

## Words & Phrases Progression

### Reception

Nouns & Pronouns	Adjectives & Determiners	Adverbs & Prepositions	Verbs
<p>understand noun as a <i>naming word</i> <i>cat sun monster boy</i></p> <p>coordination of nouns using <i>and</i> <i>I like <u>cake</u> and <u>crisps</u>.</i></p>	<p>understand adjective as a <i>describing word</i> <i>red happy big hot</i></p> <p>one adjective before a noun <i>the <u>green</u> alien</i></p> <p>coordination of adjectives using <i>and</i> <i>The alien is <u>green</u> and <u>scary</u>.</i></p>	<p>prepositions of place (where) <i>in on under behind</i></p>	<p>understand verb as a <i>doing word</i> <i>run eat play sing</i></p>
<p>simple noun phrases <i>The <u>monster</u> chased James.</i> <i>James ran into a <u>cave</u>.</i></p>			

## Reception

## Understand noun as a naming word

**Key Idea:** words can name people and things**Key Vocabulary:** naming word

As children are not expected to know and use the term *noun* until Key Stage 1, a useful placeholder phrase in Reception is *naming word*. These words can name both physical (*dog, boy, pencil*) and non-physical (*love, peace, anger*) things, but at this stage the focus should be on physical objects: living (*doctor, woman, bear*) and non-living things (*chair, school, car*).

A simple way of identifying *naming words* is that they can usually be preceded by *the*: *the singer, the hat, the flower*.

A sentence usually has at least one naming word (as the subject of the sentence).

*My cat ran away.*

naming word = *cat* (it can be preceded by *the* – *the cat*)

Sentences may have additional naming words in the predicate.

*My favourite food is cheese.*

naming words = *food* (it can be preceded by *the* – *the food*), *cheese* (it can be preceded by *the* – *the cheese*).

Coordination of nouns using *and*

## Recap &amp; build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as a *naming word*

**Key Idea:** naming words (nouns) can be joined by the joining word (conjunction) *and*.

**Key Vocabulary:** joining word, naming word

Nouns can be linked by the coordinating conjunction *and*, which can be understood as a *joining word*. The simplest way of introducing coordination is through simple noun lists of two objects. For example:

*My favourite snacks are crisps and beetroot.*

The naming words (nouns) *crisps* and *beetroot* are joined by *and*.

*Jim wore a hat and a coat.*

The naming words (nouns) *hat* and *coat* are joined by *and*.

*I have a cat and a goldfish.*

The naming words (nouns) *cat* and *goldfish* are joined by *and*.

## Deepening Understanding

It is helpful for children to begin to see noun as part of a larger structure, the noun phrase (although they will not be introduced to the term *noun phrase* until Year 2). In two of the previous examples, the nouns were part of the noun phrases beginning with *a*

*Jim wore a hat and a coat.*

The naming phrases (noun phrases) *a hat* and *a coat* are joined by *and*.

*I have a cat and a goldfish.*

The naming phrases (noun phrases) *a cat* and *a goldfish* are joined by *and*.



## Reception

### Simple noun phrases

#### Recap & build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as a *naming word*

**Key Idea:** naming words (nouns) often need a word before them such as *the*, *a* and *my*.

**Key Vocabulary:** naming word

In sentences, nouns are often preceded by determiners to create simple noun phrases, following the pattern: determiner + noun. Determiners are studied in more detail in Years 1 to 6; those that children are likely to encounter and use most frequently at the earliest stages of writing include: *a*, *his*, *her*, *my* and *the*. Children should begin to see noun phrases as a unit. They might refer to them as *naming phrases*.

*My dog bit the postman.*

noun phrases (naming phrases):	<i>my dog</i>	<i>the postman</i>
determiners:	<i>my</i>	<i>the</i>
nouns (naming words):	<i>dog</i>	<i>postman</i>

Not all nouns need to be preceded by determiners. Three groups of nouns can stand alone without a determiner:

#### 1. Proper nouns

Many proper nouns are not typically preceded by determiners.

*Jim lives in Grimsby.*

#### 2. Plural nouns

Plural nouns can be used with or without determiners.

Without determiners:	<i>Jim live in caves.</i>
With determiners:	<i>The trolls live in the caves.</i>

#### 3. Mass (or non-count) nouns

Mass nouns cannot be counted but are rather described by amounts. They can function with or without determiners, but cannot take the determiners *a*, *an* or *one*. *Rice* is an example of a *mass* noun. There can be an amount of *rice* but not a number of *rice*. It cannot be pluralised (*rices*) and it does not take the determiners *a*, *an* or *one* (*a rice*, *one rice*)

*I bought sugar and bread from the shop.*

In Reception, children do not need to know the detail of the kinds of nouns that do and do not follow determiners; Rather, they might be made aware that most nouns need a word such as *a* and *the* before them but a smaller number do not.

### Deepening Understanding

Noun phrases can be expanded with the addition of adjectives (see Year 1 **W&P**: *expansion before the noun* for more detail).

*My angry dog bit the frightened postman.*

noun phrases (naming phrases):	<i>my angry dog</i>	<i>the frightened postman</i>
determiners:	<i>my</i>	<i>the</i>
adjectives (describing words):	<i>angry</i>	<i>frightened</i>
nouns (naming words):	<i>dog</i>	<i>postman</i>

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## Reception

### Year R: Understand adjective as a *describing word*

#### Recap & build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as a *naming word*

**Key Idea:** words can describe people and things.

**Key Vocabulary:** describing word

**Build on:** naming word

Adjectives describe nouns. It is, then, logical that learning about adjectives follows learning about nouns. In Reception adjectives are simplest explained as words that describe people or things (naming words / nouns).

Perhaps the simplest way of introducing adjectives is in the sentences that take the form: [noun] *is* [adjective].

*Apples are red.*

The adjective (describing word) *red* describes the noun (naming word) *apples*.

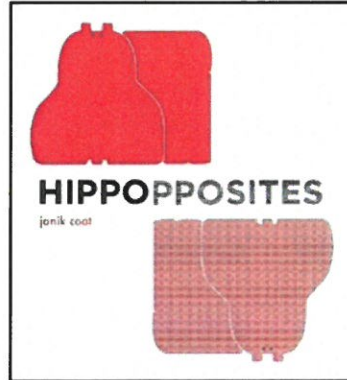
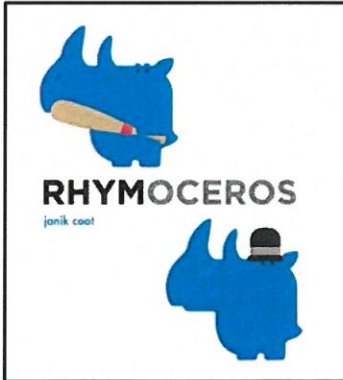
*My dog is friendly.*

The adjective (describing word) *friendly* describes the noun (naming word) *dog*.

*My sister is mean.*

The adjective (describing word) *mean* describes the noun (naming word) *sister*.

#### Teaching Tip



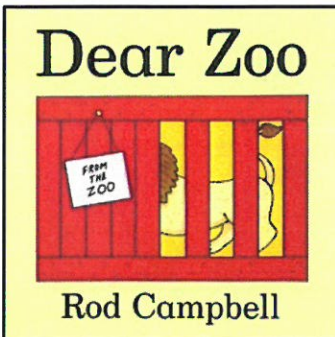
There are many picture books that can be used to teach about adjectives. *Rhynoceros* and *Hippopotoses* by Janik Coat (Abrams) introduce children to rhyming adjectives.

*mossy / glossy stinky / inky chilly / frilly*

And opposite adjectives.

*light / dark left / right  
rough / smooth*

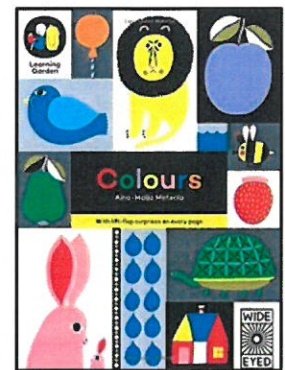
colour adjectives. A particularly beautiful one (with flaps to lift and explore) is *Colours* by Aino-Maija Metsola (Wide Eyed Editions), which explores common colours (yellow, blue, green, pink, etc.) and the things that are typically those colours. It uses and reinforces the sentence structure: [noun] *is* [adjective].



And, of course, the classic picture book *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell (Macmillan) is a wonderful way of exploring adjectives that describe animals. The main character receives several animals from the zoo, all of which are not quite right (until he receives the last animal).

*The tiger is orange.  
The cupcake was pink.*

*They sent me a camel. He was too grumpy.  
They sent me a monkey. He was too naughty.*





## Reception

### One adjective before a noun

#### Recap & build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as a *naming word*
- Year R **W&P**: understand adjective as a *describing word*

**Key Idea:** describing words (adjectives) often go before the naming words (nouns) that they describe.

**Key Vocabulary:** describing word

**Build on:** naming word

An adjective is often placed immediately before the noun that it describes but after any determiners (for example, *the*, *a*, *my*).

*My **red** coat has **blue** buttons.*

The describing word (adjective) *red* is placed before the naming word (noun) *coat* but after *my*.

The describing word (adjective) *blue* is placed before the naming word (noun) *buttons* but after *the*.

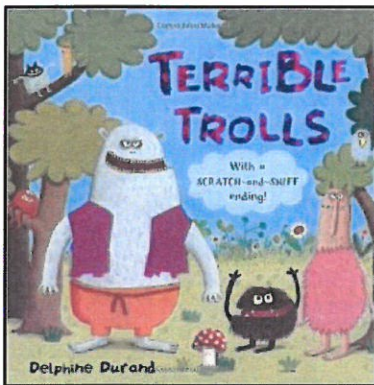
*The **yummy** cake was covered with **sticky** icing.*

The describing word (adjective) *yummy* is placed before the naming word (noun) *cake* but after *the*.

The describing word (adjective) *sticky* is placed before the naming word (noun) *icing*. There is no determiner.

### Teaching Tip

Countless picture books are filled with adjectives that can be used as stimuli for teaching adjectives. Two particular favourites are *Terrible Trolls* by Delphine Durand (Campbell Books) and *Who's Hiding in the Tree that Shouldn't Be?* by Craig Shuttlewood (Templar Publishing).



*Terrible Trolls* is a play on *If You Go Down to the Woods Today*. The big surprise is that the woods are filled with trolls (each with tactile elements and even scratch-and-sniff arm pits!). The trolls are describes with an array of textural adjectives and children can feel the objects being described. For example:

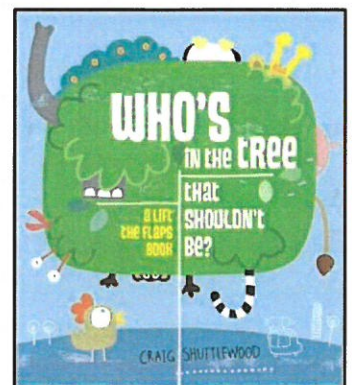
**scratchy** toes   **scaly** skin   **matted** hair   **sticky** trails

Children can have fun drawing their own trolls and labelling the separate parts of the body:

**warty** skin   **round** belly   **furry** nose   **purple** hair

*Who's Hiding in the Tree that Shouldn't Be?* hides animals behind flaps in environments in which they don't belong. Using the rhyming descriptions, children must guess which animals are *hiding in the places they shouldn't be*? For example:

*In the desert drought who's the odd one out, with **curly** tail and **snuffly** snout?*



## Reception

Coordination of adjectives using *and*

## Recap &amp; build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as *a naming word*
- Year R **W&P**: coordination of nouns using *and*
- Year R **W&P**: understand adjective as *a describing word*

**Key Idea:** describing words (adjectives) can be joined by the joining word (conjunction) *and*.

**Key Vocabulary:** describing word, joining word

**Build on:** naming word

Two adjectives (describing words) can be coordinated with the conjunction *and* to describe two qualities of a noun (a naming word). The conjunction *and* most often joins two adjectives when the adjectives do not precede the noun.

More likely: *My monster is huge and fierce.*  
Less likely: *My huge and fierce monster is in the bath.*

More likely: *His nose is round and warty.*  
Less likely: *His round and warty nose drips slime.*

It is not grammatically incorrect to use the structure [adjective] and [adjective] before a noun. It is simply much more likely that a writer would use a comma (*my fierce, huge monster; his warty, round nose*). Commas between adjectives are not studied until Year 2 (*Year 2 P: commas in adjective lists*).

## Deepening Understanding

When two colours are used to describe a noun, they are often separated by *and* when they precede the noun.

*My monster has green and blue hair.*  
*Red and yellow spots cover his belly.*



## Reception

## Prepositions of place (where)

## Recap &amp; build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as *a naming word*
- Year R **W&P**: simple noun phrases

**Key Idea:** some words describe *where* things are.

**Key Vocabulary:** where word

**Build on:** naming word

Although prepositions perform several functions in English, one of the more common groups, and the simplest to understand, are those that describe physical position: i.e. they describe *where* things are. Prepositions of place describing *where* include:

*behind, in, in front of, next to, on, off, under, with*

Prepositions are typically followed by a noun (naming word) or noun phrase (naming phrase).

*The dog is **in** the playground.*

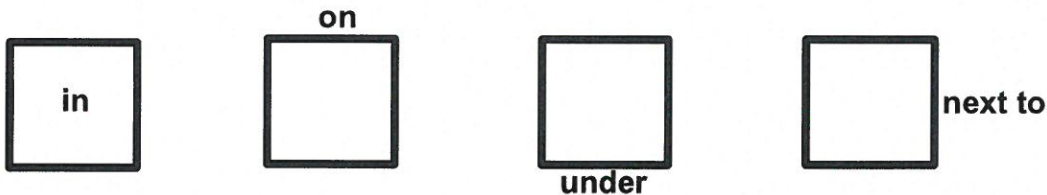
The where word (preposition) *in* is followed by the naming phrase (noun phrase) *the playground*.

*Jim danced **with** Mary.*

The where word (preposition) *with* is followed by the naming word (noun) *Mary*.

**Teaching Tip 1**

Preposition boxes can visually represent many prepositions of place. For example:





## Reception

Understand verb as a *doing word*

## Recap &amp; build upon:

- Year R **W&P**: understand noun as a *naming word*

## Key Idea

Words can describe what people or things are doing.

## Key Vocabulary: doing word

Although there are small number of verbs that do not, the majority of verbs describe actions and can, therefore, be understood as *doing words*. Almost every sentence in English contains at least one verb. The verb describes what the subject does or did.

Jim **walked** into the kitchen.

doing word (verb) = *walked*

What did Jim do? *walked*

He **found** a cake in the kitchen.

doing word (verb) = *found*

What did he do? *found (a cake)*.

Jim **ate** a huge slice.

What did Jim do? *ate (a huge slice)*.

Start with verbs that describe very obvious physical actions (*run, jump, dance, sit, climb*), move onto smaller actions (*scratch, whistle, poke, stroke, blink*) and then onto less obvious ones (*keep, think, watch, wait, help*)

Not all verbs are *doing words*; some describe *being*. These verbs are studied in Year 1 (see Year 1 **W&P**: understand to be and to have as verbs).

The cake **was** delicious.

In the above sentence, the cake did not *do* anything. It was *being* something: *delicious*. At this stage of writing development, simply note that these are verbs without attempting to explain that verbs may also describe *being*.