language naming attributes of common objects / communicating ideas projecting themselves into feelings / animals actions of others developing awareness of different taking on a role - real or fantasy environments conflict resolution - real or imaginary communicating emotions problem solving discussing previous experiences awareness of danger recognition of 'same' and 'different' organising ideas and experiences expressing feelings

APPENDIX B: Examples of some possible homework activities in Year 1

How to complete your topic homework:

- You can have a go at any of the tasks whenever you like
- When you have completed a task **bring it in to school on a Friday** so that you can share your excellent achievements with your class.
- Feel free to be creative in how you complete your homework tasks.
- Please aim to complete your work to a high standard.

- Practise reading and writing these tricky words what, when, have Can you write some sentences using them?
- Draw around your hand and design a henna pattern.
- What are the primary colours? Can you create a picture using lines and those colours like the artist Mondrian?
- Practise reading and writing these tricky words was, some, said Can you write some sentences using them?
- Listen and look for signs of Spring. What can you find?
- Research significant animals that live in India/are special to India, i.e. Tiger, Peacock, Elephant.
- Practise reading and writing these tricky words some, come, there Can you write some sentences using them?
- Research a variety of Indian foods and display on a poster.
- What are the secondary colours? Can you create a colour field like the artist Rothko?
- Practise reading and writing these tricky words like, little, all Can you write some sentences using them?
- Draw the Indian flag.
- Weather watch Can you make a weather diary and record some weather over the course of a few days? What's your favourite weather?
- Practise reading and writing these tricky words one, here, people Can you write some sentences using them?
- Create a chart of spring flowers you have seen in your garden/local area. Include pictures and labels.
- Make your own Indian curry at home with your family. Take pictures to show.

APPENDIX C: Examples of some possible homework activities in Year 2

How to complete your topic homework:

- You can have a go at any of the tasks whenever you like
- When you have completed a task **bring it in to school on a Friday** so that you can share your excellent achievements with your class.
- Feel free to be creative in how you complete your homework tasks.
- Please aim to complete your work to a high standard.

- Draw and label a map indicating famous castles in the UK.
- Paint or draw a dragon. Write a character profile about him/her.
- Write a story of a Dragon's Adventure. You may wish to make up your own story or re-tell a story you have read.
- Design your own crown.
- Make a 3D model of a castle.
- Find out about food from the medieval era. List the different types of food or make the recipe and list the quantities of ingredients you would need.
- Visit a castle, take photographs and write facts about it. Research on the internet if it is not
 possible to visit.
- Find out some facts about a famous King or Queen.
- Research a famous battle e.g. looking at the Bayeaux tapestry.
- Create a non-chronological report about castles. Remember the features of a non-fiction text.
- Design your ideal castle and present your idea through drawings, sculpture or writing.
- Write a 'Day in the life of' for someone who lived in a castle e.g. a king, knight or peasant. In your writing, show how life in the castle contrasted for different people.
- Make a moving picture of a knight on horseback jousting. Use a slider mechanism.
- Read a story that has a dragon, a castle or knights in it. Draw a story map to show the different events in the story.
- Imagine you are a modern day jester and write some jokes or riddles you might perform to the queen.
- Research a famous battle e.g. looking at the Bayeaux tapestry.
- Decide on 5 laws you would make if you were King or Queen. Write these down and perhaps display them on a scroll
- Visit your local library and find as many books about dragons/castles/knights/princesses. Make a list of all the fiction and non- fiction books. Read some of them too!
- Write about a medieval job you'd like to do.
- Your own idea linked to Knight and Castles.

APPENDIX D: Examples of some possible homework activities in Year 3

How to complete your topic homework:

- Choose any task that interests you from the choices below (you may complete more than one if you wish!)
- Bring your project book into class every Tuesday for a homework exhibition.
- Please complete your work to a **GOLD STANDARD**.

Try to choose a variety of tasks to include research / drawing / writing and making! Be creative and have fun!

- Find out about Egyptian hieroglyphics and use them to write your name and the name of your favourite TV show or book.
- What did the Ancient Egyptians wear? What were their clothes made of? Draw a man and a woman in their Egyptian clothes and label them.
- Create a leaflet to encourage tourists to visit Ancient Egypt.
- Research two different Ancient Egyptian artefacts. Draw them and describe what they are and what they were used for.
- Create a word search about Ancient Egypt.
- What did the Ancient Egyptians eat? Create a menu for an Egyptian dinner and include pictures of the foods!
- Draw or trace a map of Egypt and mark the important landmarks.
- Create a fact page about King Tutankhamun and draw a picture of him.
- Make a model of an Egyptian pyramid (or the three pyramids of Giza) using any suitable
 materials you wish. If you have Minecraft, you could create them and take screenshots to print out
 and stick into your book
- Write a poem about the Ancient Egyptians this can be rhyming / non-rhyming / Acrostic.
- Make a model of Tutankhamun's funeral mask using whichever materials you wish.
- Create a multiple choice quiz about the Ancient Egyptians.
- Create a crossword puzzle about ancient Egypt.
- Split your page into 6 squares. In each square draw a cartoon sketch about daily life in ancient Egypt.
- Choose an ancient Egyptian god or goddess and create a fact page about them include a drawing.
- Design a piece of Egyptian jewellery. You can either draw it or make it!
- Write a paragraph about why the river Nile was so important to the ancient Egyptians
- Write a fact file on one of the Egyptian pharaohs.

APPENDIX E: Examples of some possible homework activities in Year 4

How to complete your topic homework:

- Choose any task that interests you from the choices below (you may complete more than one if you wish!)
- Bring your project book into class every Tuesday for a homework exhibition.
- Please complete your work to a GOLD STANDARD.

Try to choose a variety of tasks to include research / drawing / writing and making! Be creative and have fun!

- Find out about one of the countries involved in WW2. Present some facts about that country at the time. You could include their flag, a picture of their leader and a map of the country etc.
- Make a word search of places, names and words connected with WW2.
- Investigate the WW2 activities on Purple Mash and complete an activity of your choice. You
 can either print it yourself and stick it into your homework booklet or save it to your Purple
 Mash user folder.
- Research the secret codes used in WW2. Create your own code and write a coded message to
 give people important information. Be sure to include a key so that we can decipher your code.
- Make a news report about the start of WW2. Ask your friends or family to help and film it so you can show your class.
- Research and write a short biography about a famous character from WWII e.g. Winston Churchill.
- Compare and contrast the fashions of Wartime Britain and Britain today.
- Create a presentation about what you would pack if you were evacuated to another place today, giving reasons for each item.
- Write a letter in role as a soldier to his family about his experiences in a WW2 battle.
- How has Britain changed since 1940? Find facts e.g. salary changes, house prices, wages.
- The only two Atomic bombs ever used in wartime were dropped during WW2. Find out why, what they were made from, and why they were so damaging.
- Make your own artefact from WW2. This could be a rationing book, an evacuation case, model plane used in WWII, soldiers helmet, a medal or an idea of your own.
- Design a WW2 quiz including at least six questions. Challenge your family and friends to answer them.
- Have a go at making a recipe from the 1940s. Write out the recipe you used; you could also include photographs and a review of the meal.
- Write a fictional diary as an evacuee during WW2.
- Make a model of an aircraft involved in WW2.
- Find out about one of the many secret missions completed by British forces during WW2 and make a comic strip about what happened.
- Write instructions or an advice leaflet for citizens to follow during an air raid.

APPENDIX F: Examples of some possible homework activities in Year 5

How to complete your topic homework:

- Choose any task that interests you from the choices below (you may complete more than one if you wish!)
- Bring your project book into class every Tuesday for a homework exhibition.
- Please complete your work to a **GOLD STANDARD**.

Try to choose a variety of tasks to include research / drawing / writing and making! Be creative and have fun!

- Make a list of 20 objects that we would use now that the Victorians used.
- Draw or paint a picture of a scene from the Victorian times e.g. Queen Victoria on the throne, a matchbox girl out on the street, a poor family eating dinner.
- Write a short newspaper article announcing Queen Victoria's coronation.
- Draw yourself as a Victorian you can be any type of Victorian you like (royalty, poorhouse child, rich factory owner, maid).
- Write a letter to Queen Victoria asking what it is like to be Queen.
- Write an acrostic poem about the Victorians.
- Draw a picture of 3 toys or games that were popular with Victorian children.
- Make a 3D object from Victorian times.
- Create a job advert for someone to work as a maid in a rich household.
- Make and write a postcard sent from London to Ottery in Victorian times.
- Find out some foods the Victorians liked to eat and use these to design a menu for a Victorian café.
- Imagine you are living in Victorian times. Write a paragraph describing three things you would like about living in that time and three things you don't think you would like. Remember to say why.
- If you were Queen Victoria what new laws would you make and why?
- Write a diary entry from a child who lives in the workhouse. Talk about your day, what kind of things you do, and how you feel.
- Research an invention from the Victorian era.
- Design an outfit for a <u>poor</u> person to wear in Victorian times.
- Design an outfit for a <u>rich</u> person to wear in Victorian times.
- Write 10 facts about Queen Victoria.
- Write a timetable of a normal school day for you, then write a timetable of a Victorian schoolchild's day and find 3 ways they are different.
- Cook a favourite Victorian recipe and take a photo or bring it into school!
- Go for a walk somewhere and write down any Victorian street names or buildings you see.

APPENDIX G: Examples of possible homework activities in Year 6

How to complete your topic homework:

- Choose any task that interests you from the choices below (you may complete more than one if you wish!)
- Bring your project book into class every Tuesday for a homework exhibition.
- Please complete your work to a **GOLD STANDARD**.

Try to choose a variety of tasks to include research / drawing / writing and making! Be creative and have fun!

- Write down the symbols used by the Maya that represent numbers. Can you make up some sums for your friends to answer.
- Can you research a Mayan city? What can you find out about it? What was it like? Write a fact file about it!
- Write your own top 10 interesting facts about the Maya people. This could be in the form of a powerpoint
- Make a model of a Maya pyramid/temple
- Research two different things invented by the Maya. Create a fact file about them.
- With a friend, choreograph a Mayan dance
- Design and make a 3D model of a chocolate bar
- Research the Mayan calendar and explain how it worked.
- Write your name in Maya hieroglyphics. Try to be creative with how you do this.
- Write a secret message in Maya hieroglyphics for your friends to work out.
- The Mayans were great farmers and enjoyed eating tortillas filled with cooked vegetables!
 Can you design your own Mayan tortilla recipe? Perhaps you could even make it!
- Research the different jobs that Maya people may have had
- https://mayansandtikal.com/mayan-civilisation/mayan-jobs/?utm_content=cmp-true
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgldR5KOQKs
- Research and create an information poster about the Mayan religious beliefs and some of the Gods that they worshipped.
- Research and make a PowerPoint Mayan Food or school
- Write a story or create a comic strip about the Maya.
- Research and make a PowerPoint Mayan Music or Religion
- Pretend you are an explorer who has just discovered a new tomb in the amazon. Write a letter home to your family about the discovery
- Design a set of Mayan masks for a celebration. You might like to choose one design to make.

APPENDIX H: Supporting reading at home

Reading at home is one of the most important ways that families can support children. It is not just about listening to a child read but also to really involve them in the book and discussions around it.

7 Top Tips to Support Reading at Home

Shared reading is a great way to develop children's language and communication and to boost their reading skills. Regular reading routines can offer lots of opportunities for learning during school closures.

1 Concentrate on reading quality (it isn't all about reading lots!)



Don't worry too much about the 'what' and 'how' of reading each day. Books are great—but leaflets, comics, recipes and instructions on a webpage can all be great too. Following a recipe to make some cupcakes is valuable reading. Be on the lookout for reading, wherever it is!

2 Ask your child lots of questions



All reading matters. Shared reading is about 'reading with', not just 'reading to' (even for older children). So, ask lots of 'Wh' questions, such as Who? What? When? Where? Why? Try them when talking about books: for example, 'what do you think Harry is feeling?'

Ask your child to make predictions about what they have read



If it is a book, look at the front cover—or the last chapter—and talk about what might happen next. Look for clues in the book and be a reading detective! For example, 'can you see the bear on the front cover? Where do you think he will go?'

4 Ask your child to summarise what they have read



When you've finished reading, talk about what happened. Acting out the things that happened in the story or describing the big idea of a chapter is really fun and maximises learning. For example, 'can you remember all the things that happened on the bear hunt?'

Ask your child to write about what they have read



Write, or draw pictures, from anything you've read! Big writing and pictures are even more fun. For example, use an old roll of wallpaper to make a treasure map with clues from the stories you've read together.

6 Read and discuss reading with friends or family



Make books a part of the family. Encourage your child to share them with a relative or friend, over a video call. Laugh about them when you are making meals together. For example, 'I hope the tiger doesn't come to tea today!'

Maintain the motivation to read



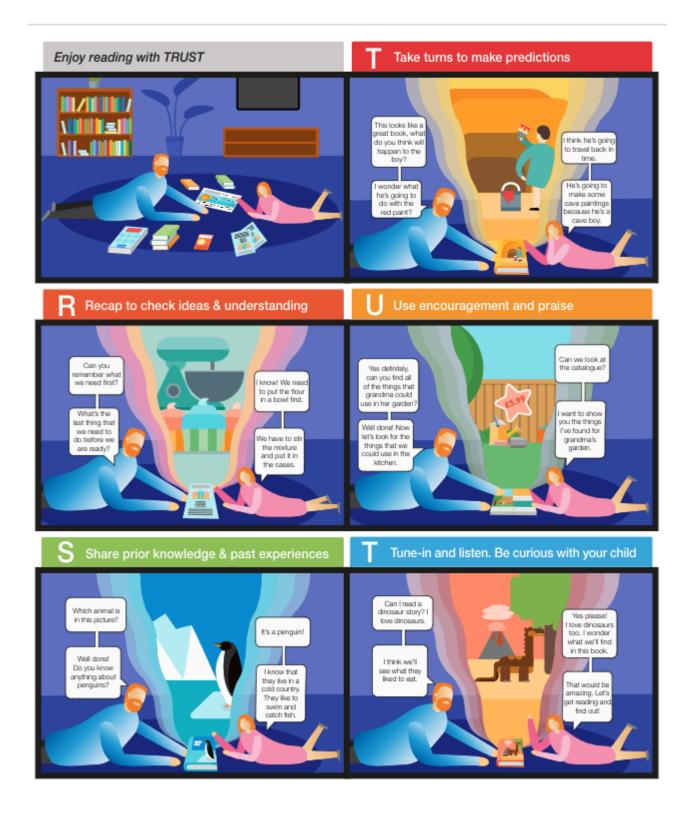
Talk about the joy of reading whenever you can. Your child is on an amazing journey to becoming a reader. Put them in the driving seat and have fun on the way! For example, 'choose your favourite story for bedtime tonight.'

Education Endowment Foundation (2018)

Preparing for Literacy: Improving Communication, Language and Literacy in the Early Years. Education Endowment Foundation: London.

Available online: eef.lifteracy-early-years





Appendix I: Online safety when working at home

We recognise that there will be times when children are working online to complete homework activities so it is important that they are able to stay safe online while doing this. We do a lot of work in school with regards to online safety and encourage the children to be **SMART** online:



There are a number of helpful websites for children and families to further support this. We have a dedicated page on our school website which provides links to many of these sites. This can be accessed at www.otteryprimary.co.uk/parent-and-carers-hub/helpful-websites/

20 fun things to try together









































Appendix K: Useful links

School website links:

Tapestry for the EYFS

https://tapestryjournal.com/

Wellbeing resources

https://www.otteryprimary.co.uk/parent-and-carers-hub/wellbeing/

Access to googleclassrooms

https://www.otteryprimary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/googleclassroom-cribsheet.pdf

Safeguarding links and e-safety information:

https://www.otteryprimary.co.uk/parent-and-carers-hub/safeguarding/useful-sites-2/

Curriculum documents:

https://www.otteryprimary.co.uk/curriculum/