

## Because, When, If: Joining Ideas in Year 2 Sentences

### Key points

- In Year 2, children are taught to join two ideas into one sentence using words such as 'because', 'when', 'if' and 'that' — these are called subordinating conjunctions, and they show how two ideas connect, such as cause, time or condition.
- This is a specific requirement of the National Curriculum for English at this stage, alongside joining words like 'and', 'but' and 'or'.
- Many children naturally reach for 'and' or 'then' to link ideas, since these are simpler and come earlier in writing development.
- Learning words like 'because' and 'if' helps children explain reasons, describe timing, and set out conditions more clearly in their writing and talk.
- This skill is usually taught and practised gradually across the school year, often through spoken sentences before it appears in written work.
- How quickly a child picks this up varies, and that's completely normal — if you'd like to know how your child is getting on, their teacher is the best person to ask.

### Things to try at home

- Play a simple game finishing sentences together, such as 'I put my coat on because...' and take turns adding an ending.
- During everyday chats, model the words yourself — for example, 'We need an umbrella if it rains' — without asking your child to repeat it.
- Ask playful 'when' questions, like 'What do we do when it's bedtime?', and see what sentence they come up with in reply.
- Look at a favourite picture book and spot any 'because', 'when', 'if' or 'that' on the page, just for fun, with no pressure to remember them.
- Invite your child to make up a silly sentence using one of these words, such as 'The dog danced when the music started.'

### Find out more

- GOV.UK: National Curriculum in England — English programmes of study, Key Stage 1 ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))
- GOV.UK: Department for Education guidance on the Key Stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling requirements ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))
- Your child's class teacher, who can tell you how this is being taught and practised in their specific class