

2025 national curriculum tests

Key stage 1

English grammar, punctuation and spelling test mark schemes

Paper 1: spelling

Paper 2: questions



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1. Introduction

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) is responsible for the development and delivery of key stage 1 and 2 statutory and optional tests. STA is an executive agency of the Department for Education.

The 2025 optional tests assess the national curriculum. This test has been developed to meet the specification set out in the [test framework](#)¹ for English grammar, punctuation and spelling at key stage 1.

This key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test is not statutory. The key stage 1 tests can be marked internally within schools to inform teacher assessment. The evidence from the test can be used to help inform this teacher assessment.

A new test and new mark schemes are produced each year.

Scaled score conversion tables are not included in this document. Conversion tables are produced as part of the standards maintenance process. [Scaled score conversion tables](#)² for the 2025 tests will be published in June 2025.

The mark schemes should be used to mark pupils' responses. The pupil examples are based on responses gathered from the test trialling process. It is important when marking to refer to the general marking principles, the additional guidance and the exemplars section to ensure marking is accurate and consistent.

2. Structure of the test

The optional key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test materials comprise:

- Paper 1: spelling (20 marks)
- Paper 2: questions (20 marks)

3. Content domain coverage

The 2025 test meets the specification in the test framework. Tables 1 and 2 set out the areas of the content domain that are assessed in Papers 1 and 2.

4. Internal moderation procedures

We recommend those who are involved in marking the key stage 1 tests undertake moderation activity to ensure marking is consistent across their school.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-framework

² www.gov.uk/guidance/scaled-scores-at-key-stage-1

5. Paper 1: spelling

5.1 Content domain coverage for Paper 1: spelling

This information is provided in the mark schemes in Table 1.

5.2 General marking guidance for Paper 1: spelling

The following guidance applies to all questions in Paper 1. Please read this carefully before applying the individual mark schemes.

- If a pupil makes more than one attempt, it must be clear which answer the pupil wishes to be marked.
- If a pupil makes two or more attempts and it is not clear which answer should be considered, the mark is not awarded.
- Pupils can answer in upper or lower case, or a mixture of the two. The exception to this is for days of the week, which must be written with an initial capital letter for the mark to be awarded.
- If a pupil has answered with the correct sequence of letters but has incorrectly inserted an apostrophe or a hyphen, the mark is not awarded.
- If a pupil has answered with the correct sequence of letters but these have been separated into clearly divided components, with or without a hyphen, the mark is not awarded.
- If a pupil uses a reversed letter, it must be unambiguous for the award of the mark. Markers may refer to the pupil's handwriting in the rest of the paper to decide whether or not the letter is ambiguous.
- Crossed-out answers that have not been replaced by a further attempt should not be awarded the mark.

5.3 Pupil version of Paper 1: spelling

Spelling	
P. There was a big _____ in the garden.	☐
1. Cows and sheep _____ in fields.	☐
2. The buildings are very _____.	☐
3. I want to _____ my snack for after school.	☐
4. Some ducks go _____ in the winter.	☐
5. Andy _____ the tennis match.	☐
6. _____ the table before art.	☐
7. The rabbit is _____ around the field.	☐
8. We are having _____ with our dinner.	☐
9. We took our dog for a _____.	☐
10. There are _____ pens in the box.	☐
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11. The teacher _____ for a helper.	☐
12. It is _____ for bats to be awake at night.	☐
13. The laptop is _____ a lot.	☐
14. My cat finds the _____ place to sleep.	☐
15. The _____ trail was fun.	☐
16. We have a _____ path at our school.	☐
17. They drank orange _____ after sport.	☐
18. On _____ we have history.	☐
19. There are three bones in your _____.	☐
20. Sarah chose a healthy _____ for lunch.	☐
End of spelling test	
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6. Mark schemes for Paper 1: spelling

Information relating to the content domain reference codes can be found in the key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test framework.

Table 1: Mark schemes and content domain references for Paper 1

Qu.	Spelling	M.	Primary content domain reference	Secondary content domain reference
1	live	1	S4 – the /v/ sound at the end of words	S8 – vowel digraphs and trigraphs
2	tall	1	S1 – the sounds /f/, /l/, /s/, /z/, /k/ spelt <i>ff</i> , <i>ll</i> , <i>ss</i> , <i>zz</i> and <i>ck</i>	S27 – the /ɔ:/ sound spelt <i>a</i> before <i>l</i> and <i>ll</i>
3	save	1	S4 – the /v/ sound at the end of words	S8 – vowel digraphs and trigraphs
4	south	1	S8 – vowel digraphs and trigraphs	
5	won	1	S36 – homophones and near-homophones	S28 – the /ʌ/ sound spelt <i>o</i>
6	cover	1	S28 – the /ʌ/ sound spelt <i>o</i>	
7	hopping	1	S26 – adding <i>-ing</i> , <i>-ed</i> , <i>-er</i> , <i>-est</i> and <i>-y</i> to words of one syllable ending in a single consonant letter after a single vowel letter	
8	rice	1	S15 – the /s/ sound spelt <i>c</i> before <i>e</i> , <i>i</i> and <i>y</i>	S8 – vowel digraphs and trigraphs
9	walk	1	S27 – the /ɔ:/ sound spelt <i>a</i> before <i>l</i> and <i>ll</i>	S11 – using <i>k</i> for the /k/ sound
10	many	1	S37 – common exception words	S9 – words ending in <i>-y</i> (/i:/ or /ɪ/)
11	asked	1	S6 – adding the endings <i>-ing</i> , <i>-ed</i> and <i>-er</i> to verbs where no change is needed in the root word	S11 – using <i>k</i> for the /k/ sound
12	normal	1	S20 – the // or /ə/ sound spelt <i>-al</i> at the end of words	S8 – vowel digraphs and trigraphs
13	worth	1	S31 – the /ɜ:/ sound spelt <i>or</i> after <i>w</i>	
14	warmest	1	S32 – the /ɔ:/ sound spelt <i>ar</i> after <i>w</i>	S7 – adding <i>-er</i> and <i>-est</i> to adjectives where no change is needed in the root word
15	fitness	1	S34 – the suffixes <i>-ment</i> , <i>-ness</i> , <i>-ful</i> , <i>-less</i> and <i>-ly</i>	
16	gravel	1	S19 – the // or /ə/ sound spelt <i>-el</i> at the end of words	
17	squash	1	S30 – the /ɒ/ sound spelt <i>a</i> after <i>w</i> and <i>qu</i>	
18	Tuesday	1	S13 – the days of the week	S8 – vowel digraphs and trigraphs
19	ankle	1	S18 – the // or /ə/ sound spelt <i>-le</i> at the end of words	S2 – the <i>ŋ</i> sound spelt <i>n</i> before <i>k</i>
20	option	1	S35 – words ending in <i>-tion</i>	
Total marks		20		

7. Paper 2: questions

7.1 Content domain coverage for Paper 2: questions

Table 2 sets out the content domain coverage for Paper 2. Information relating to these codes can be found in the key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test framework.

Table 2: Content domain coverage for Paper 2

	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6
Qu.	Grammatical terms or word classes	Functions of sentences	Combining words, phrases and clauses	Verb tenses and consistency	Punctuation	Vocabulary
1			1			
2					1	
3			1			
4					1	
5					1	
6				1		
7		1				
8	1					
9	1					
10					1	
11					1	
12	1					
13						1
14					1	
15	1					
16					1	
17						1
18			1		1	
19		1				

7.2 General marking guidance for Paper 2: questions

To ensure consistency of marking, the most frequent procedural queries are listed in Table 3, along with the action you should take. The following guidance applies to all questions in Paper 2. Please read this carefully before applying the individual mark schemes.

Table 3: General marking principles for Paper 2

Question type	Accept	Do not accept
Tick boxes and tables	- any unambiguous indication of the correct answer, for example: - the box is crossed rather than ticked - the correct answer is circled rather than ticked - correct answers that replace a crossed-out attempt	answers in which more than the required number of boxes have been ticked
Circling of the answer	- any unambiguous indication of the correct answer, for example: - the answer is underlined - the answer is enclosed within a box - the answer is circled together with part of a surrounding word	- answers in which more than the required number of words have been circled - answers in which the correct answer is circled, together with the whole of any surrounding words
Drawing lines to 'match' boxes	lines that do not touch the boxes, provided the intention is clear	multiple lines drawn to or from the same box (unless this is a question requirement)
Writing or inserting punctuation	correctly formed punctuation that is clear, unambiguous and recognisable as the required punctuation mark	punctuation that is ambiguous, for example, it is unclear whether the mark is a comma or full stop

Question type	Accept	Do not accept
Additional punctuation	answers that are punctuated correctly according to the mark scheme, even if additional punctuation has been attempted incorrectly Pupils may try to use inverted commas around spoken words. This is beyond the key stage 1 programme of study and should not be taken into account when considering whether the answer is correct according to the mark scheme.	answers that do not meet the mark scheme criteria
Spelling (in Paper 2 only)	incorrect spellings of the correct answer, unless specific mark scheme guidance is given to require a correct spelling	incorrect spellings of answers for which the mark scheme requires correct spelling For questions assessing contracted forms, verb forms, plurals, prefixes and suffixes, correct spelling is generally required.
Answers outside the expected space	- a correct answer given somewhere other than the answer space, provided it is not contradicted by another answer written elsewhere - correct answers that are written in the 'blank' within a question, rather than in the expected space below it - correct answers in which the pupil has written out a word or sentence that is already provided For answers in both the expected space (e.g. the tick box) and elsewhere, the intended answer space takes precedence.	answers that are given outside the expected space and are contradicted by another answer written elsewhere

Question type	Accept	Do not accept
More than one answer given	multiple answers that are all correct according to the mark scheme	both correct and incorrect responses given
Handwriting	answers that are clear, unambiguous and recognisable, including letters that have been reversed, but which are still clearly identifiable to the marker	answers that are unclear or ambiguous
Capital letters	capital letters that are clear and unambiguous Where letters do not have unique capital letter forms, the height of the capital letter will be the same as, or greater than, that of letters with ascenders. Markers may refer to the pupil's handwriting in the rest of the paper to distinguish between upper and lower case letters.	answers in which capital letters are omitted or placed inappropriately in a sentence, or where an entire word is capitalised Where a pupil needs to write, rewrite or complete a sentence, the correct use of capital letters is required.
Crossed-out answers	correct answers that replace a crossed-out attempt	crossed-out answers

7.3 Explanation of the mark schemes for Paper 2: questions

Those marking the tests should familiarise themselves with the marking guidance in section 7.2 of this document before applying the mark schemes.

The practice questions are not marked as they are completed by the pupils together with the test administrator as an introduction to the test.

The mark schemes contain the following information for each question:

- the question number
- the question from the test paper
- what is required to answer each question – either a correct answer or examples of different types of creditworthy response
- how many marks are available for this question
- any additional guidance that may be relevant.

8. Mark schemes for Paper 2: questions

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
1	Tick the correct word to complete the sentence below. <i>I wanted to read my book _____ it was too dark.</i> Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. if ☐ but ☒ or ☐ that ☐	1m
2	Add the correct punctuation mark in the box below. Award 1 mark for a question mark inserted in the box. <i>Where are the pens and pencils ?</i>	1m
3	Circle one word in the sentence below that can be replaced with the word <u>because</u>. Award 1 mark for the correct word identified. <i>Ava wore her sun hat <u>when</u> it was hot.</i>	1m
4	Add a full stop to mark the two sentences below. Award 1 mark for a full stop after <i>dog</i>. <i>My friend has a dog. I have a cat and a goldfish.</i>	1m
5	What does the apostrophe in the word <u>Dean's</u> show? <i><u>Dean's</u> new trainers are white.</i> Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. The new trainers belong to Dean. ☒ The word has some missing letters. ☐ It shows a pause in the sentence. ☐ Dean's is a plural word. ☐	1m

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
6	Circle one word in each box to complete the sentences in the past tense. Award 1 mark for both correct words identified. The children saw the farm animals and sit <u>sat</u> on the tractor. The farmer <u>showed</u> shows them the controls.	1m
7	Tick the two sentences that must end with a question mark. Award 1 mark for both correct boxes ticked. What a great time we had on the trip ☐ Yesterday, I asked my friend to stay ☐ Who has he invited to the party ☒ Is anyone else coming today ☒ When I get home, I will read my book ☐	1m
8	What type of word is underlined in the sentence below? Dad wrote a <u>short</u> list before he went shopping. Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. a verb ☐ a noun ☐ an adjective ☒ an adverb ☐	1m
9	Add a suffix to make the word <u>proud</u> an adverb. Award 1 mark for the letters <i>ly</i> written in lower case. Seth walked proudly across the stage. Also award the mark for <i>proudly</i> written out in full with the suffix spelt correctly.	1m

Qu.	Requirement	Mark								
10	Write the words <u>do not</u> as one word, using an apostrophe. <i>I <u>do not</u> like the toy.</i> Award 1 mark for <i>don't</i> spelt correctly. <table><tr><th>Accept</th><th>Do not accept</th></tr><tr><td><u>don't</u></td><td>do'nt</td></tr><tr><td>don't</td><td><u>don't</u></td></tr><tr><td><u>Don't</u></td><td><u>do'nt</u></td></tr></table> Additional guidance: • Mark positively in relation to the size and position of the apostrophe as some pupils at this age may have uneven handwriting. • The response can be written in upper or lower case or a mixture of the two.	Accept	Do not accept	<u>don't</u>	do'nt	don't	<u>don't</u>	<u>Don't</u>	<u>do'nt</u>	1m
Accept	Do not accept									
<u>don't</u>	do'nt									
don't	<u>don't</u>									
<u>Don't</u>	<u>do'nt</u>									
11	Add two commas to the sentence below in the correct places. Award 1 mark for a comma after <i>English</i> and a comma after <i>Polish</i>. <i>My teacher can understand English, Polish, Urdu and sign language.</i> Do not accept the insertion of additional punctuation.	1m								
12	What type of word is underlined in the sentence below? <i>Anita and her dad <u>cleaned</u> the car.</i> Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. a noun ☐ a verb ☒ an adjective ☐ an adverb ☐	1m								
13	Add two letters to the word <u>finished</u> to make a word that means <u>not finished</u>. Award 1 mark for the letters <i>un</i> written in lower case. <i>The teacher told me to put my unfinished work in the tray.</i> Also award the mark for <i>unfinished</i> written out in full with the prefix spelt correctly.	1m								

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
14	Add one exclamation mark in the correct place below. Award 1 mark for an exclamation mark after <i>is</i>. <i>How wet it is! Will I need my wellies today?</i> Do not accept the insertion of additional punctuation.	1m
15	Tick the sentence where the underlined word is a noun. Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. The <u>big</u> ball bounced over the gate. ☐ Jo chased the ball across the <u>field</u>. ☒ She <u>quickly</u> threw the ball to her friend. ☐ Her friend <u>kicked</u> the ball. ☐	1m
16	Which sentence uses capital letters correctly? Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. Alice and I went to the Cinema. ☐ Last month We visited Spain. ☐ Hedgehogs come out at Night. ☐ The weather was warm last Friday. ☒	1m
17	Add a suffix to the word <u>colour</u> to complete the sentence below. Award 1 mark for the letters <i>ful</i> written in lower case. <i>The costume was very colourful with bright red ribbons.</i> Also award the mark for <i>colourful</i> written out in full with the suffix spelt correctly.	1m

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
18	Write a statement using only the four words in the box. Remember to use correct punctuation. <i>children can the sing</i> Award 2 marks for a grammatically correct statement using only the four words and with correct punctuation (see additional guidance), i.e. • <i>The children can sing.</i> • <i>The children can sing!</i> Also award 2 marks for a grammatically correct statement which does not use all four words and with correct punctuation (see additional guidance), e.g. • <i>Children can sing.</i> • <i>The children sing!</i> • <i>Children sing.</i> Award 1 mark for a grammatically correct statement using only the four words with incorrect punctuation, e.g. • <i>The children can sing</i> • <i>the children can sing.</i> • <i>the Children can sing?</i> Also award 1 mark for a grammatically correct statement which does not use all four words with incorrect punctuation, e.g. • <i>children can sing.</i> • <i>the children sing</i> • <i>Children sing</i> Do not accept other sentence types, e.g. <i>Can the children sing?</i> Additional guidance: • Correct punctuation refers to correct capitalisation throughout the sentence and an end full stop or exclamation mark – other additional punctuation should not be penalised. • Incorrect spelling should not be penalised, unless a misspelling creates a grammatically incorrect sentence, e.g. <i>The children can sings.</i> • Attempts to punctuate the whole sentence as direct speech should not be penalised.	2m
19	The sentences below have their punctuation marks covered. Which sentence is an exclamation? Award 1 mark for the correct box ticked. Sasha, are you nearly ready ● ☐ What are we going to do today ● ☐ We need a packed lunch ● ☐ What great fun we had ● ☒	1m



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Key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test mark schemes
Paper 1: spelling and Paper 2: questions
Product code: STA/25/8906/e ISBN: 978-1-83507-258-5

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