



### Intent

At Connor Downs, we seek to realise the potential of all learners and recognise that all pupils have an entitlement to access handwriting through a personalised curriculum.

We aim for learners to show commitment, resilience and independence in their handwriting development.

Throughout school learners will:

- enjoy experiences that allow them to explore patterns in writing materials such as modelling clay, sand, rice and with writing tools such as pencils, IWB, tablets, pens.
- understand the language associated with handwriting in preparation for letter formation.
- continue to acquire, develop and apply gross and fine motor skills related to handwriting, including improving their posture and position.
- develop handwriting that is legible, speedy and fluent.

### Handwriting development

#### 1. Fundamentals

**In Reception class and when appropriate through school, curriculum opportunities to develop skills underpinning handwriting include:**

- **Postural Control & Shoulder Stability**

- Hand pushes (place palms together with elbows out and forearms held horizontally, then push hands together as hard as possible and hold for 5 seconds)
- Rolling a ball slowly up a wall (slow & controlled)
- Chair push ups
- Work lying flat on the floor

- **Bilateral Integration**

- Jumping & skipping
- Beating a drum
- Throwing & catching a ball
- Threading beads
- Fastening/ unfastening buttons
- Lacing activities
- Cutting activities

- **Wrist Extension**

- Work on vertical surfaces (stick paper on the wall, whiteboard, chalkboard etc)
- Hungry Hippos

- **Hand Separation**

- Tear paper with little finger curled in, and roll into small balls with thumb & index finger
- Flatten small balls of playdoh by pinching them between pads of thumb & index finger
- Roll small balls of playdoh between pads of thumb and index finger
- Use hole puncher to punch holes along strips of paper
- Hide small objects inside playdoh (beads, pennies, beans) inside playdoh and pull out with thumb and index finger

- **Hand Arches**

- Playdoh activities
- Use small beads or items to cup hands and fill hands, then transfer between hands.
- Paper tearing

**Other hand strengthening activities include:**

- Squeezing (water bottles, stress balls, play doh)
- Rolling (playdoh rolled into small balls)
- Tearing (paper, magazines, tissues)
- Building (blocks)
- Pressing (pressing down on a hole punch to create lines along the edge of a paper)
- Pinching (eye droppers and tweezers to move liquids / small items)
- Squirting

**Examples of Materials to use for mark making/ developing writing:**

- Sand, Water, Rice, Pasta (cooked and uncooked), Gloop, Powdered foods (chocolate, potato, custard), Salt, Slime, Paint, Shaving foam, Foam soap, Toothpaste, Glitter, Play dough, Soil, Play foam, Flour, Sugar, pencils, Paint and paint brushes, Chalks, Felt tips, Crayons, Pencil grips/ support
- Marking making on different mediums: paper, card, stone, trees, screens, material etc

**2. Early stages of handwriting- secure motor control and hand-eye coordination.**

The learner is only able to engage in handwriting activities if the rest of the body is stable enough to support them

**Learners will:**

- Develop physical control through large-scale movement such as outdoor play, balancing, climbing, marching and moving to music.
- Manipulate objects and use one-handed tools and equipment with increasing control such as using tools, cooking utensils and scissors.
- Develop fine motor control and hand-eye coordination, through activities such as jigsaws, threading, cutting and manipulating 'small world' equipment.

**Pencil grips for children:**

## Typical Development of Pencil Grasp in Children



### **Ideas to Develop a Tripod Grasp**

This means that the pencil is held between the tips of the thumb, index and middle fingers; the pencil is held in a relaxed way without too much pressure; the pencil rests on the hand between the thumb and the index finger (webspace); the webspace gap is open; the ring and little fingers are held away from the pencil.

· Pegs (place clothes pegs around the rim of a container), threading beads, picking up cards, popping bubble wrap, posting (coins into a box with a slot in the lid), pipettes, short Crayons (very short crayons can't be held with a whole hand grasp), soft pencil grip (to help position their fingers around the pencil)

### **Ideas for Developing Motor Accuracy / Pencil Control**

· Always sit with feet flat on the floor with the hips, knees and elbows flexed at 90 degrees. The table should be at a height so that the elbows can rest comfortably.

· Encourage a correct pencil grip (tripod), a pencil grip can help position the fingers correctly.

· Practice drawing between tramlines.

· Practice doing dot to dots, mazes, colouring in, tracing around templates or stencils.

· Practice naming, tracing and copying simple shapes.

· Practice drawing people, houses, flowers – naming the shapes being used.

· When practising pencil skills start using a large scale initially.

### **3. Handwriting Families- shapes and lines, then letters.**

The learner must have **sufficient strength and stamina** in the intrinsic muscles of the hand to enable them to hold the pencil and move it skilfully. They need **sufficient attention and memory** to process and retain information. They also need **visual perception** to accurately interpret what is seen.

Learners will:

- Use movement and retrace/ copy lines/ shapes.

- Draw/ form circles, lines and simple shapes.

- Use a writing tool (pencil, paintbrush, chalk etc) and hold it effectively. Handwriting sits on a line/ follows lines.

- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters.

## Sitting position and posture for handwriting activities:

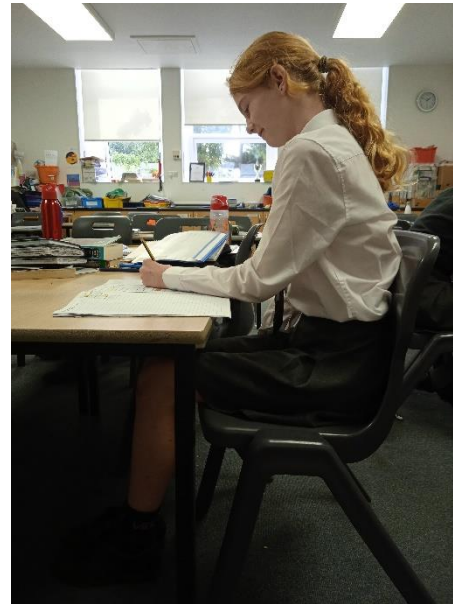
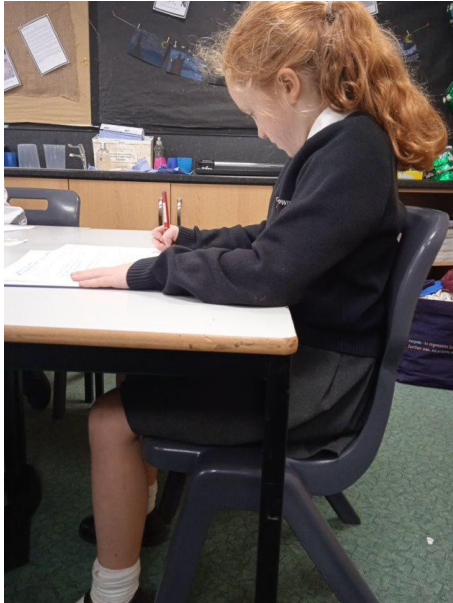
### Left Handers



Is there a circle gap between your thumb and finger?

Is your paper tilted at a slight angle?

### Right Handers



- Arms should be bent at the elbow with the forearm resting on the surface of the table.
- Feet should be flat on the floor and knees at the same level as the hips
- Shoulders should be relaxed and not tensed up towards the ears
- The non-writing hand should be used to stabilise the workbook / paper.

## Are you ready for handwriting? Relax!

Are your elbows off the desk?

Sit up and lean slightly forward

Are your feet flat on the floor?

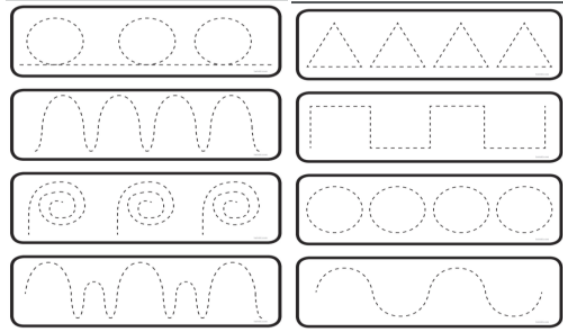
Is your body a fist width away from the desk?

Are all chair legs touching the ground?



## Step 1- Handwriting shapes and lines

- Loops
- Straight Lines
- Curved Lines
- Circles
- Wavy lines
- Zig zags
- Shape (e.g circle, square, oval, triangle)

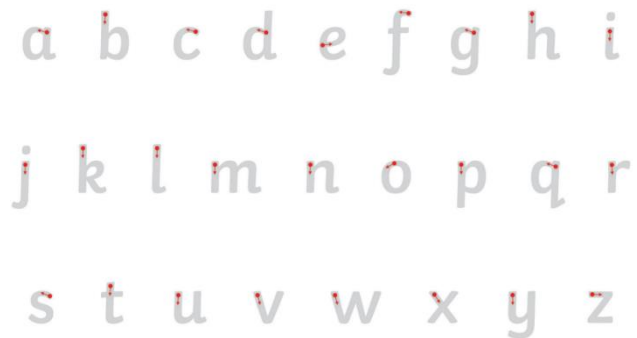


## Step 2- Handwriting Letter families

The children learn to form each letter in the following manner, which is in line with our phonics scheme, 'Little Wandle' in Reception class and Y1. Handwriting practise takes place in these classes on a daily basis.

- Curly caterpillar family- c, a, d, s, e, f, o, g
- Ladder family- j, t, u, i, y, l,
- One armed robot family n, b, h, k, m, r, p
- Zig zag monster family z, w, x

**-See appendix 1**



## Step 3 -Cursive handwriting

In the summer term of Year 1, children begin to learn to use cursive handwriting. This is a writing style where letters are joined together rather than printed separately. Fluid cursive is a skill which saves the writer time as they do not need to lift their pen from the page. In Year 2, children will continue to practise their handwriting on a daily basis until the majority of the class are writing cursively.

**-See appendix 2**

## Handwriting Language used in school

### Left, right, up and down

**Baseline:** The line on which most letters rest.

**Midpoint:** The height of all letters that are not ascenders and descenders:

Letters that do not go above the x-height are: a c e m n o r s u v w x z

**Ascender:** A letter that goes above the x-height. Letters that go above the x-height are: b d f h k l t and all CAPITAL LETTERS.

**Ascender line:** The line that ascenders go up to- b d f h k l

**Descender:** a letter that goes below the baseline. Letters that go below the baseline are: g j p q y. The part that goes below the baseline is called the tail.

**Descender line:** The line that descenders go down to- g j p q y

**Push up:** any movement upward with the writing instrument.

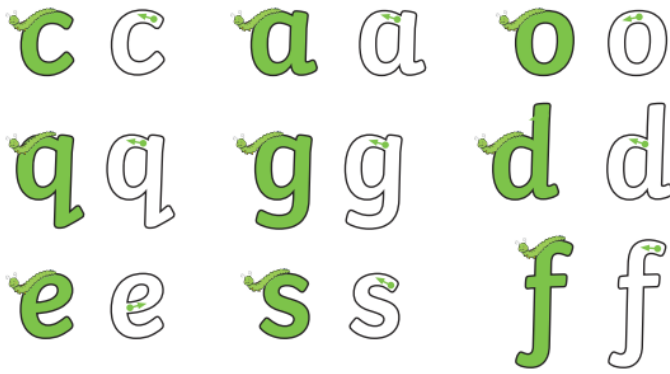
**Crossbar:** the horizontal line through these letters: A E F f G H T t

**Flourish:** An ornamental stroke at the start or end of a letter- for example 'r'

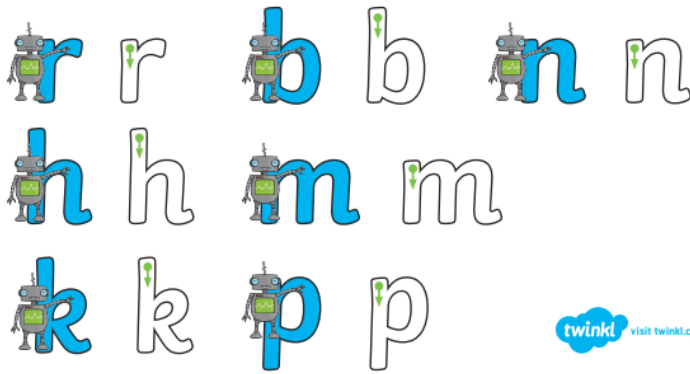
## The structure of handwriting lessons

- At the start of each school year, handwriting is modelled and children are given guided practice. After this, reminders are shared before writing activities and success is celebrated. From Year 3, handwriting practise takes place weekly until the majority of the class are writing cursively with correctly sized and proportioned letters. After this, as children move through KS2, it is likely handwriting will be taught explicitly less often for the majority and will form intervention for others.
- Sessions start by warming up hands and feet by drawing letters of them or creating spirals. Children practise circling with each finger, wagging fingers, rapid opening and closing of hands like the sign for people 'chatting'. Create glasses over eyes, clench fists, interweave fingers, play heads, shoulders knees and toes, slowly walk a mouse up with arm and run down.
- Good posture is checked- feet flat on floor, not too close or far from the table, paper at a slight angle in line with arm, flip pen to get pencil grip.
- The following offers a logical order to focus on similarities of letters/joins
  1. Push up to join to next letter- a, c, d, g, s, p, q, e
  2. Other middle-sized letters- i, m, n, u, x, z
  3. Ascenders- b, d, h, k, l, t
  4. Descenders- f, g, j, p, q, y
  5. Horizontal joins- o, w, r, v
  6. Tricky letters- f, y, g
  7. Capital letters – including sizes
  8. Then practise 2-3 letter combinations (ai/ou/ea/le/fa/ing/ed/ale/ght etc)
  9. Practise words with spacing between and consistent sizing.
- The resource [Writing Repeater - mobile friendly \(ictgames.com\)](http://ictgames.com) is excellent to model to the children a join or word.
- Handwriting lessons should be short- practising one perfect row of letters/joins is preferable to extended sessions.
- Teachers look out for common errors- the size of 'F', the shape of J, G and I, mixing upper and lower case and backwards rotations and correct these.
- All children will start each new school year by using pencil. The use of handwriting pens is at the teacher's discretion when consistency is established. This is monitored throughout the year with additional practise offered where appropriate.
- Examples of handwriting from each year group can be found at the end of this document (Appendix 4).

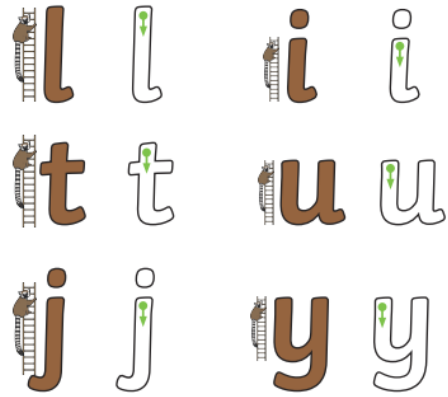
### Curly Caterpillar Letters



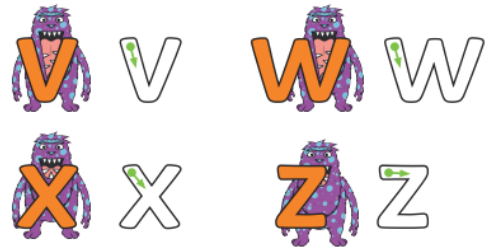
### One Armed Robot Letters



### Ladder Letters



### Zigzag Monster Letters



Letter formation





Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff

Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt

Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Appendix 3 Cursive Formation

Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

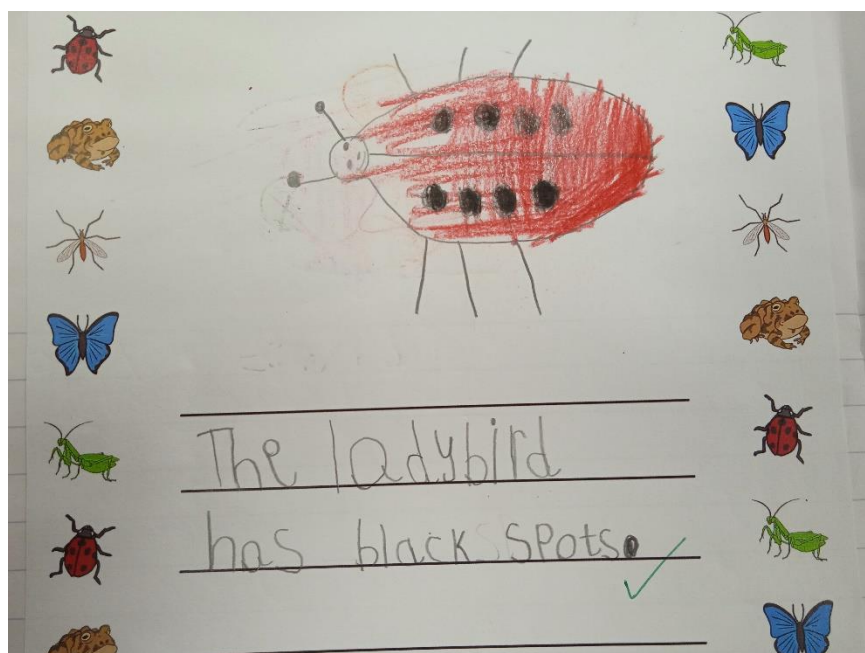
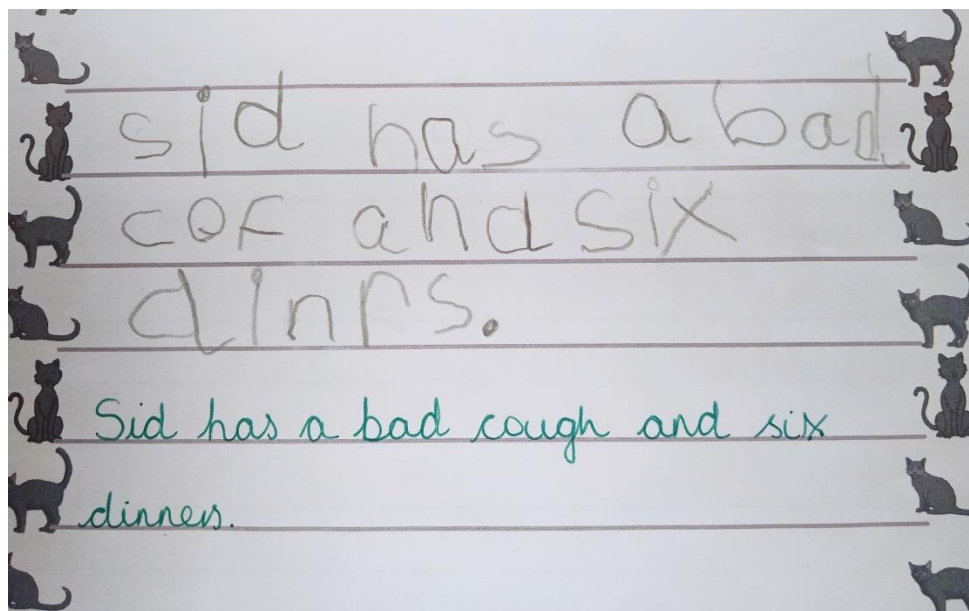
Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Ww Xx Yy Zz

# Appendix 4: Samples of handwriting from each year group.


## Reception Class:



Year 1:

The wolf BLEW down  
the straw house.

The wolf BLEW down  
the Wood house.



builds builds  
stairs stairs

The carpenter  
builds things with  
wood. In the  
house he builds  
the stairs  
steps.

Year 2:

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October  
to learn about L.H. (E.K.).

1. It is a Victorian House.
2. I was owned by the Robertes.
3. In those days  
people lived differently.  
photos were black and white.  
toys  
cars

✓  
✓ Well collected facts.  
① To prepare questions.

1. Amy was 25 when she started learning to fly.
2. Moths were chosen because she flew a plane called Gipsy Moth. ✓
3. The text is non-fiction because it is true. ✓
4. Amy Johnson was born in Hull in 1903. ✓
5. Amy flew the plane to Australia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war. ✓
6. I would use to learn how to say an airman because it would be fun. ✓

## Year 3:

It was winter on the farm. The horse, dog, cat and hen all went in to the big shed with the sheep. In January the farmer made a scarecrow from a blue coat, two poles, three buttons, a sack, some string and an old pipe. In February Mr Scarecrow was unhappy when he was put out in the field.

1. The Stone Age period covers over 3 million years.
2. The period is split into three time periods.
3. The 10,000BC <sup>Neolithic</sup> period follows the Mesolithic period.
4. It is called the Stone Age because during this time stone

The Word Bird

In the beginning nothing was heard  
All was silent, not a word  
till the word Bird sang  
And the world began ✓

She sang the sea she sang  
the waves  
She sang the meadows she sang  
the flowers  
Oh the word bird sang  
And the world began ✓

She sang the sand she sang  
the shells  
She sang the snow she sang  
the ice  
Oh the word bird sang  
And the world began ✓

Year 4:

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October

National Poetry Day.

Making a Word Bird.

My interesting word from the thesaurus  
for the word bird is athletic. ✓

She sang the clouds, she sang the rain.  
She sang the moon, she sang the sunset.  
Oh the word bird sang ✓  
And the world began

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October

National Poetry Day

Making a Word Bird

My interesting word from the  
thesaurus for the word bird is elated. ✓


She trilled the sand,  
She trilled the trees  
She trilled the grass ✓  
She trilled the leaves  
Oh the word bird trilled sang ✓  
And the world began ✓

Year 5:

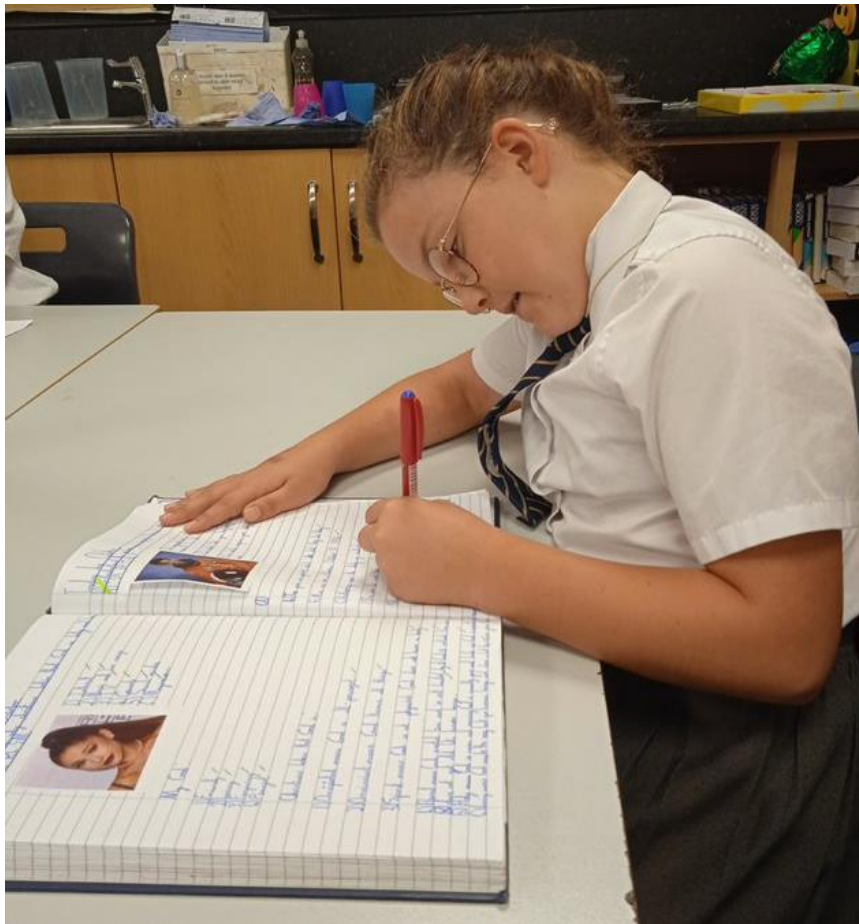
Monday 14th October

Understand the features of a biography (Science and English)

SM, EP, CT, RL



- 1) The biography has to go at the ~~beginning~~ very top because it is a title ✓
- 2) You should start your biography with a ~~statement~~ <sup>relevant detail point</sup>
- 3) You should organise your biography in ~~chronological~~ <sup>chronological</sup> order.





Year 6:

Creepily, the silhouette like plane shadows the people below  
The sirens scream. Under the mighty metal eagle, two flaps  
unlatch. Something is dispatched. It makes the people  
below worry with fear.

The bomb. It is descending towards the innocent people below  
It ignites whilst in mid-fall. Inside, the chemicals  
are roaring to explode. The surface of the explosive is  
heating up. It feels like the coarsest sandpaper. It  
impacts the ground. POW! CRASH! BOOM!!

There are bricks, wood and shards of glass zooming around.  
Buildings crippled to nothing. Destruction. Obliteration. Despair.  
The city in ruins.

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October

To use homophones correctly English  
PLT; EP

They're

- 1) Their going on holiday tomorrow. ✓
- 2) Dad parked the car over there. ✓
- 3) Sam and Jack did well in their. ✓
- 4) Their\* are 30 students in our class. \* There
- 5) There are many clouds in the sky today. ✓

The amazing species of iguana live in so many different locations around the world. They can vary from the humid rainforests, Florida and even the Galapagos Islands. The Galapagos Islands are home to the Marine Iguana, they love to spend time near the water and are the only of their kind that can swim. They can swim down to 20m below the ocean.