KEY STAGE 2

YEARS 3–6

2013

National Curriculum assessments

English grammar, punctuation and spelling test framework

End of Key Stage 2 framework for assessment 2013–2015

Standards
& Testing
Agency

Contents

1. Overview

In July 2012, in response to Lord Bew's independent review of Key Stage 2 assessment[1], the Government announced that a new statutory English grammar, punctuation and spelling test (hereafter known as 'the test') for all children in Year 6 would be introduced during the 2012-13 academic year.

The test will only include questions that assess elements of the current National Curriculum in English. The domain will include items that measure:

- sentence grammar (through identification and grammatical accuracy);
- punctuation (through identification and grammatical accuracy);
- vocabulary (through grammatical accuracy) and
- spelling.

1.1 Purposes

As outlined in the review of Key Stage 2 assessment by Lord Bew *(ibid.)*, the main purposes of statutory assessment are to:

- Ascertain what pupils have achieved in relation to the attainment targets outlined in the National Curriculum.
- Hold schools accountable for the attainment and progress made by their pupils and groups of pupils.
- Inform parents and secondary schools about the performance of individual pupils.
- Enable benchmarking between schools, as well as monitor performance locally and nationally.

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) will produce a technical manual in January 2013 to demonstrate how well the test meets these purposes.

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[1] Bew et al., 2011, *Independent review of Key Stage 2 testing, assessment and accountability*

2. What is a test framework?

The purpose of the test framework is to provide the documentation to guide the development of the test.

The framework includes those parts of the content domain as outlined in the National Curriculum that will be covered in the test. The cognitive processes associated with the measurement of the construct of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling are also detailed. The framework summarises the measures that have been put in place in order to improve accessibility for all children and to minimise bias affecting particular groups. Full details of the studies into diversity and inclusion can be found in the test technical manual, published in January 2013.

Also included in the test framework is a test specification by which valid, reliable and comparable tests can be constructed each year. This includes specifics about test format, item types, response types and marking as well as a test-level reporting strategy.

By providing all of this information in a single document, the test framework answers questions about what the tests will cover, and how, in a clear and concise manner. The framework does not provide information on how teachers should teach the content of the tests. The test framework does not provide detail of the validity studies that are taking place as the test is being developed. The detail of these studies can be found in the technical manual published in January 2013.

3. Nature of the test

From the academic year 2012-13, the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test forms part of the statutory assessment arrangements for children at the end of Key Stage 2.

The test contributes to the assessment of a child in English and is based on the relevant sections of the 1999 National Curriculum statutory programme of study for English at Key Stage 2 and related attainment targets. The programmes of study are set out for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening.

The test is in place of the English writing test previously taken at the end of Key Stage 2. As the Bew review (*ibid.*) recommended, writing composition will be subject to teacher assessment. The test will cover the aspects of spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary that lend themselves to externally-marked testing.

3.1 Population to be assessed

All eligible children working at level 3 and above, who are registered at maintained, special schools, or academies (including Free Schools), and who are at the end of Key Stage 2, will be required to take the level 3-5 test, unless they have taken it in the past. Independent schools may choose to participate in the statutory assessment arrangements on a year by year basis.

Some children are exempt from the tests, including those working below level 3. Further details can be found in the *Assessment and reporting arrangements*.

A separate level 6 test is available. Schools may choose to enter children for the level 6 test if they are at the end of Key Stage 2 and have been following elements of the Key Stage 3 programme of study (published in 2007).

Children entered for level 6 test are required to take the level 3-5 test. Headteachers should consider a child's expected attainment before entering them for the level 6 test as they should already be demonstrating attainment above level 5. The child must achieve a mark consistent with performance at level 5 in the level 3-5 test and pass the corresponding level 6 test in the same year to be awarded an overall result that is consistent with performance at level 6. If the child does not pass the level 6 test they will be awarded the result achieved in the level 3-5 test.

3.2 Test format

The test will be administered on paper with the spelling component administered aurally by a test administrator. At level 3-5 there are two components and at level 6 there are three components. Although not all components will be strictly timed, the table below provides an indication for each. The total testing time for each of the level 3-5 and level 6 tests will be approximately 1 hour.

Level 3-5

Component	Description	Timing of component
1	Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary	45 minutes
2	Spelling	Around 15 minutes (not strictly timed)

Level 6

Component	Description	Timing of component
1	Extended task	30 minutes
2	Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary	20 minutes
3	Spelling	Around 10 minutes (not strictly timed)

4. Content domain

4.1 Level 3-5 test

The test samples from the relevant sections of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum programme of study for English (1999). The test is split into two components. Component 1 assesses grammar (including Standard English), punctuation and vocabulary.

Although the majority of the test content is drawn from En3: writing, some relevant areas of content are sampled from across the programme of study for English, including vocabulary (from En2: reading) and Standard English, which appears in both En3: writing and En1: speaking and listening.

Each element of content within component 1 of the test can be assessed through either 'sentence grammar' (sg) or 'grammatical accuracy' (ga)[2]. In 'sentence grammar' and 'punctuation' items, the element being tested is isolated as far as possible, so that children do not need to draw extensively on wider grammatical context in order to achieve the correct response. 'Grammatical accuracy' items require children to draw on their wider grammatical knowledge and contextualise the element being tested in order to achieve the correct response. In order to facilitate test development, each element of the domain has been extracted from the programme of study and assigned a reference code.

4.1.1 Component 1: short answer section

The test draws on the Key Stage 2 programme of study for English, as detailed below.

KS2 Programme of study reference	Reference code	
En3.7a–c Language structure		
Pupils should be taught:		
a: word classes and the grammatical functions of words, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles	**sg/ga1** sg/ga1.1 sg/ga1.2 sg/ga1.3 sg/ga1.4 sg/ga1.5 sg/ga1.6 sg/ga1.7 sg/ga1.8	**Grammatical terms/word classes** Nouns Verbs Adjectives Connectives Pronouns Adverbs Prepositions Articles
b: the features of different types of sentence, including statements, questions and commands, and how to use them for example, imperatives in commands	**sg/ga2** sg/ga2.1 sg/ga2.2 sg/ga2.3	**Features of sentences** Statements Questions Commands

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[2]In the case of punctuation, items will be assessed through either 'punctuation' (p) or 'grammatical accuracy' (ga)

KS2 Programme of study reference	Reference code	
c: the grammar of complex sentences, including clauses, phrases and connectives.	**sg/ga3** sg/ga3.1 sg/ga3.2 sg/ga3.3	**Complex sentences** Clauses Phrases Subordinating connectives
En3.6a–b Standard English		
Pupils should be taught: **a:** how written standard English varies in degrees of formality **b:** some of the differences between standard English and non-standard English usage, including subject–verb agreements and use of prepostions.	**sg/ga4** sg/ga4.1 sg/ga4.2 sg/ga4.3 sg/ga4.4 **sg/ga 5** sg/ga5.4	**Standard English** Tense agreement Subject–verb agreement Double negatives Use of 'I' and 'me' **Formal / informal** Contractions
En3.1 and En3.2 Vocabulary / language strategies		
Pupils should be taught: **En3.1b**: to broaden their vocabulary and use it in inventive ways **En3.2d**: to proofread – check the draft for spelling and punctuation errors, omissions and repetitions.	**ga7** sg/ga7.1 sg/ga7.2 sg/ga7.3 sg/ga7.4 sg/ga7.5 sg/ga7.6 sg/ga7.7 sg/ga7.8 sg/ga7.9	**Vocabulary** Word meaning Vocabulary in context Concision and precision in vocabulary Synonyms Antonyms Word groups / families Prefixes Suffixes Singular and plural
En3.3 Punctuation		
Pupils should be taught: **En3.3**: to use punctuation marks correctly in their writing, including full stops, question and exclamation marks, commas, inverted commas, and apostrophes to mark possession and omission.	**p/ga6** pg/a6.1 pg/a6.2 pg/a6.3 pg/a6.4 pg/a6.5 pg/a6.6 pg/a6.7 pg/a6.8 pg/a6.9 pg/a6.10 pg/a6.11	**Punctuation** Capital letters Full stops Question marks Exclamation marks Commas in lists Commas to mark phrases or clauses Inverted commas Apostrophes Brackets Ellipses Colons

KEY: **sg:** sentence grammar   **p:** punctuation   **ga:** grammatical accuracy

4.1.2 Component 2: spelling task

This component consists of 20 target words, presented to children aurally by a test administrator within 20 distinct, contextualised sentences.

The range of strategies and morphological awareness tested is drawn from the following programme of study references:

KS2 Programme of study reference
En3.2 Language strategies
Pupils should be taught to: **En3.2d:** proofread – check the draft for spelling and punctuation errors, omissions and repetitions.
En3.4a–j Spelling
Pupils should be taught: **En3.4 spelling strategies**   **a:** to sound out phonemes   **b:** to analyse words into syllables and other known words   **c:** to apply knowledge of spelling conventions   **d:** to use knowledge of common letter strings, visual patterns and analogies   **e:** to check their spelling   **f:** to revise and build on their knowledge of words and spelling patterns.   **En3.4 morphology**   **g:** the meaning, use and spelling of common prefixes and suffixes   **h:** the spelling of words with inflectional endings   **i:** the relevance of word families, roots and origins of words   **j:** the use of appropriate terminology, including vowel, consonant, homophone and syllable.

4.2 Level 6 test

The level 6 test comprises three components. Although it will draw on the Key Stage 2 references above[3], this test additionally samples content from the Key Stage 3 programme of study for English (2007). During the test, it is therefore possible that children will encounter elements of the Key Stage 3 programme of study that they have not yet covered. For this reason, questions drawn solely from the Key Stage 3 programme of study will often use 'scaffolding', so that they are accessible to Year 6 children working within level 6.

The relevant sections of the Key Stage 3 programme of study that will be covered over time are specified below. Teachers entering children for the level 6 test will need to have covered these elements of the Key Stage 3 programme of study to be assured that the child is working within level 6.

Component 1 is an extended piece of writing, where children are able to demonstrate precise and accurate choices of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary consistent with the expectation at level 6. Component 2 of this test comprises questions to assess grammar, punctuation and vocabulary, just as at level 3-5. Component 3 assesses spelling.

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[3] In addition to the Key Stage 2 references given above, the level 6 test will also cover En3.7d: the purposes and organisational features of paragraphs and how ideas can be linked, as part of the extended task

4.2.1 Component 1: extended task

The writing is assessed according to three strands, made up of: sentence structure and punctuation (SSP); text structure and organisation (TSO) and appropriacy and vocabulary (AV). The programme of study references above are the basis for the mark schemes (see section 7.8 below and Appendix 1).

4.2.2 Component 2: short answer section

The level 6 test will assess the appropriate knowledge and skills of the Key Stage 2 programme of study and, consistent with other National Curriculum tests at this level, will also sample from the Key Stage 3 programme of study in the following areas:

KS3 Programme of study reference	Reference code	
Sentence grammar		
1.1a Being clear, coherent and accurate in spoken and written communication. **1.1c** Demonstrating a secure understanding of the conventions of written language, including grammar, spelling and punctuation. **2.3i** Pupils should be able to use complex sentences to extend, link and develop ideas. **2.3j** Pupils should be able to vary sentence structure for interest, effect and subtleties of meaning. **2.3t** Pupils should be able to use the conventions of standard English effectively. **2.3u** Pupils should be able to use grammar accurately in a variety of sentence types, including subject-verb agreement and correct and consistent use of tense. **3.4a** The study of English should include the principles of sentence grammar.	**sg/ga1** sg/ga1.1 sg/ga1.2 sg/ga1.3 sg/ga1.4 sg/ga1.5 sg/ga1.6 sg/ga1.7 **ga2** ga2.1 ga2.2 ga2.3 **ga3** ga3.1 ga3.2 ga3.3	**Grammatical terms / word classes** Nouns Verbs Adjectives Connectives Pronouns Adverbs Prepositions **Features of sentences** Statements Questions Commands **Complex sentences** Clauses Phrases Subordinating connectives

KS3 Programme of study reference	Reference code	
Standard English		
2.3t Pupils should be able to use the conventions of Standard English effectively. **2.3u** Pupils should be able to use grammar accurately in a variety of sentence types, including subject-verb agreement and correct and consistent use of tense.	**ga4** ga4.1 ga4.2 ga4.3 ga4.4 **sg/ga 5** sg/ga5.1 sg/ga5.2 sg/ga5.3 sg/ga5.4	**Standard English** Tense agreement Subject-verb agreement Double negatives Use of 'I' and 'me' **Formal / informal** Passive constructions/voice Impersonal constructions Active voice Contractions
Vocabulary / language strategies		
2.3f Pupils should be able to use imaginative vocabulary. **2.3l** Pupils should be able to use formal and impersonal language and concise expression.	**ga7** ga7.1 ga7.2 ga7.3 ga7.4 ga7.5 ga7.6 ga7.7 ga7.8 ga7.9	**Vocabulary** Word meaning Vocabulary in context Concision and precision in vocabulary Synonyms Antonyms Word groups / families Prefixes Suffixes Singular and plural
Punctuation		
1.1c Demonstrating a secure understanding of the conventions of written language, including grammar, spelling and punctuation. **2.3v** Pupils should be able to signal sentence structure by the effective use of the full range of punctuation marks to clarify meaning.	**ga6** ga6.1 ga6.2 ga6.3 ga6.4 ga6.5 ga6.6 ga6.7 ga6.8 ga6.9 ga6.10 ga6.11 ga6.12 ga6.13	**Punctuation** Capital letters Full stops Question marks Exclamation marks Commas in lists Commas to mark phrases or clauses Inverted commas Apostrophes Brackets Ellipses Colons Semi-colons Punctuation for parenthesis

KEY: **sg:** sentence grammar **ga:** grammatical accuracy

4.2.3 Component 3: spelling task

The level 6 spelling task consists of 15 target words, presented to children aurally by a test administrator within 15 distinct, contextualised sentences.

At level 6, the format is the same as at level 3-5, however words are chosen that demonstrate the spelling strategies required for lower-frequency, less familiar words.

In addition to the content from the Key Stage 2 programme of study, the following content is sampled from the Key Stage 3 programme of study for English:

Programme of study reference:

2.3w Pupils should be able to spell correctly, increasing their knowledge of regular patterns of spelling, word families, roots of words and derivations, including prefixes, suffixes and inflections.

4.2.4 British English (*BrE*) conventions

In spelling, punctuation and grammar, variations exist between *BrE* and conventions used in other English-speaking countries. The tests will credit children for using *BrE* conventions.

5. Cognitive domain

Items within the test are classified with four ratings to inform a judgement of their cognitive demand.

- Cognitive level
- Response complexity
- Abstraction rating
- Strategy support rating

A detailed explanation of each of the four dimensions follows below, together with the relevant codes that are used as short-hand when considering item suitability during test development.

Items in the test may be categorised according to any combination of these four dimensions.

5.1 Cognitive level

The cognitive level is classified within a six-point taxonomy, derived from Bloom's cognitive domain.

Cognitive level	Example questions
Knowledge (KN)	What is the name of the punctuation mark below?
	Circle two nouns in this sentence.
	Which word correctly completes the sentence below?
Comprehension (CO)	Circle the word that describes…
	Tick the word that means…
Application (AP)	Complete the sentence below with an adjective that makes sense.
	Write a complex sentence using the connective 'because'.
	Which sentence uses inverted commas correctly?
Analysis (AN)	Categorise these into adverbs of time, place and manner.
	Why is a colon used in the sentence below?
Synthesis (SY)	How could the clarity of the following sentence be improved? Re-write it, making changes to punctuation and wording to make it clearer.
Evaluation (EV)	What would be the effect of replacing these parenthetic commas with dashes?

Increasing cognitive demand

5.2 Response complexity

The response complexity is considered within a scale that ranges from closed to extended response formats, sub-categorised into a number of types.

	Item format	Response complexity	Example questions
Increasing demand of response type	**Selected response**	**Data selection – narrow (DN)** From defined data field, eg: multiple choice or matching	Put a tick to show whether each is a main clause or subordinate clause. Draw lines to match each sentence with the correct verb.
		Data selection – wide (DW) Identifying a feature from a wider data field	Circle the connective in the sentence below.
	Constructed response	**Data transformation (DT)**	Copy the sentence below. Add capital letters where necessary. Replace the underlined words with one word of a similar meaning.
		Independent response – within prompt (IP)	Insert three missing apostrophes in the passage below. Add a subordinate clause to the sentence below…
	Extended response	**Independent response – strategy defined but no prompt (IU)**	The word written below has more than one meaning. Write two sentences to show two different meanings.
		Independent response – open, strategy not given (IO)	Explain why a comma is needed in the sentence below.

5.3 Abstraction rating

The abstraction rating is an indicator of the familiarity of the item's vocabulary and context for the test population.

Abstraction rating	Description	Examples of contexts or vocabulary
1	The vocabulary and context can reasonably be assumed to be highly familiar to the majority of children taking the test.	School-based situations Domestic and family scenarios Food Animals Items of clothing
2	The vocabulary and context may fall outside the child's immediate personal experience, but are nonetheless familiar through coverage in the primary curriculum, children's literature or the media.	Holidays Parks Significant periods of history
3 **Level 6 only**	The vocabulary and context will be the least familiar and may be outside the direct experience of those sitting the tests.	Low frequency vocabulary Low frequency spellings

5.4 Strategy support rating

The strategy support rating indicates the extent to which the child must independently arrive at an understanding of the question requirements, response method and answer format.

Strategy support rating	Description
1	Indicates items that provide the child with a high level of support. This may be an exemplar response that fully models the process and answer format required, and that can effectively be transposed to the child's own response.
2	Indicates that the item includes a partial level of support. This may be an explanation of some technical terminology included in the question, or an example to follow which partially shows the method or expected result, but is not fully transferrable to the child's own response.
3	Indicates items that do not include any support, and in which the child is therefore required to interpret the vocabulary, method and expected answer format independently.

6. Diversity and inclusion

In order to improve general accessibility for all children, where possible, items will be placed in order of difficulty; accordingly, to be consistent with all National Curriculum tests, attempts have been made to make the item rubric as accessible as possible for all children, including those who experience reading and processing difficulties, and those for whom English is an additional language, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of demand to adequately assess the content. This includes applying the principles of plain English where possible, conducting interviews with children and taking into account feedback from expert reviewers.

Specific issues for children with disabilities and special educational needs were considered during the development of the tests. Measures have been put in place in order to improve accessibility for all children and to minimise bias affecting particular groups.

For each test in development, expert opinions on specific items are gathered, for example at inclusion panel meetings, which are attended by experts and practitioners from across the fields of disabilities and special educational needs. This provides an opportunity for some questions to be amended or removed in response to concerns raised.

Issues likely to be encountered by children with specific learning difficulties have been considered in detail. Where possible, features of items that lead to construct irrelevant variance (for example, item formats and presentational features) have been modified in line with best practice for dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties.

6.1 Access arrangements

The full range of access arrangements applicable to Key Stage 2 assessments, including additional time and the use of a scribe or reader, will be available to eligible children as required. The examples given here should be read in conjunction with the *Assessment and reporting arrangements* document, which gives full details of permitted adjustments.

- For children with a visual impairment, enlarged print, modified large print and Braille versions of the tests will be produced.

- Children with a hearing impairment may be unable to access the spelling task, which is aurally-administered. It will be possible to take the test using British Sign Language or lip-reading. Children who do not use either of these communication modes will be awarded compensatory marks.

- Schools can apply for early opening of test materials, in order to prepare apparatus or make adaptations to support specific children's needs.

- Eligible children with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties can make use of a reader at the school's discretion.

- Eligible children, including, but not limited to, those with dyspraxia and other motor impairments, as well as some physical disabilities, may make use of a scribe.

6.2 Compensatory marks

Compensatory marks for spelling will be available for eligible children. Consistent with the *Assessment and reporting arrangements*, these will be based on the mean average scores that children achieved during the technical pre-test.

6.3 Children with English as an additional language (EAL)

Children with English as an additional language should be registered for the level 3-5 National Curriculum tests. If children cannot communicate in English at level 3 or above then they will be working below the level of the English tests and should not take them, as set out in the *Assessment and reporting arrangements*.

7. Test specification

The test specification below has been used to develop the 2013 test and will continue to be used for as long as we assess the 1999 National Curriculum.

7.1 Level 3-5 test format

Component	Description	Timing of component	Number of marks
Component 1: Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary	Short answer questions (selected and constructed response) presented in order of difficulty	**45 minutes**	**50 marks**
Component 2: Spelling	20 sentences from which targeted spelling words have been left out	**Around 15 minutes (not strictly timed)**	**20 marks**

Total test time: 1 hour (approx.)
Total marks: 70

7.2 Level 6 test format

Component	Description	Timing of component	Number of marks
Component 1: Short, extended task	An extended response to a writing prompt through which children are able to demonstrate precision, choice and accuracy of punctuation, syntax and vocabulary when writing	**30 minutes**	**SSP 6 marks TSO 4 marks AV 4 marks** **Total 14 marks**
Component 2: Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary	Short answer questions (selected and constructed response) presented in order of difficulty	**20 minutes**	**21 marks**
Component 3: Spelling	15 sentences from which targeted spelling words have been left out	**Around 10 minutes (not strictly timed)**	**15 marks**

Total test time: 1 hour (approx.)
Total marks: 50

7.3 Proportion of marks

The table below shows the proportion of marks assessing each element of each component.

7.3.1 Level 3-5

Component	Element	Number of marks	Proportion of total marks
Component 1: Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary	Grammar	**25-35**	**36-50%**
	Punctuation	**10-20**	**14-28%**
	Vocabulary	**5-10**	**7-14%**
Component 2: Spelling	Spelling	**20**	**29%**

Total marks: 70

7.3.2 Level 6

Component	Element	Number of marks	Proportion of total marks
Component 1: Short, extended piece task	Grammar	**8**	**16%**
	Punctuation	**2**	**4%**
	Appropriacy and vocabulary	**4**	**8%**
Component 2: Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary	Grammar	**10-15**	**20-30%**
	Punctuation	**5-10**	**10-20%**
	Vocabulary	**1-5**	**2-10%**
Component 3: Spelling	Spelling	**15**	**30%**

Total marks: 50

The reference codes (sg…/p…/ga…) given on pages 8-12 detail the specific content to be tested within component 1 of the level 3-5 test and component 2 of the level 6 test. The test will sample from this content in any given year. Although each element may not be included within each test, the full range of content detailed in this document will be assessed over time.

7.4 Format of items / proportion of item format

Items in component 1 of the level 3-5 test and component 2 of the level 6 test are categorised into two broad formats:

- Selected response, requiring selection of the correct answer.
- Constructed response, requiring the child to write a short answer of their own within a specified format.

The proportions of each item type are described below.

7.4.1 Level 3-5 test

Item type (component 1)	Approximate proportion in component
Selected response	65-85%
Constructed response	15-35%

7.4.2 Level 6 test

Item type (component 2)	Approximate proportion in component
Selected response	50-70%
Constructed response	30-50%

These formats are further categorised into the following sub-types.

Item type	Rubric sub-type
Selected response	'Identify…'
	'Match…'
Constructed response	'Complete/correct/rewrite…'
	'Find and write…'
	'Explain…'

For component 1 in the level 6 test, the prompt will identify a clear purpose, audience and format for writing; it will allow children to demonstrate their ability to use a range of precise, accurate and appropriate punctuation, syntax and vocabulary.

7.4.3 Question stems

The following stems are indicative of the rubric used in live test questions for each sub-type, although actual questions may differ from, and are not limited to, the examples given.

Question stem type	Definition	Common examples
Identify	These items test children's knowledge of particular terminology, language or punctuation features and vocabulary by requiring them to identify the correct response from a given selection. In most cases, they will have to tick, underline or circle the response.	Tick one word to complete the sentence below. Circle the word/words that… Which sentence uses the […] correctly?
Matching	These items require the pairing of two different elements printed on the page, so that the children indicate their response by drawing a line, and need to do no writing.	Draw lines to match each sentence with…
Complete/ Correct/ Rewrite	These items usually require children to insert or generate a specified type of response within a given structure, either to complete the target sentence or to replace an error within it.	An error is underlined in the sentence below. Write the correction in the box. Rewrite the sentence below, changing it to… Copy the sentence below. Add […] where necessary.
Find/Write	These items require children to generate their own examples of specified language, or to label given language with a technical term.	Write a complex sentence using […]
Explain	These items require children to express their understanding of particular terminology, language features and vocabulary by requiring them to analyse and explain, in their own words, how or why that element is used.	The sentence below has […] missing. Explain why it needs […] What is the purpose of […]? Why is the […] used in the sentence below?

7.5 Format of responses

In the short answer sections, most responses will require only a tick, circle, line or very short written response. Some test items do require a full sentence to be written but these will usually be placed towards the end of the paper in order to allow children every opportunity to gain more straightforward marks quickly. At level 6, a short piece of extended writing will allow children to demonstrate their ability to choose precise and accurate syntax, punctuation and make ambitious vocabulary choices.

7.6 Item selection and organisation for the short answer section

Consistent with Lord Bew's recommendations for test organisation in relation to the English reading test, items in this component will, as far as possible, be placed in '…clear order of difficulty'[4]. The difficulty of individual items is determined quantitatively.

7.7 Spelling

At level 3-5, the words assessed are selected to take account of children's developing ability to spell accurately a wide range of words and include a balance of common, polysyllabic words, words that conform to regular patterns and words with irregular patterns.

Spelling strategies include: adding regular word endings, prefixes, suffixes, superlatives, pluralisation (regular and irregular), silent letters, compound words, homophones, double consonants, regular letter strings, common root words, diminutives, vowel endings, possessive pronouns and other content identified within the relevant section of the National Curriculum programme of study.

The level 3 - 5 spelling task consists of 20 target words, presented to children aurally by a test administrator within 20 distinct, contextualised sentences. The words are selected from a large bank of pre-tested content. Pre-testing is used to determine how each word functions statistically. Words included in the final task are selected to ensure an appropriate range of difficulty. The task has an appropriate mean value so that children from levels 3-5 are able to demonstrate performance and standards are maintained.

At level 6, the format is similar to level 3-5, although there are only 15 words. Words are chosen that demonstrate the spelling strategies required for lower-frequency, less familiar words.

7.8 Marking

The test has been designed to be marked on-screen.

A full mark scheme is provided for all aspects of the test, with particular detailed focus on marking principles and exemplification for constructed response formats, in order to maximise the reliability of marking. While in the majority of cases, there will only be one or two ways in which to successfully answer the questions in the short answer components, where a number of possible answers are acceptable, this will be acknowledged in the mark scheme so that children are credited for any correct response.

Mark scheme booklets for the short answer components will be in landscape orientation and a tabular format, consistent with other National Curriculum assessments. The question will not be reproduced in the mark scheme, unless it is integral to understanding the children's responses.

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[4] Bew et al., 2011, *Independent review of Key Stage 2 testing, assessment and accountability*

The format below is indicative of the intended layout.

Question/ Reference code	Requirement	Mark	Additional Guidance
Q1 ga6.8	■ Award **one** mark for any appropriate contraction. I don't understand why **you're/ they're/he's/she's/Michael's** not here yet!	**1m**	Also accept responses with correct contractions and additional words. eg: ● I don't understand why she's still not here yet! **Do not accept** responses without an apostrophe. eg: ● *youre*

Tailored mark schemes will be provided for the level 6 extended task, which are based on generic mark schemes. These are refined during each test development cycle from basic genre-specific guidelines to include precise guidance for expert markers that is tailored to the individual test. Authentic children's responses also inform these, which are taken from pre-test scripts. Finally, annotated exemplar responses are included in the level 6 extended task mark scheme. An illustrative example of a generic 'describe and explain' mark scheme is included at Appendix 1 for information.

7.9 Reporting

The following table highlights the key features from the National Curriculum (NC) level descriptors that are relevant to the tests and that have been taken into consideration (alongside the associated sections of the programmes of study) when defining test content relevant to the level 3-5 and level 6 tests (above). Consistent with practice for all National Curriculum tests, comprehensive performance descriptors will be developed during the standard setting process to support the setting of appropriate thresholds on the test.

The outcome of the test will provide information about children's performance. However, this test will not produce a National Curriculum level. Although drawn largely from En3: writing, the test does not cover fully those aspects of compositional writing that are subject to teacher assessment, therefore a level cannot be awarded for the full attainment target. Further, test content has been drawn from three English attainment targets and therefore test outcomes will be reported as indicative of children working at a National Curriculum level only.

Indicative NC level	Extracts from level descriptors
3	**Vocabulary:** sequences of sentences extend ideas logically and words are chosen for variety and interest. **Sentence grammar:** the basic grammatical structure of sentences is usually correct. **Spelling:** spelling is usually accurate, including that of common, polysyllabic words. **Punctuation:** punctuation to mark sentences – full stops, capital letters and question marks – is used accurately.
4	**Vocabulary:** vocabulary choices are often adventurous and words are used for effect. **Sentence grammar:** pupils are beginning to use grammatically complex sentences, extending meaning. **Spelling:** spelling, including that of polysyllabic words that conform to regular patterns, is generally accurate. **Punctuation:** full stops, capital letters and question marks are used correctly, and pupils are beginning to use punctuation within sentences.
5	**Vocabulary:** vocabulary choices are imaginative and words are used precisely. **Sentence grammar:** sentences, including complex ones, and paragraphs are coherent, clear and well developed. **Spelling:** words with complex regular patterns are usually spelt correctly. **Punctuation:** a range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas, is usually used accurately.
6	**Vocabulary and sentence grammar:** pupils experiment with a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create effects. **Spelling:** spelling, including that of irregular words, is generally accurate. **Punctuation and structure:** a range of punctuation is usually used correctly to clarify meaning, and ideas are organised into well-developed, linked paragraphs.

Appendix 1

Example of a generic mark scheme for a 'describe and explain' task

Assessment focus	AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect.	AF6 Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences.	AF3 Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events.	AF4 Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs.	AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to the task, reader and purpose.	AF7 Select appropriate and effective vocabulary.
Strand	**Sentence structure and punctuation**		**Text structure and organisation**		**Appropriacy and vocabulary**	
Threshold	• A range of grammatical structures is used to vary the focus of sentences and to express subtleties of meaning, eg: secure control of phrases and clauses within complex sentences (*test-specific examples*); evidence of deliberate control of verbs, eg: placement, forms of verbs, eg: placement, forms (including modals) and complex verb phrases. Management of constructions to support purpose, eg: impersonal constructions, infinitives to convey formality, fronted adverbials for emphasis. • An appropriate range of punctuation is used effectively and precisely to support clarity, eg: effective use of internal sentence punctuation.		• The structure of the text is controlled, showing links between paragraphs in a variety of ways, eg: causal or thematic linkage, deliberate repetition, linking pronouns, adverbials or text connectives. Paragraphs are varied and managed in ways that support the structure of the whole text, eg: the single sentence paragraph to secure an argument; movement of focus from the general to the specific. Openings and endings are generally effective in framing the response. • Within paragraphs, there is evidence of cohesive devices to support structure such as contrast and repetition. Effective reference chains avoid repetitive subjects.		• The text is adapted for the chosen type, addressing a general audience, and is focused on purpose, containing features of the chosen form. Content is well-shaped, eg: balance of description and explanation. • Vocabulary choices are ambitious, yet precise, appropriate and purposeful (*test-specific examples*) and achieve sufficient formality of tone.	
Marks	**4, 5 or 6**		**3 or 4**		**3 or 4**	

Assessment focus	AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect.	AF6 Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences.	AF3 Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events.	AF4 Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs.	AF2 Produce texts which are appropriate to the task, reader and purpose.	AF7 Select appropriate and effective vocabulary.
Strand	Sentence structure and punctuation		Text structure and organisation		Appropriacy and vocabulary	
Below threshold	• A variety of sentence structures is used for control. Connectives are used precisely. Constructions support purpose, eg: through fronted or embedded clauses (*test-specific examples*). Generally accurate management of verbs, eg: complex verb phrases, secure transitions between tenses. Phrases and clauses build up relevant detail and information (*test-specific examples*). • Almost all sentences are controlled, with an appropriate range of punctuation.		• The sequencing of ideas is supported by paragraphs or sections which enable coherent development and control of content across the text, eg: purposeful links are made between paragraphs or sections (*test-specific examples*). • Opening and closing are generally appropriate. Within paragraphs or sections, main ideas are developed, eg: illustration by relevant detail, argument or example. Connections between ideas are supported through accurate use of connectives.		• The text is adapted for the chosen audience, eg: selection of appropriate topics with substantial development, mixture of description and explanation. • Some vocabulary choices may be ambitious and are mainly appropriate to the context (*test-specific examples*).	
Marks	**1, 2 or 3**		**1 or 2**		**1 or 2**	

A response that does not meet the criteria for below level 6 should be awarded 0 marks.

N.B. Spelling is **not** assessed in this task and should not be considered when awarding marks.

Appendix 2

Glossary of terminology used in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test framework

analogies	A set of conventions for spelling a known word that children can apply to spelling other words.
Bloom's cognitive domain	A taxonomy of levels of learning, first published in Bloom, B., *et al.* (1956) *Taxonomy of educational objectives: the classification of educational goals; Handbook I: Cognitive Domain* New York, Longmans, Green, 1956.
cognitive processes	A term applied to the analysis and consideration of thinking skills and intellectual processes.
component	A section of a test, presented to children as a test paper or test booklet. Some tests may have two or more components which each child needs to sit in order to complete the test. For example, for the level 3-5 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test, there are two components, presented to children in two separate booklets. The level 6 test comprises three components, presented to children in three separate booklets.
construct irrelevant variance	The introduction of irrelevant variables, not intended for assessment, which may affect assessment outcomes.
content domain	The body of subject knowledge to be assessed by the test.
diminutive	A term that implies relative lack of size and/or stature. In the National Curriculum programme of study for English at Key Stage 2, this applies specifically to spelling strategies required to apply suffixes. *(-ette, -let, -ling)* of small size to a noun.
homophone	Two words are homophones if they have the same pronunciation, but a different spelling and meaning.
mark scheme	The document explaining the creditworthy responses or the criteria that must be applied to award the mark for an item.
morphemes	The smallest units of linguistic meaning. Root words, prefixes and suffixes are all examples of morphemes.
morphological awareness	Recognition, understanding, and use of morphemes (see above).

National Curriculum	Section 351 of the Education Act 1996 requires all maintained schools in England to deliver a framework of teaching and learning ('National Curriculum') that: promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils at the school and of society and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The four main purposes of the National Curriculum are to: establish an entitlement for all pupils; establish standards; promote continuity and coherence and promote public understanding.
phoneme	A single unit of linguistic sound.
programme of study	The statutory curriculum of subject knowledge, skills and understanding for a key stage. The programme of study for English at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 can be accessed on the Department's website at http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum
rubric	The item-level instructions for a question in the test, explaining what the child has to do.
scaffolding	Describes the structured support given to help a child to complete a task within the test.
Standard English	Standard English is a variety of English that attempts to minimise regional and international variance that might impede meaning or understanding. Standard English is not limited to a particular region and can be spoken with any accent. Standard British English relies upon, for example, subject-verb agreement and avoiding the use of dialect in more formal written and spoken communications.
teacher assessment	A judgement made by a teacher of a child's performance. Writing at the end of Key Stage 2 is subject to this form of assessment. Further details can be accessed on the Department's website at http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/assessment/keystage2/teacher
technical manual	A report presenting technical analyses of data gathered during test reliability and validity studies.
test administrator	An individual who delivers a test to a group of children.
test framework	A document to guide test development, setting out the principles, rationale and key information about the test, and containing a test specification.
test specification	A detailed specification of what is to be included in a test in any single cycle of development.

About this publication

Who is it for?

This document is primarily for test developers. It may also be of interest to the teaching community and those preparing children for tests at the end of Key Stage 2.

What does it cover?

- Which parts of the National Curriculum will be covered by the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.

- The cognitive processes associated with the measurement of the construct of grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling in English.

- Measures that have been put in place to improve accessibility for all children, and to minimise bias affecting particular groups.

- Specifics about the format of the test, item types, response types and marking, as well as a test-level reporting strategy. This will enable valid, reliable and comparable tests to be constructed year on year.

Related information

Visit the Department for Education's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2 for all related information.

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