Vocabulary progression document

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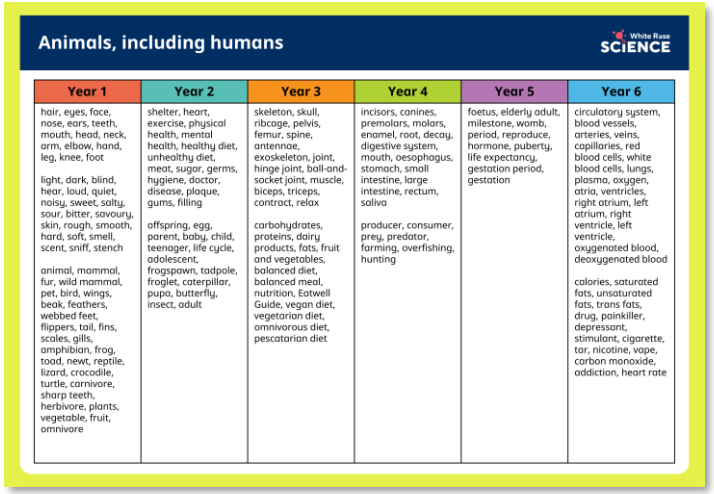
Introduction

The use of accurate scientific vocabulary is essential for children's understanding and communication of scientific concepts. This document presents a detailed mapping of scientific vocabulary progression, illustrating how language skills in science develop over time.

Words are listed in order of where they appear in the scheme of learning. To save repetition of vocabulary, the words are documented where they are first introduced. For example, the word 'carnivore' is used throughout the schemes, however, it is tracked in Year 1 as this is the year group this word is first introduced in.



Animals, including humans

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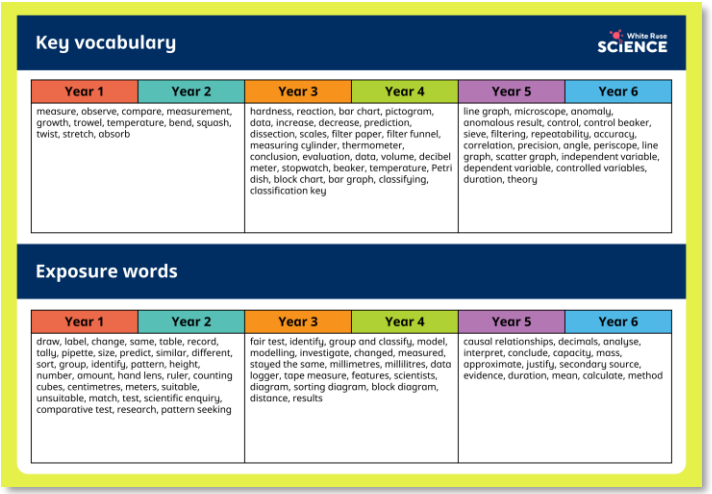
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
hair, eyes, face, nose, ears, teeth, mouth, head, neck, arm, elbow, hand, leg, knee, foot light, dark, blind, hear, loud, quiet, noisy, sweet, salty, sour, bitter, savoury, skin, rough, smooth, hard, soft, smell, scent, sniff, stench animal, mammal, fur, wild mammal, pet, bird, wings, beak, feathers, webbed feet, flippers, tail, fins, scales, gills, amphibian, frog, toad, newt, reptile, lizard, crocodile, turtle, carnivore, sharp teeth, herbivore, plants, vegetable, fruit, omnivore	shelter, heart, exercise, physical health, mental health, healthy diet, unhealthy diet, meat, sugar, germs, hygiene, doctor, disease, plaque, gums, filling offspring, egg, parent, baby, child, teenager, life cycle, adolescent, frogspawn, tadpole, froglet, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly, insect, adult	skeleton, skull, ribcage, pelvis, femur, spine, antennae, exoskeleton, joint, hinge joint, ball-and-socket joint, muscle, biceps, triceps, contract, relax carbohydrates, proteins, dairy products, fats, fruit and vegetables, balanced diet, balanced meal, nutrition, Eatwell Guide, vegan diet, vegetarian diet, omnivorous diet, pescatarian diet	incisors, canines, premolars, molars, enamel, root, decay, digestive system, mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, rectum, saliva producer, consumer, prey, predator, farming, overfishing, hunting	foetus, elderly adult, milestone, womb, period, reproduce, hormone, puberty, life expectancy, gestation period, gestation	circulatory system, blood vessels, arteries, veins, capillaries, red blood cells, white blood cells, lungs, plasma, oxygen, atria, ventricles, right atrium, left atrium, right ventricle, left ventricle, oxygenated blood, deoxygenated blood calories, saturated fats, unsaturated fats, trans fats, drug, painkiller, depressant, stimulant, cigarette, tar, nicotine, vape, carbon monoxide, addiction, heart rate



Key vocabulary

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Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
measure, observe, compare, measurement, growth, trowel, temperature, bend, squash, twist, stretch, absorb		hardness, reaction, bar chart, pictogram, data, increase, decrease, prediction, dissection, scales, filter paper, filter funnel, measuring cylinder, thermometer, conclusion, evaluation, data, volume, decibel meter, stopwatch, beaker, temperature, Petri dish, block chart, bar graph, classifying, classification key		line graph, microscope, anomaly, anomalous result, control, control beaker, sieve, filtering, repeatability, accuracy, correlation, precision, angle, periscope, line graph, scatter graph, independent variable, dependent variable, controlled variables, duration, theory	

Exposure words

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
draw, label, change, same, table, record, tally, pipette, size, predict, similar, different, sort, group, identify, pattern, height, number, amount, hand lens, ruler, counting cubes, centimetres, meters, suitable, unsuitable, match, test, scientific enquiry, comparative test, research, pattern seeking		fair test, identify, group and classify, model, modelling, investigate, changed, measured, stayed the same, millimetres, millilitres, data logger, tape measure, features, scientists, diagram, sorting diagram, block diagram, distance, results		causal relationships, decimals, analyse, interpret, conclude, capacity, mass, approximate, justify, secondary source, evidence, duration, mean, calculate, method	

The aim of this document is to give an at-a-glance guide to the progression of vocabulary throughout the curriculum. Vocabulary is broken down into Years 1 – 6 for the topic areas from the National Curriculum and sustainability blocks. Working scientifically vocabulary is broken down into the primary phases.

The working scientifically section has been split into two categories. This includes key vocabulary from the schemes and exposure words. Children are not expected to use every word in the exposure words list, but they can hear correct scientific language verbally through teacher discussion and instruction.

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Animals, including humans

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Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
hair, eyes, face, nose, ears, teeth, mouth, head, neck, arm, elbow, hand, leg, knee, foot light, dark, blind, hear, loud, quiet, noisy, sweet, salty, sour, bitter, savoury, skin, rough, smooth, hard, soft, smell, scent, sniff, stench animal, mammal, fur, wild mammal, pet, bird, wings, beak, feathers, webbed feet, flippers, tail, fins, scales, gills, amphibian, frog, toad, newt, reptile, lizard, crocodile, turtle, carnivore, sharp teeth, herbivore, plants, vegetable, fruit, omnivore	shelter, heart, exercise, physical health, mental health, healthy diet, unhealthy diet, meat, sugar, germs, hygiene, doctor, disease, plaque, gums, filling offspring, egg, parent, baby, child, teenager, life cycle, adolescent, frogspawn, tadpole, froglet, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly, insect, adult	skeleton, skull, ribcage, pelvis, femur, spine, antennae, exoskeleton, joint, hinge joint, ball-and-socket joint, muscle, biceps, triceps, contract, relax carbohydrates, proteins, dairy products, fats, fruit and vegetables, balanced diet, balanced meal, nutrition, Eatwell Guide, vegan diet, vegetarian diet, omnivorous diet, pescatarian diet	incisors, canines, premolars, molars, enamel, root, decay, digestive system, mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, rectum, saliva producer, consumer, prey, predator, farming, overfishing, hunting	foetus, elderly adult, milestone, womb, period, reproduce, hormone, puberty, life expectancy, gestation period, gestation	circulatory system, blood vessels, arteries, veins, capillaries, red blood cells, white blood cells, lungs, plasma, oxygen, atria, ventricles, right atrium, left atrium, right ventricle, left ventricle, oxygenated blood, deoxygenated blood calories, saturated fats, unsaturated fats, trans fats, drug, painkiller, depressant, stimulant, cigarette, tar, nicotine, vape, carbon monoxide, addiction, heart rate

Living things and their habitats

Year 2	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Arctic plants, hibernate, habitat, cactus, desert, rainfall, ocean, seagrass, woodland, fern, moss, microhabitat, spider, snail, diet, food chain, living, dead, never alive	vertebrate, invertebrate, soft-bodied invertebrate, flowering plant, non-flowering plant, seasonal changes, natural resources, rewilding, nature reserve	monotreme, mammary gland, metamorphosis, larva, chrysalis, hatchling, nestling, fledgling, fertilisation, embryo, sperm cells, egg cells, sexual reproduction, anther, stigma, style, filament, ovary, ovule, clone, runner, tuber, asexual reproduction, cutting, parent plant	organism, excretion, reproduction, mollusc, arachnid, classification, coniferous tree, microorganism, bacteria, virus, fungi, characteristics

Plants

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
plant, flower, leaf, petals, stem, roots, branch, trunk, roots, wildflower, daisy, garden plant, sunflower, nettle, buttercup, dandelion, deciduous tree, horse chestnut, oak, sycamore, evergreen tree, pine, holly, needles, seed, soil, growth	sunlight, compost, herb, blossom, bulb, shoot	water transportation, seedling, seed coating, germination, stamen, pistil, pollen, reproductive organs, pollination, pollinators, wind dispersal, animal dispersal, water dispersal, explosion dispersal, seed dispersal

Materials

Year 1	Year 2	Year 5
material, shiny, dull, rock, heavy, light, object, wood, metal, plastic, glass, wool, solid, liquid, melt, freeze, ice, float, sink, absorb, transparent, opaque	natural material, human-made material, recycle, flexible, rigid, stone, pebble, brick, brittle, flexible, translucent, tough, lightweight, strong, breakable, waterproof	electrical conductor, electrical insulator, thermal insulator, properties, lifespan, dissolve, soluble, insoluble, solution, mixture, reversible changes, reverse, chemical reaction, irreversible change, burning, heating, vinegar, bicarbonate of soda

Rocks

Year 3
granite, pumice, sandstone, chalk, marble, gneiss, crystals, grains, layers, texture, hardness, weathering, fossil, shell, fossilisation, sediment, sandy soil, clay soil, peat soil, chalky soil, organic matter, nutrients, deforestation, habitat loss

States of matter

Year 4
solid, liquid, gas, states of matter, pouring solid, ooblek, flow, freezing, melting, boiling, condensation, evaporation, melting point, water cycle, precipitation, atmosphere, petri dish

Electricity

Year 4	Year 6
appliances, plug, socket, cell, electrocuted, circuit, switch, battery, buzzer, conductor, insulator	series circuit, voltage, current, complete circuit, incomplete circuit

Earth and space

Year 5
Solar System, orbit, Sun, planets, Pluto, celestial body, gravity, heliocentric model, geocentric model, rotate, axis, North Pole, South Pole, Earth, night, day, moon, gravitational force, satellite

Seasonal changes

Year 1
autumn, daylight, night, weather, season, rainfall, weather, rain gauge, winter, rainy, snowy, windy, cloudy, frosty, sunny, spring, summer

Sound

Year 4
vibration, sound, volume, pitch, outer ear, ear bones, cochlea, ear drum, ear canal, decibel, insulate, high-pitched, low-pitched, background noise

Light

Year 3	Year 6
light sources, natural light sources, artificial light sources, Sun, sunglasses, protect, reflection, shadow	retina, iris, pupil, lens, ray diagram, solar eclipse, refraction, medium, rainbow, prism, coloured filter, spectrum of light

Forces and magnets

Year 3	Year 5
push, pull, force, contact force, friction, magnet, magnetic, poles, magnetic force, non-metal, iron, aluminium, steel, attract, repel	frictional force, motion, air resistance, parachute, surface area, water resistance, streamlined, non-contact force, gravity, weight, lever, gear, pulley, machine

Evolution and inheritance

Year 6
variation, species, inheritance, desirable characteristics, polar habitat, desert habitat, adaptations, evolution, common ancestor, natural selection, finch, Galapagos Islands, decompose, Charles Darwin, palaeontologist, Mary Anning

Working scientifically

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Key vocabulary

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
measure, observe, compare, measurement, growth, trowel, temperature, bend, squash, twist, stretch, absorb		hardness, reaction, bar chart, pictogram, data, increase, decrease, prediction, dissection, scales, filter paper, filter funnel, measuring cylinder, thermometer, conclusion, evaluation, data, volume, decibel meter, stopwatch, beaker, temperature, Petri dish, block chart, bar graph, classifying, classification key		line graph, microscope, anomaly, anomalous result, control, control beaker, sieve, filtering, repeatability, accuracy, correlation, precision, angle, periscope, line graph, scatter graph, independent variable, dependent variable, controlled variables, duration, theory	

Exposure words

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
draw, label, change, same, table, record, tally, pipette, size, predict, similar, different, sort, group, identify, pattern, height, number, amount, hand lens, ruler, counting cubes, centimetres, meters, suitable, unsuitable, match, test, scientific enquiry, comparative test, research, pattern seeking		fair test, identify, group and classify, model, modelling, investigate, changed, measured, stayed the same, millimetres, millilitres, data logger, tape measure, features, scientists, diagram, sorting diagram, block diagram, distance, results		causal relationships, decimals, analyse, interpret, conclude, capacity, mass, approximate, justify, secondary source, evidence, duration, mean, calculate, method	

Sustainability

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Sustainability

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Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Earth, helpful, harmful, recycle, reuse, crops, farmer, cook	single-use plastic, wildlife, nature, local	food waste, landfill, food waste recycling, edible, inedible, biodiversity, rewilding, endangered, extinct	mains electricity, battery-powered, renewable energy, non-renewable energy, energy usage, habitat destruction, palm oil, sustainable	global warming, greenhouse gases, fossil fuels, climate change, glacier, carbon footprint, plastic pollution, pollution, microplastic	solar power, wind power, solar panels, wind turbine, migration, glare, light pollution, light trespass, skyglow, urban, rural, light emission