

At the heart of **Rainbow Grammar** is a very simple idea – that colour can be used to expose the underlying structure of sentences, so that children can understand how they work, imitate their patterns and then apply those patterns to new contexts. Using colour to understand sentences is nothing new, but it is the unique way in which Rainbow Grammar does it that makes it so powerful.

Rainbow Grammar identifies nine sentence building blocks – clauses and phrases – and assigns each a colour. Three form the core of almost all sentences in English. This basic pattern learned in Year 1 uses a simple traffic light model: green represents the subject of a sentence (who or what the sentence is about), orange the predicate (the action in the sentence) and red the punctuation that stops a sentence.

The monster roared all night .

Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, children learn how to build upon this simple structure by both using the full range of Rainbow Grammar colours, which represent an increasingly sophisticated range of sentence elements, and by using the different patterns in which they can be joined together. For example:

Year 1 All night , the monster roared .

Year 2 The monster roared all night because he wanted his teddy .

Year 3 The monster lost his teddy , crawled under the bed and roared all night .

Year 4 The monster , a timid little beastie , roared all night .

Year 5 The monster roared into his pillow which was soaked in tears .

Until eventually, in Year 6, children are able to build more elaborate patterns using multiple elements to express complex ideas.

Because he wanted his teddy , the monster , a timid little beastie who was afraid of the dark , roared all night , huddled beneath his favourite blanket .

At the same time, children learn about the eight word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.) and four phrase types that make up the sentences they are building, and how they can improve the internal structure of these Rainbow Grammar elements.

Year 1 *adjectives of size*

The huge monster ran through the forest .

Year 2 *proper nouns (places)*

The huge monster ran through Sherwood Forest .

Year 3 *precise nouns*

The huge ogre ran through Sherwood Forest .

Year 4 *verbs for shades of meaning*

The huge ogre stormed through Sherwood Forest .

Year 5 *double noun phrase*

The huge ogre stormed through the dark heart of Sherwood Forest .

Year 6 *compound-adjectives*

The huge, thistle-furred ogre stormed through the dark heart of Sherwood Forest .