

Intervention 2: Prepositions

Information for teachers

- **Prepositions** are words that express a relationship between a noun and another noun, or between a noun and a verb
- They can express:
 - **relations in space** (*to, from*)
 - **relations in time** (*before, after*)
 - **abstract relations** (*despite, except*)
- A single preposition can often be used to express more than one type of relationship
 - Mary said this in class
 - Mary said this in the morning
 - Mary said this in all seriousness
- When prepositions express simple physical relations, they are fairly easy to understand
- The more abstract meanings of prepositions cause trouble for almost all learners of English
- Some distinctions that are very easily confused include:
 - *to/at*
 - *in/on/at*
 - *of/from*
 - *since/for*
- Children who speak some of the languages most commonly found in NI schools, such as Polish, Portuguese, and Arabic, will benefit from this intervention
- However, this intervention is not just for specific languages
 - It may be of use to any Newcomer pupil
 - It can also help English-speaking pupils to understand English better

How to use this resource

- This resource contains stories with deliberate mistakes in them
- Children can go through the stories looking for mistakes
- There are also questions for children to answer, based on the stories
- A teacher or assistant should be present to explain these tasks to children, make sure they understand the questions, and help with any areas where they may be struggling
- You can use the stories and questions included here as a template, and create your own resources based on other stories
- These resources are intended for children in Key Stage 2, but similar methods may be useful for older or younger children.

Answer key for teachers

Story 1

- **Highlighted** text has been replaced by deliberate mistakes in the classroom version
- **Coloured** text is key to answering the questions correctly
- If you need to help children with recognising the mistakes, present them with a different sentence using the same preposition and prompt them about the meaning. It may also be helpful to use props (e.g. *Is this pencil on the desk or in the desk?*).

Little Red Riding Hood

Little Red Riding Hood was a little girl who always wore a red hood.

One day Little Red Riding Hood's mother gave her a basket with some food in it and asked her to take it **to** her grandmother. Her grandmother lived **on** the other side of the forest.

After Little Red Riding Hood **had been walking through** the forest **for** several minutes, she saw a wolf. The wolf asked **if** Little Red Riding Hood where she was going. Little Red Riding Hood said that she was taking some food to her grandmother.

While Little Red Riding Hood was picking flowers, the wolf ran to her grandmother's house. The wolf ate her grandmother up. Then he put on her grandmother's clothes and got into her bed.

Little Red Riding Hood arrived **at** her grandmother's house. The wolf told her to come in.

'Put the basket by the table,' said the wolf.

'Oh, Grandmother, what big eyes you have!' said Little Red Riding Hood.

'All the better to see you with, my dear,' said the wolf.

'Oh Grandmother, what big teeth you have!' said Little Red Riding Hood.

'All the better to eat you with,' said the wolf.

Then the wolf jumped **out of** bed and ate Little Red Riding Hood.

Answers

2. In the forest
3. after, on, into
4. B, A, A
5. Accept any reasonable answer other than 'the table' (e.g. 'the floor', 'a chair').
Provide prompts if the child struggles to answer.

Story 2

- Highlighted text has been replaced by deliberate mistakes in the classroom version
- Coloured text is key to answering the questions correctly
- If you need to help children with recognising the mistakes, present them with a different sentence using the same preposition and prompt them about the meaning. It may also be helpful to use props (e.g. *Is this pencil on the desk or in the desk?*).

Jack and the Beanstalk

Jack and his mother lived on a farm. They were very poor. To get some money, they decided to sell their cow.

Jack took the cow to market. On the way, he met a man who asked Jack to sell him the cow. The man offered Jack five magic beans for the cow.

Jack gave the man the cow and went home with his magic beans. His mother was very angry that all Jack had got was some beans. She threw the beans out of the window.

The next morning, when Jack got up, he found that the beans had grown into a huge beanstalk. The beanstalk reached all the way up to the sky.

Jack climbed up the beanstalk. At the top of the beanstalk, he arrived at the house of a giant.

Jack hid in the giant's house and watched what he did. The giant had lots of treasures. He had a lot of money, a hen that laid golden eggs, and a magical harp.

When the giant fell asleep, Jack took his treasures and climbed down the beanstalk with them. The giant woke up and chased Jack. Jack reached the ground while the giant was still climbing down. Jack got an axe and chopped the beanstalk down. The giant fell from the sky and was killed.

Jack and his mother now had plenty of money. They lived happily ever after.

Answers

2. Outdoors
3. to, at (also accept 'up'), out of
4. A, B, A
5. The ground

(Accept any reasonable variant, e.g. 'soil', 'earth', 'dirt'. Do not accept 'beanstalk'.)

Story 3

- **Highlighted** text has been replaced by deliberate mistakes in the classroom version
- **Coloured** text is key to answering the questions correctly
- If you need to help children with recognising the mistakes, present them with a different sentence using the same preposition and prompt them about the meaning. It may also be helpful to use props (e.g. *Is this pencil on the desk or in the desk?*).

Sleeping Beauty

Once upon a time there was a princess. When she was a baby, the king and queen invited everyone **to** her christening. There was a wicked fairy that they didn't invite, but she came to the christening anyway.

The wicked fairy was angry **at** not being invited. She put a curse **on** the princess, saying that when she was older, she would prick her finger on a spindle and die.

There was also a good fairy at the christening. She made it so that when the princess pricked her finger, she wouldn't die; she would just fall **into** a deep sleep.

One day, when she was sixteen, the princess saw an old woman making thread with a spinning wheel. The princess asked if she could try making thread. When she sat at the wheel, she pricked her finger on the spindle and fell asleep.

Everyone else in the castle fell asleep too. The king and queen fell asleep. All the soldiers and servants fell asleep. An enormous hedge of brambles grew up **around** the castle.

A hundred years later, a prince was riding by. He saw the hedge of brambles and wondered **about** it. To find out what was inside the hedge, he hacked his way through **with** his sword.

Inside the hedge, he found the castle with everyone asleep **in** it. He went into the castle and saw the princess. He kissed her and she woke up.

Everyone else in the castle woke up too. The prince and the princess were married, and lived happily ever after.

Answers

2. Outside
3. to, at, about
4. A, B, B
5. Accept any answer where the princess is younger than fourteen.

Story 4

- Highlighted text has been replaced by deliberate mistakes in the classroom version
- Coloured text is key to answering the questions correctly
- If you need to help children with recognising the mistakes, present them with a different sentence using the same preposition and prompt them about the meaning. It may also be helpful to use props (e.g. *Is this pencil on the desk or in the desk?*).

The Tortoise and the Hare

Once there was a hare who challenged a tortoise to a race. They asked a fox to be the judge of the race.

The hare was sure that he would win, because he was faster than the tortoise. ‘What a dull, heavy creature you are!’ he said to the tortoise.

The tortoise and the hare started off together. The hare raced off quickly and soon left the tortoise behind.

After a while, the hare got tired and decided to stop running. ‘I can start again when the tortoise gets here,’ thought the hare. So the hare lay down and had a rest. After a while, he fell asleep.

Meanwhile, the tortoise kept jogging steadily on. At first, he was far behind the hare. Once the hare had stopped, though, the tortoise began to catch up to him. Eventually, the tortoise got to where the hare was. The hare didn’t wake up. The tortoise kept on and passed the hare.

When the hare woke up, the tortoise was ahead of him. As soon as he woke up, the hare raced off and soon reached the finish line. But he was too late. The fox told the hare that the tortoise had already won. The hare realised that he shouldn’t have stopped to rest.

Answers

2. No
3. behind, on, across
4. A, A, A
5. The finish line