

Key stage 2

Pupil A – Piece B: a guide

Context: while studying 'Kensuke's Kingdom' by Michael Morpurgo, pupils explored the topic of survival. Pupil A chose to write an explanation text focussed on how parents can best support their children to enable them to survive and thrive at primary school.

How to survive primary school

Within a person's lifetime, nine years are spent in primary school. This period of time is the first stage of a child's education, designed to equip them with the necessary basics in reading, writing and mathematics so that they may go on into high school to hone their skills before seeking higher education or an apprenticeship. The curriculum advances through stages from learning the fundamentals through play, into more formalised activities sat at tables and chairs. Primary school is split into three key stages with the later two culminating in examinations to distinguish the progress each child has made. The final year of primary school is the most crucial and it can bear influence on a child's success at high school. This guide is written with children about to experience year 6 in mind, providing insight and advice to their parents, enabling them to guide their child to ensure their final year is a fruitful one.

With between twenty-five and thirty-five students in a class, it can from time to time be challenging to focus on the task in hand. Innuocuous fun with classmates may not be as harmless as it seems, with recent studies indicating that children who engage in frivolity during lesson hours are almost six times less likely to pass the statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) that assess the skills learnt ^{throughout} ~~throughout~~ Key stage 2. 68% of children who do not pass SATs tests are boys and there is an extremely high correlation between the inattentiveness of males in class and their under performance in tests. Social interaction is important, and playing with friends at primary school is a treasured

memory for many adults, however it is recommended that in order to achieve their potential, students save such encounters for play times. Parents are advised to remind children of this often and stay in contact with their class teacher by attending parents' evenings to monitor their child's engagement in the classroom. Enrolling a child in clubs, particularly if they are a boy, can provide them with freedom to enjoy time socially with friends outside of the classroom and may encourage focus when they are within it.

It is likely that as students approach the end of key stage 2 and the SAT tests loom, there will be an increase in homework expectation from the class teacher. Children frequently become awash with revision guides, spelling lists, online learning and worksheets during this final year. Support should be offered to children within the family home through a structured timetable, ensuring studies come before any other optional activities. A timetable can be drawn up in agreement with the child to ensure that the workload is spread out over the week, preventing the child from suffering burnout.

Listening skills are vital in year 6. Children should be made aware that at this stage it is unlikely their teacher will use the 'hands up' technique seen lower down the school. Instead, teachers in year 6 opt for a vastly different approach, commonly named 'no hands up'. This provides an additional layer of challenge; a child cannot sit complacent, comforted by the knowledge that formulating an answer is optional. Any child may be selected to answer at any given moment and children will be expected to have an answer ready to share. Parents can support their children by building in opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills at home. At such a time as this where technology use is wide spread, the ability to speak and listen is wavering within the population - and yet is such a vital skill at school. Parents should include dinner table talk to model speaking and listening, removing any iPads or other devices to focus on fostering communication

skills.

With love and guidance, the odds of your child achieving highly are vastly increased. Follow the nuggets of wisdom shared within this guide offered as support in assisting your child to navigate their way through the schooling system.