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## Under-fives get 'learning goals'

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/education/7591433.stm>

From BBC News 01.09.08 © BBC MMVIII

### **New welfare guidelines including 69 "learning goals" for the under-fives have come into force in England.**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets out expected standards of care in registered childcare **settings**. The "toddler curriculum" includes being able to count to 10, spell their names, understand stories, know right from wrong and be able to dress and undress. Ministers say the EYFS will help stop disadvantaged children falling behind in educational **attainment**.

The guidelines have **provoked** a worried reaction from some childcare workers who believe increasing levels of associated paperwork could put them out of business.

### **'Best start'**

Others fear children will be required to start formal learning too early and that it could set some of them up for failure at a tender age.

So England's Children's Minister Beverley Hughes **announced** that learning goals requiring children to be able to write their own names and begin using simple sentences by the age of five, sometimes with punctuation, would be **reviewed** to see if they were suitable.

But in a joint letter to the managers of England's 3,000 children's centres Schools Secretary Ed Balls and Ms Hughes said their guidelines would help make sure that all young children had the chance to **engage** in stimulating play.

Children's centre staff would be able to use it to engage mothers and fathers, to make sure these experiences are built on at home, they said.

Mr Balls added: "I am driven by a **determination** to make sure that the most disadvantaged children get the very best start in life.

"We want to give all children a level playing field and help all parents get the best care and support for their children.

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"I believe that every child in this country is entitled to the benefits of learning through play as set out in the EYFS and that their parents are entitled to the **reassurance** that their children will be well supported and cared for by high quality childminders and nursery workers."

### Developmental milestones

Research shows that gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged children can affect them from the age of 22 months and are likely to get bigger as they age. By the time they take GCSES, children from poorer backgrounds are half as **likly** to get five good grades as their wealthier peers.

The EYFS applies to all formal childcare settings for children under five and is based on the idea that children need to learn through play as they begin to understand the world around them.

Childcare providers are **recquired** to keep parents up to date with their children's **progres** and will be encouraged to be involved with **thier** early education. Profiles of each child will be completed by nurseries and childminders, recording the developmental milestones the reach. These are intended to provide an **acurate** picture of a child's development for parents and **primery** schools when they reach them.

However, ministers are keen to stress that the youngsters will not be tested on the goals included in the guidelines. They also argue that as the framework is a **combinasion** of two existing sets of guidelines they should not place extra burdens on those working in childcare.

In Scotland, what and how children learn in pre-school nurseries is set out in the Curriculum for Excellence which is **currently** being rolled out. It does not apply to childminders.

In Wales, a new Scandinavian-style Learn through Play nursery and infant **curriculum** is being introduced for three to seven-year-olds, which moves away from the more **formmal** classroom based lessons.

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### A. Read the article

Now decide, based on the article, whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The Early Years Foundation stage applies to all children under 5.  
True / False
2. All children under five should be able to use correct punctuation.  
True / False
3. There are 3,000 children's centres in Wales and Scotland.  
True / False
4. The gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children widens as they get older.  
True / False
5. Beverley Hughes is Schools Minister.  
True / False
6. There will be no testing on any of these goals set out in the guidelines.  
True / False

### B.

What are your views? Are we setting too many targets for our children at too early an age? Could it put pressure on children and parents? Should we actually be less formal at an early age? Write an essay detailing your views.

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C.

Look at the words in the text that are in **bold / red**. They are listed on the left below. Can you match them with a word on the right that can replace them in the text.

For example **settings** can be replaced by venues

<b>settings</b>	→	venue
<b>attainment</b>		resolve
<b>provoked</b>		achievement
<b>announced</b>		guarantee
<b>reviewed</b>		sparked
<b>engage</b>		reassessed
<b>determination</b>		stated
<b>reassurance</b>		participate

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D. The words in **blue** are misspelled. I identify the correct spelling.

1. What is the correct spelling of **likly**?

- a. likley
- b. likeley
- c. likelie
- d. likely

2. What is the correct spelling of **required**?

- a. required
- b. requirred
- c. recquirred
- d. reqired

3. What is the correct spelling of **progres**?

- a. proggress
- b. progress
- c. proggres
- d. progress

4. What is the correct spelling of **thier**?

- a. there
- b. they're
- c. their
- d. theer

5. What is the correct spelling of **acurate**?

- a. accurate
- b. accurrate
- c. accuratte
- d. acurrate

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6. What is the correct spelling of **primery**?

- a. primmery
- b. primmary
- c. primmarry
- d. primary

7. What is the correct spelling of **combinasion**?

- a. combinassion
- b. combination
- c. combinnasion
- d. commbination

8. What is the correct spelling of **currently**?

- a. curantly
- b. currently
- c. currentley
- d. currantly

9. What is the correct spelling of **curriculum**?

- a. curriculum
- b. curriculum
- c. curicculum
- d. curricullum

10. What is the correct spelling of **formmal**?

- a. formel
- b. formal
- c. formmel
- d. forml

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## Answers

A.

1. False – only those in registered childcare settings.
2. False
3. False – there are 3,000 in England
4. True
5. False – she is Children's Minister
6. True

C.

settings	→	venue
attainment		achievement
provoked		sparked
announced		stated
reviewed		reassessed
engage		participate
determination		resolve
reassurance		guarantee

D.

1. likely
2. required
3. progress
4. their
5. accurate
6. primary
7. combination
8. currently
9. curriculum
10. formal