

Assessing Writing



Last Updated: September 2024

Assessment Levels

Children can be assessed as
Below (B)
Working Towards (W)
Age Related Expectations (N)
Greater Depth (A)

Children may also be assessed at working at a 'Pre-Key Stage Standard'

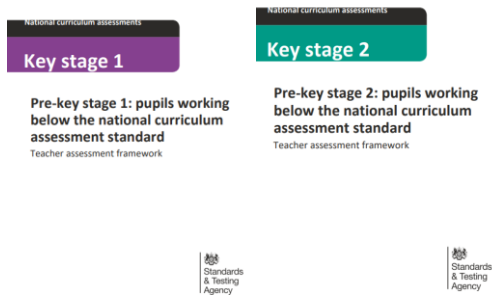
Progress and writing

It is important to remember that by assessing a child at 'N' in September, this is not saying that they are achieving all of the age related criteria at that point but you are saying that they are achieving some of the criteria now and you are confident that by the end of the year, they will be confidently showing all of the age related criteria.

By assessing a child as 'N' all year, you are saying that that child is making expected progress.

Pre-Key Stage Standards

There are two documents that are to be used when assessing children at a Pre-Key Stage Standard (PKS).



There is some cross over between Pre-Key Stage standards in KS2 and the Expected Standard for year 2 children.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Final pre-key stage 1 standards | Final pre-key stage 2 standards |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard 4• Standard 3• Standard 2• Standard 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard 6 (working at the KS1 expected standard)• Standard 5 (working towards the KS1 expected standard)• Standard 4• Standard 3• Standard 2• Standard 1 |

Working Towards

Apart from year 2 and year 6, where the Teacher Assessment Framework is used, all other year groups only have criteria for Age Related Expectations (N) and Greater Depth (A). A Working Towards (W) child is approximately working 1 year behind their age group, therefore it is also necessary to use the prior year groups Age Related Expectations (N) criteria grid to assess them. As well as this, to assess a child at Working Towards (W) they need to be achieving some of the Age Related Expectations (N) criteria. It is important that by saying a child is Working Towards (W) you are saying that they are Working Towards Age Related Expectations.

Greater Depth

The above is **not** the same for assessing a child at Greater Depth (A). A child at Greater Depth (A) **should not** be ticking off the next year group's grid. You should only use the Greater Depth (A) criteria for the correct year group. In general children who are at Greater Depth are children who:

- read with a writer's eye, noticing the effects a writer creates and asking how he or she did it;
- master handwriting and spelling – these skills need to be automatic so that children are not too preoccupied with them to concentrate on composition;
- know what they want to say – pupils need reasons to write, and suitable content to write about internalise the different stages of the writing process: planning, drafting and editing and proof reading their work;
- write with a reader's eye, constantly re-reading work to check that it makes sense and that the message is effectively conveyed;
- know how different sorts of texts are structured, so that, over time, they can create their own structures appropriate to audience and purpose;
- have a feeling for grammar, varying and controlling sentence structure with ease, in order to create different language effects;
- are capable of writing at length while maintaining a sense of audience, purpose and organisation.

From early on the children's writing may:

- have a strong awareness of audience;
- pay attention to the craft of writing;
- show an original style or "voice";
- show an ability to imitate or experiment with different styles of writing;
- show an awareness of more sophisticated language and literary features and consciously use them;
- apply reading experiences to writing;
- show a dislike of repetitive, closed or over-scaffolded tasks.

Source: <https://www.focus-education.co.uk/blog/recognising-potential-for-greater-depth/#:~:text=The%20children%20who%20are%20judged,vary%20from%20cohort%20to%20cohort.>

Understanding the expectations

These expectations have been developed across DDAT by the English Co-ordinators across the different schools.

It is your responsibility as a teacher to know the age related expectations for your year group. Children must then have the opportunity to develop these skills and techniques within the teaching sequence for writing. It is also essential that you are aware of the age related expectations of the year group below the group you are teaching and above – you are preparing them for the next stage of writing.

Using the grids

You should not expect to see that a child can use all of the age related criteria in one piece of writing as some pieces of writing lend themselves more to different skills. However you should be expecting to see a child show evidence of age related criteria across a range of pieces and these should show a consistent standard of writing.

The statement below is from the Teacher Assessment Guidance for KS1 and KS2

“Evidence to inform statutory TA should come from the teaching of core subjects and skills specified in the national curriculum. Teachers should not track or record evidence solely to show that pupils have achieved the statements within the frameworks”

At Firs, there is no expectation for you to use the grids for every child, for every piece of writing. However, it is important that these grids are being referenced to ensure you are assessing and tracking pupils progress accurately and developing a system that works for you. In year 6, we use the grids and mark against them after marking a child's hot write. This ensures that we can easily see any gaps that particular children need to work on. In year 2, a small version of the grids is stapled to children's work and highlighted against.

“A pupil's writing should meet all of the statements within the standard at which they are judged. However, teachers can use their discretion to ensure that, on occasion, a particular weakness does not prevent an accurate judgement from being made of a pupil's attainment. A teacher's professional judgement about whether the pupil has met the standard overall takes precedence.”

We will use the grids in in-school moderation meetings when we moderate pieces of writing across school to ensure assessment is accurate and to help us identify our next steps.

Teaching Tool vs, Assessment Tool

It is important these grids are only used as an assessment tool. Whilst it is important for you as a teacher to teach the children how to do the outlined skills, to ensure children become good writers, they should not be doing things to 'tick a box.'

To help you know what to teach to specific year groups, you should use the progression grids which identifies the coverage for each unit of writing.

Using the exemplification

We have created the exemplification to show how to assess individual writing. Remember that if we are saying a piece of writing is 'N' for that year group, we are saying it is 'N' for the **end** of the academic year.

The exemplification should be used to support you in assessing your children's writing and also to help us ensure we have consistent standards of writing and assessment across school.

Remember that although the exemplification covers from Year 1 to Year 6, depending on what you are assessing the child as, you may need to look at other year groups. For example if you think that a child in year 4 is working towards, you will need to be looking at the year 3 example writing.

Independent Writing

When we are assessing writing at Firs, we are going to use our whole knowledge of the pupil and their ability and use a wide range of evidence to support our judgement. It is however important that we are aware of the definition behind *independent writing* at the end of KS1 and end of KS2 to ensure that children do not 'dip' in progress of attainment when they reach year 2 and year 6 due to too heavily supported work being used to make assessment judgements.

This guidance has been taken from the Teacher Assessment Guidance for KS1 and KS2

Teachers' judgements must only be based on writing that has been produced independently by the pupil.

Teachers should keep in mind that the national curriculum states writing can also be produced through discussion with the teacher and peers. This is particularly true at KS1, where discussion and oral rehearsal with teachers will feature more. The KS1 TA frameworks state that pupils should demonstrate the 'pupil can' statements after discussion with the teacher.

A piece of writing may provide evidence of a pupil demonstrating some 'pupil can' statements independently, but not others. For example, a pupil may produce an independent piece of writing that meets many of the statements relating to composition and the use of grammar but does not demonstrate independent spelling. This could be because the teacher has provided the pupil with some domain-specific words or corrected their spelling.

Teachers may choose to use success criteria in lessons to help pupils understand what they have learnt and to help them judge whether a pupil has met the objectives for a piece of writing. Using success criteria does not mean that a pupil's writing is not independent, the teacher would simply need to avoid modelling or over-scaffolding the expected outcome. Furthermore, using detailed success criteria as a teaching tool for one aspect of writing could still provide independent evidence of other 'pupil can' statements which have not been mentioned.

Writing is likely to be independent if it:

- emerges from a text, topic, visit or curriculum experience in which pupils have opportunities to discuss and rehearse what is to be written about
- enables pupils to use their own ideas and provides them with an element of choice – for example, writing from the perspective of a character they have chosen themselves
- has been edited, if required, by the pupil without the support of the teacher, although this may be in response to self, peer, or group evaluation
- is produced by pupils who have sought out classroom resources, such as a dictionary or thesaurus, without being prompted to do so by the teacher

Writing is not independent if it has been:

- modelled or heavily scaffolded – as part of external moderation, LA moderators can discuss where modelled or scaffolded writing is found and may ask for further examples of pupil work to support the standard and judgement
- copied or paraphrased
- edited or re-written because of direct intervention by a teacher or other adult – for example, when the pupil has been directed to change specific words for greater impact, when incorrect or omitted punctuation has been indicated, or when incorrectly spelt words have been identified by an adult for the pupil to correct
- produced with the support of electronic aids that automatically provide correct spelling, synonyms, punctuation, or predictive text
- supported by detailed success criteria that specifically direct pupils what to include, or where to include it, in their writing – such as directing them to include specific vocabulary, grammatical features or punctuation

Greater Depth (A)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p><i>Write effectively and coherently for different purposes, drawing on their reading to inform the vocabulary and grammar of their writing</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>Make simple additions, revisions and proofreading corrections to their own writing</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>Use the punctuation taught at key stage 1 mostly correctly</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>Spell most common exception words</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>Add suffixes to spell most words correctly in their writing (e.g. -ment, -ness, -ful, -less, -ly)</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |

Year 4

Age Related (N)

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Composition and effect | Characters are conveyed through action, dialogue and emotion. Write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences | | | | | | | | | |
| Text structure and organisation | Non-narrative writing has a clear purpose, and relevant information <i>e.g. structure and subheadings</i> Narratives include a clear structure, setting and plot. Paragraphs are used to organise information around a theme. | | | | | | | | | |
| Sentence construction | Composes sentences using a range of sentence structures Starting to use a range of devices to build cohesion <i>e.g. fronted adverbials of time, place and manner, pronouns to avoid repetition.</i> Uses a wider range of subordinating conjunctions <i>e.g. as although, since while</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Language | Accurate and consistent use of tense used. Select vocabulary for effect including technical vocabulary. For detail and description, expand noun phrases before and after the noun with prepositional or adverbial phrases. | | | | | | | | | |
| Punctuation | Sentences demarcated correctly including g FS, ? ! as appropriate Commas mostly used for fronted adverbials Inverted commas and punctuation within them correctly used. Commas in list. Consistently use apostrophes for contraction. Consistently use possessive apostrophe for single and plural nouns. Edits, drafts to ensure meaning and impact is clear | | | | | | | | | |
| Spelling | Spells most words correctly (Year 3 and 4) | | | | | | | | | |
| Handwriting | Consistently maintains legibility in joined handwriting. | | | | | | | | | |

Greater Depth (A)

Greater Depth for Years 3, 4 and 5 has the same criteria. However this should not look the same as the children will also be showing **all** of the criteria for a child working at age related expectations.
A variety of writing, including cross curricular writing shows evidence of:

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Deliberate choice of language, grammatical structures, presentational devices and punctuation. | | | | | | | | | |
| | Independent control of a range of text types and genres. | | | | | | | | | |
| | Pupil drawing independently on their reading as models for writing. | | | | | | | | | |
| | Self -editing and improvement. | | | | | | | | | |

Year 5

Age Related (N)

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Composition and effect | Use dialogue to reveal character and atmosphere. Writes effectively for a range of purposes using appropriate features e.g. first person diary, direct address in instructions and persuasive writing. | | | | | | | | | |
| Text structure and organisation | Starting to link paragraphs with a range of cohesive devices. Use a range of presentational devices including use of title, subheading and bullet points. | | | | | | | | | |
| Sentence construction | Start sentences using a variety of openers e.g. time conjunctions, verbs, adjectives, subordinate conjunctions, expanded noun phrases. Begin to use passive verb forms. Uses modal verbs. | | | | | | | | | |
| Language | Creates effects in writing using figurative language. Select vocabulary to match the purpose and audience (formal and informal). Start to use a variety of tenses where appropriate. | | | | | | | | | |
| Punctuation | Uses (mostly correctly): Commas, within clauses, to clarify meaning Dashes Brackets Uses hyphens. Uses colons to introduce lists. | | | | | | | | | |
| Spelling | Spells all Y3 and 4 words correctly. Spells some Y5 and 6 words correctly. Spell some homophones from Y5/6 spelling appendix. Use the hyphen to join a prefix to a root e.g. re-enter. | | | | | | | | | |
| Handwriting | Legible writing consistently applied through a piece of writing. | | | | | | | | | |

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Greater Depth (A)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p><i>write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure)</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>distinguish between the language of speech and writing³ and choose the appropriate register</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p><i>use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.⁴</i></p> | | | | | | | | | |