



INTENT - IMPLEMENTATION - IMPACT

ENGLISH

“We are creatures of stories. We are the stories we tell and the stories we are told.” Oliver Jeffers

INTENT

At Semley, we believe in a holistic approach to teaching English. We believe that reading and writing cannot be separated- reading is breathing in and writing is breathing out. We intend to develop our children’s love of literature by nurturing a widespread love of reading for pleasure and basing our teaching of the English curriculum on a rich variety of high-quality texts.

Throughout school, beginning in Reception, children are encouraged to use and explore a variety of strategies which will build towards their application of Reading and Writing. Language is celebrated in all classrooms, where children are immersed in a communication enabling environment full of rich vocabulary. During their time at Semley, children will encounter a range of exciting and meaningful English opportunities, allowing them to express themselves across a wide range of genres - giving them the confidence to articulate their creativity, views and opinions in society.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our children are immersed in a story based English curriculum which is based on high quality texts carefully chosen by their class teachers. These books are selected not only to engage the children but also to model key reading and writing objectives. Teachers select books by authors the children already know and love and also use this opportunity to introduce new storytellers to them. The books chosen allow the children to learn how to develop their writer’s voices in a wide range of genres which are mapped out on our Semley English Curriculum Overview. Our bespoke English curriculum is written so that our children are taught the National Curriculum English objectives in a stimulating manner and through real authors.

Writing

Our classes experience a ‘hook’ to launch each new English unit which is designed to excite, inspire and intrigue them. This may be a real or staged experience, a drama activity or an opportunity to explore the local area. Each unit focuses on two or three key grammar, spelling, punctuation or vocabulary skills which support the fiction or non-fiction genre being taught. The children have opportunities to practice these grammar skills and then apply them in short burst writing pieces. They also have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of character and motivation through drama activities.

Throughout each unit, the children return back to their key text to see examples of the grammar skills they are learning in a real text (book look) and to absorb the vocabulary of a story teller or a non-fiction writer. Visual literacy (film clips, picture books etc.) and real experiences (drama workshops or a linked activity) will also add to the richness of our English curriculum. These grammar skills will be combined for their Final Writing Outcome which will be modelled clearly in the main text of unit.

Each English unit is personalised by the teachers to ensure their class follows the Reading and Writing skills progression for their year groups. Where necessary, teachers support individual or groups of children by including teaching objectives from the previous year which need to be prioritised before covering their year groups’ objectives. Writing is also celebrated in all the foundation subjects. Each term, the children will write a developed piece of writing in response to an experience in a foundation subject or as an opportunity to showcase their learning. This gives the children the opportunity to talk and write as historians, geographers, scientists, theologians,



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write from a different perspective, style or with a change of formality. We use a variety of methods to give immediate feedback during our English lessons. We also assess each short burst piece of writing against the key grammar, vocabulary, spelling or punctuation skill being practised. Where appropriate, we formally assess a non-fiction and fiction writing outcome for each child every term. These pieces help inform our judgement of the progress our children are making and their current attainment in Writing.

Reading

Every opportunity is taken to nurture a love for reading for pleasure at Semley School. Each class has a welcoming reading corner where children can independently browse and enjoy high quality fiction and non-fiction books. Teachers and children enjoy recommending stories to each other and choosing class books together. A highlight of the Semley year is World Book Day which forms the centre point of a week of reading celebrations including a costume parade and a special evening called 'Books at Bedtime'.

We take great care in helping the reading fluency of all our children progress – from reception to Year 6. We have developed our own Semley School levelled reading scheme which includes engaging books from a wide range of new and exciting authors and publishers and includes books which are high interest for all ages. All children are heard to read regularly by their teachers which ensures they are all reading at a level which is appropriate to their fluency and which also develops their comprehension skills. This allows all children to be supported and challenged in their reading on a personal basis. Having a whole school reading scheme has the additional benefit that when our year 6s leave for year 7, their reading level feeds directly into the secondary school reading programmes - many of whom also use levelled reading schemes.

Each class teacher closely monitors the reading progress of all the children in their class and regularly identifies the lowest 20% of their class for extra reading support as Priority Readers. These children receive additional individual reading time on a regular basis to help boost their fluency and comprehension. Within English lessons, children receive a weekly reading comprehension session which is either linked to the key English text they are reading or is an opportunity for them to practise key reading skills which are important for the genre they are currently being taught. These objectives are carefully chosen from our Reading Progression document and ensures a full coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. Throughout the school, we use the VIPERS comprehension question based approach to focus on the key comprehension skills of Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval, Sequence or Summarise. Teachers monitor the children's progress by hearing them read individually and against the reading objectives taught in comprehension lessons. This information is then used to make a formal judgement of the children's progress and attainment against the national expectations for reading each term.

IMPACT

Children at Semley School think of themselves as storytellers and are able to communicate effectively across a range of genres. They are able to talk and write as historians, geographers, scientists, theologians and leading experts in a range of fields. They have acquired a rich vocabulary and a comprehensive understanding of spelling and grammatical conventions which allow them to communicate their ideas clearly. Our children leave Semley School with a deeply rooted love of reading and all the skills they need to comprehend a range of real life texts and to research independently. This equips them not only for secondary school but also with the ability to find answers to their own questions as they embark on the journey as life-long learners.