

Children's Services

RP Network
17th March 2026



HIAS English Team

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Aims:

- Local and national updates
- Securing sentence structure
- RP Network questions and discussion: Helen Lay

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Starter toolkit

The starter toolkit gathers the key information about the National Year of Reading in one document. It features a research overview alongside useful links and calendar dates. The document also explains the National Year of Reading Participatory Award and the Learning Management System. There is also a link to a brand toolkit containing editable digital templates. Contact email for questions: NYRschools@literacytrust.org.uk

[Schools And Early Years Settings Offer Toolkit & Resources | National Year Of Reading | National Literacy Trust](#)



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GO ALL IN.

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026:
Schools and Early Years Settings Offer Overview

National Year of Reading 2026

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The campaign goal

GO ALL IN.

Click on the image to watch the campaign introduction video

Reverse long-term declines in reading by:

- Engaging new audiences
- Bringing reading to where culture is
- Systems and partnerships to embed lasting, meaningful change

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Schools and Early Years Settings Offer objectives

1. School and Early Years setting leaders understand the **importance** of embedding a culture of Reading for Pleasure in their schools/settings
2. Teachers and Early Years practitioners have a better understanding of how to embed a culture of Reading for Pleasure in their practice
3. Teachers and Early Years practitioners are aware of the range of support available to them

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What's on offer?

A termly cycle of....

Go All In Together events

Half termly broadcasted events for pupils and young people to celebrate literacy and reading, together across the nation. Featuring exciting names and faces!

Professional development for you

A suite of phase-specific online webinars, resource and briefings, and in-person events and conferences.

Events, challenges and quizzes

A variety of reading challenges, quizzes and events for your children and young people to take part in.

throughout 2026.

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Authorfy is free for the 2026 National Year of Reading!

Authorfy is an online platform providing author videos and downloadable resources.

"We are most well-known for our 'Author Masterclasses', which are in depth conversations with authors about their books. They each include 10-12 videos, a writing challenge, an excerpt reading, a downloadable extract and a scheme of work. These videos can be watched in any order and are perfect for developing deeper understanding of texts, learning about different writing processes, and exploring authorial choices. We also provide 'Book of the Month' videos and display resources, plus hundreds of creative challenges set by authors and illustrators, downloadable classroom resources, book extracts, activity packs, and more."



[Home - authorfy](#)

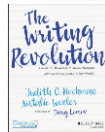
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Why is sentence structure so important?

The sentence holds the key

The importance of spending plenty of instructional time working with sentences can't be stressed enough. Sentence-level work is the engine that will propel your students from writing the way they speak to using the structures of written language.

(Hochman and Wexler, *The Writing Revolution*, 2017)



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Variation of sentences

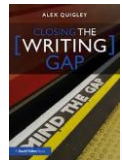
"We can take the brilliant complexity of sentences for granted. Each sentence written in the classroom is a distillation of a near-infinite number of complex moves.

For pupils, practising one sentence brilliantly may be worth a hundred sentences written in haste."

[Crafting Great Sentences \(alexquigley.co.uk\)](#)



Crafting Great Sentences



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Strong foundations in the first years of school

Schools should:

- make sure that the curriculum clearly identifies the foundational knowledge and skills, as outlined in the EYFS and national curriculum, that children will need for later learning
- give children sufficient high-quality opportunities to practise using foundational knowledge and skills so that they become fluent
- choose teaching methods that are suited to what is being taught and what children already know
- make sure that assessment picks up children's misunderstandings quickly and gives teachers early opportunities to help children who need extra teaching and practice
- make sure that end of key stage 1 assessments do not disproportionately influence decisions about curriculum and teaching methods

[Strong foundations in the first years of school - GOV.UK](#)

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Foundational Knowledge

Building fluency in foundational knowledge allows children to succeed and therefore grow in confidence. However, English and literacy curriculums, more than mathematics, tend to introduce complex tasks too early. Therefore, children do not learn foundational knowledge properly, such as:

- how to compose simple sentences orally
- how to hold a pencil correctly and form letters and numbers
- how to spell
- how to become a fluent reader

[Strong foundations in the first years of school - GOV.UK](#)

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Year 2

Sentence	Punctuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subordination (using when, if, that, because) and co-ordination (using or, and, but) Expanded noun phrases for description and specification How the grammatical patterns in a sentence indicate its function as a statement, question, exclamation or command 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to demarcate sentences Commas to separate items in a list Apostrophes to mark where letters are missing in spelling and to mark singular possession in nouns

Max saw a huge, scary Wild Thing.
 Max was scared so he climbed a tree.
 Max wore his golden crown because he ruled the Wild Things.
 Why did Max sail away?
 What a wild rumpus it was!
 Make the Wild Things stop!

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Year 3

Sentence	Punctuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressing time, place and cause using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to inverted commas to punctuate direct speech

Max danced with the Wild Things until the moon was high.
 Finally, Max sailed back to his cosy bedroom.
 Carefully, Max stepped into the boat so that he could return home.
 "Let the wild rumpus start!" shouted Max.

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Year 4

Sentence	Punctuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noun phrases expanded by the addition of modifying adjectives, nouns and preposition phrases Fronted adverbials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech Apostrophes to mark plural possession Use of commas after fronted adverbials

After saying goodbye to the Wild Things, Max sailed across the dark, endless ocean.
 When he reached his bedroom, Max felt calm and happy.
 "Don't go!" cried the Wild Things, waving their terrible claws.

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Year 5

Sentence	Punctuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that, or an omitted relative pronoun Indicating degrees of possibility using adverbs or modal verbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis Use of commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity

The Wild Thing, which had terrible teeth, roared at Max.
 Max wondered whether he should stay with the Wild Things or go home.
 The forest, which grew in his room, looked magical.
 Max, who was wearing his crown, began the wild rumpus.

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Year 6

Sentence	Punctuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the passive to affect the presentation of information in a sentence The difference between structures typical of informal speech and structures appropriate for formal speech and writing or the use of subjunctive forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the semi-colon, colon and dash to mark the boundary between independent clauses Use of the colon to introduce a list and use of semi-colons within lists Punctuation of bullet points to list information How hyphens can be used to avoid ambiguity

The crown was placed on Max's head by the Wild Things.
 Max was declared king of all Wild Things.
 He had three rules for the rumpus: dance wildly; roar loudly; and swing from the trees.
 The Wild Things were fierce-looking – huge eyes, sharp teeth, and terrible claws.

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Progression

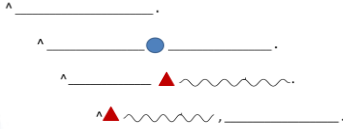
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6

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The power of the sentence

"A growing consensus from research and practice in schools indicates that the best way to teach pupils to write is by **teaching them to master sentences**. All writing is ultimately made up of sentences: only once the concept of a sentence is understood will paragraphs and longer pieces of writing make sense, let alone convey meaning."

The writing framework



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- Orange words tell us **who**.
- Yellow words tell us what they are **doing**.
- Green words tell us **what**.
- Blue words tell us **where**.
- Pink words tell us **to who(m)**.
- Brown words tell us **when**.
- Black words tell us **how**.



(Twinkl Colourful Semantics Guide)

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Simple sentence

Simple Sentences

- These sentences contain a main clause.
- Main clauses include a subject and verb.



A _____ .

Capital letter	Main Clause	Punctuation
Every sentence starts with a capital letter	Makes sense on its own Contains a verb	. ? ... !

Improvement and Mastery Series

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All sentences need a subject and a verb

Subject (who)	Verb (what doing)
Max 	
The Wild Things 	



Select a verb card to match with your subject eg Max = sailing. Say the sentence and point to the correct subject card as you say the subject, and the correct verb card as you say the verb eg "Max **is sailing**". Pick up the image of sailing and add it to the verb section the repeat the sentence "Max **is sailing**". Ask who is sailing? Ask what is Max doing? Always model a full grammatical sentence.

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Combining subjects and verbs

The Wild Thing	sails
The tree	grows
The boat	dances
The boy	roars

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Simple Sentences

- These sentences contain a main clause.
- Main clauses include a subject and verb.

A _____ .

Capital letter	Main Clause	Punctuation
Every sentence starts with a capital letter	Makes sense on its own Contains a verb	. ? ... !



The Wild Thing	is	fierce	.
The Wild Thing	is		.
The Wild Thing			.
			.

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Subject + verb + object (what?)

The Wild Thing	is	climbing	a tree
The beast		bending	the branch
The wind	is	blowing	the sail
The boy		eating	the feast

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Noun phrase




___ eyes	___ horns
___ teeth	___ mouth
___ claws	___ hair
___ legs	___ tail

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Noun phrase



orang e eyes 	sharp teeth 	claws 
scaly legs 	long tail 	black fur 

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Using and to join words



Simple Sentences
 • These sentences contain a main clause.
 • Main clauses include a subject and verb.

Compound	Main Clause	Punctuation
Every sentence starts with a capital letter.	Makes sense on its own. Contains a verb.	?
		;

The Wild Thing	has	orange eyes and sharp teeth	.
The Wild Thing	has	and	.
The Wild Thing		and	.
			.

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Compound sentence

Compound Sentences

- These sentences contain two main clauses separated by a co-ordinating conjunction.



Capital letter	Main clause	Co-ordinating conjunction	Main Clause	Punctuation
	Makes sense on its own	Links two main clauses together	Makes sense on its own	.

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Using and to join clauses



The Wild Thing	has	sharp claws	and	it	likes	sweets	.
The Wild Thing	has		and		likes		.

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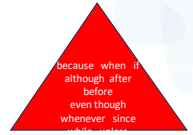
Linking clauses

- and** • Adds information, or one thing to another
- but** • Contradicts, or shows something unexpected
- or** • Offers a choice
- because** • Means a reason, shows cause and effect

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Complex sentence

Capital letter	Main clause	Subordinate Clause (starts with a subordinating conjunction)	Punctuation
	Makes sense on its own	Doesn't make sense on its own	



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Using **because** to join a main clause and a subordinate clause



Max **wore** his golden crown **because** he **was** happy .

Max **did** his strange dance **because** he **was** excited .

Max **is** _____ **because** _____ .

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Capital letter	Subordinate Clause (starts with a subordinating conjunction)	Comma	Main clause	Punctuation
	Doesn't make sense on its own	,	Makes sense on its own	

After Max **had blown** the trumpet , **the Wild Things** **stood** quietly .

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Between two adjectives - noun phrase



	Adjectives
Eyes	big, round, bright, glowing, wide
Teeth	sharp, pointy, long, big, scary
Horns	hard, curved, pointy
Claws	sharp, long, curved
Legs	thick, strong, long
Feet	big, clawed, heavy
Tail	long, stripy, furry

____ / ____ tail

____ / ____ eyes

____ / ____ claws

____ / ____ teeth

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1. Between two adjectives (expanded noun phrase)

The Wild Thing had **huge, hairy** paws that scraped along the forest floor.

2. Within a list of nouns

The creature stomped through the trees, crushing **sticks, stones and leaves** beneath its feet.

3. A list of noun phrases

Its body was covered in **a shaggy coat, a pair of curved horns, a wide toothy grin and other strange features.**

4. A list of verbs

The Wild Thing **roared, stomped, waved and leapt** as it danced wildly around Max.

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Week 1

Stimulate and generate				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Immersion in text stimulus (reading comprehension / spoken language focus)</p> <p>Developing comprehension through oracy: questioning, retelling, book talk, acting out and joining in.</p> <p>Read and enjoy the text. Build vocabulary and knowledge to support outcome.</p>	<p>Contextual handwriting teaching/ practice and dictated sentences linked to our book (applying phonic knowledge)</p> <p>Example lesson structure could be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter formation 2. Text-linked dictation 3. Independent sentence composition using picture/s from text 	<p>Further response to text (reading comprehension focus)</p> <p>Respond to text orally and in writing</p> <p>For example, 'tell Me Grid, story map, role on wall etc - what will help the pupils with their outcome and develop their understanding?</p> <p>Build vocabulary and knowledge to support outcome</p>	<p>Contextual handwriting teaching/ practice and dictated sentences linked to our book (applying phonic knowledge)</p> <p>Example lesson structure could be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter formation 2. Text-linked dictation 3. Independent sentence composition using picture/s from text 	<p>Site of application linked to text that allows pupils to apply previously taught content in a new context - eg write questions you would like to ask the dragon, remembering your question mark.</p>

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Week 2

Capture, sift and sort		Create, refine, evaluate		
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Skills 1</p> <p>Introducing a simple writing outcome linked to our text and teaching a skill to support (for example, using an adjective to describe dragon parts in our description - The dragon has sharp claws.)</p>	<p>Skills 2</p> <p>Further teaching and practice of key skill within a sentence or retrieving and practising a second skill (something we have looked at before, for example using and between words' - The dragon has sharp claws and pointy teeth.)</p>	<p>Writing our outcome</p> <p>For example, a description of the dragon for dragon hunters.</p> <p>Pay attention to accuracy and application of taught letter formation, GPCs/CEWs and grammar.</p>	<p>Writing our outcome</p> <p>For example, a description of my dragon for dragon hunters.</p> <p>Pay attention to accuracy and application of taught letter formation, GPCs/CEWs and grammar.</p>	<p>Sharing our writing</p> <p>Share and celebrate writing and return to our text stimulus.</p> <p>Publishing opportunities, such as 'my favourite sentence', performing my writing and other oral outcomes.</p>

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