

2025 national curriculum tests

Key stage 2

English grammar, punctuation and spelling test mark schemes

Paper 1: questions

Paper 2: spelling



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1. Introduction

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) is responsible for the development and delivery of statutory tests and assessments. STA is an executive agency of the Department for Education.

The 2025 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 2.

A new test and new mark schemes will be produced each year.

Key stage 2 tests are marked by external markers, who receive training to ensure the mark schemes are applied consistently and fairly. The mark schemes are provided to show teachers how the tests are marked. The pupil examples are based on responses gathered from the test trialling process.

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

2. Structure of the test

The key stage 2 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test comprises:

- Paper 1: questions (50 marks)
- Paper 2: spelling (20 marks)

3. Content domain coverage

The 2025 test meets the specification in the test framework. Tables 1 and 3 set out the areas of the content domain that are assessed in Paper 1 and Paper 2.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-framework
² www.gov.uk/guidance/scaled-scores-at-key-stage-2

4. Paper 1: questions

4.1 Content domain coverage for Paper 1: questions

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

Table 1: Content domain coverage for questions in Paper 1

	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7
Qu.	Grammatical terms or word classes	Functions of sentences	Combining words, phrases and clauses	Verb forms, tense and consistency	Punctuation	Vocabulary	Standard English and formality
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				
19	1						
20						1	
21					1		
22					1		

	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7
Qu.	Grammatical terms or word classes	Functions of sentences	Combining words, phrases and clauses	Verb forms, tense and consistency	Punctuation	Vocabulary	Standard English and formality
23					1		
24			1				
25			1				
26		1					
27				1			
28	1						
29						1	
30					1		
31					1		
32	1						
33					1		
34			1				
35	1						
36	1						
37				1			
38				1			
39	1						
40	1						
41			1				
42					1		
43				1			
44	1						
45	1						
46				1			
47	1						
48				1			
49	1						
50				1			

4.2 General marking guidance for Paper 1: questions

To ensure consistency of marking, the most frequent procedural queries are listed in Table 2, along with the action the marker will take.

Recording marks awarded

Marking takes place on screen, with markers viewing scanned images of pupils' responses. Marks are entered into the marking system in accordance with the guidance for the on-screen marking software.

For each question, markers record the award of 1 or 0 marks as appropriate, according to the mark scheme criteria. There is provision in the software to record questions not attempted. The software aggregates marks automatically.

The following guidance applies to all questions in Paper 1.

Table 2: General marking principles for Paper 1

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	answers in which more than the required number of boxes have been ticked
Circling or underlining of the answer	any unambiguous indication of the correct answer, such as the answer being enclosed within a box	- answers in which more than the required number of words have been circled or underlined - answers in which the correct answer is circled or underlined, together with 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)
Labelling	clear labels, whether they use the full vocabulary required by the question or an unambiguous abbreviation, for example, 'V' for 'verb'	ambiguity in labelling, for example, the use of 'AD' or 'A' where a distinction is required between 'adjective' and 'adverb'

Question type	Accept	Do not accept
Punctuation	correctly formed punctuation that is clear, unambiguous and recognisable as the required punctuation mark	punctuation that is ambiguous, for example, if it is unclear whether the mark is a comma or full stop
Sentences and capital letters	- a sentence that has an initial capital letter and an appropriate punctuation mark indicating the end of the sentence - capital letters that are clear and unambiguous Where letters do not have unique capital letter forms, the height of the capital letter will be equal to, or greater than, that of letters with ascenders.	answers in which capital letters are omitted or placed inappropriately in a sentence, or where an entire word is capitalised
Spelling	incorrect spellings of the correct response if no specific mark scheme guidance is given	incorrect spellings of answers for which the mark scheme requires correct spelling Correct spelling is required for the award of the mark for the majority of questions in Paper 1, especially for questions assessing contracted forms, verb forms, plurals, prefixes and suffixes.

Question type	Accept	Do not accept
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	answers that are given outside the expected space and contradicted by another answer written elsewhere
More than one answer given	multiple answers that are all correct according to the mark scheme	responses where both correct and incorrect answers are 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
Crossed-out answers	correct answers that replace a crossed-out attempt	crossed-out answers

4.3 Explanation of the mark schemes for Paper 1: questions

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 the question
- any additional guidance that may be relevant
- the content domain reference

5. Mark schemes for Paper 1: questions

Qu.	Requirement	Mark															
1 G6.2	opposite ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	1m															
2 G6.1	Award 1 mark for the correct word circled. uneven sore smooth low	1m															
3 G5.3	“Have you finished eating your lunch ” asked Hannah ↑ ☐ ↑ ☐ ↑ ☒ ↑ ☐	1m															
4 G2.1 G2.3	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 40%;">Sentence</th><th style="width: 30%;">Statement</th><th style="width: 30%;">Command</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Watch where you’re going.</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">✓</td></tr> <tr> <td>We watched the game together.</td><td style="text-align: center;">✓</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>My watch stopped working.</td><td style="text-align: center;">✓</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Do not watch too much television.</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">✓</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Sentence	Statement	Command	Watch where you’re going.		✓	We watched the game together.	✓		My watch stopped working.	✓		Do not watch too much television.		✓	1m
Sentence	Statement	Command															
Watch where you’re going.		✓															
We watched the game together.	✓																
My watch stopped working.	✓																
Do not watch too much television.		✓															
5 G5.5	Award 1 mark for two commas correctly inserted. We lifted up the log and found worms, woodlice, snails and slugs.	1m															
6 G5.4	an exclamation mark ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐	1m															
7 G7.1	Award 1 mark for both correct. We <u>was</u> / <u>were</u> going on a school trip to a concert. The musicians <u>did</u> / <u>done</u> a sound check before the show.	1m															
8 G5.11	Award 1 mark for a semi-colon correctly inserted. We have been learning about the Vikings; they were a fascinating civilisation.	1m															

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
9 G2.2 G5.3	☐ Is Jay going to come on Tuesday ☒ ☐ Do you know if Jay is coming on Tuesday ☒	1m
10 G5.9	Award 1 mark for a pair of brackets correctly inserted. Our class visited a castle (the oldest in the country) to help us with our history project.	1m
11 G7.2	Award 1 mark for all three correct. The basketball club was set up / (established) by a group of friends last year. They (invited) / got people who were interested in the game to join. Now they play / (compete) in their local league.	1m
12 G1.6a	☐ After dinner, Kal is going to her room. ☒ ☐ ☐	1m
13 G7.3 G7.2	☐ ☐ The coach has yet to announce the team. ☒ ☐	1m
14 G5.9	☐ ☐ ☐ dashes ☒	1m
15 G5.10	Award 1 mark for a colon correctly inserted. We saw various animals on our evening walk: badgers, foxes, mice and an owl.	1m
16 G1.3	Award 1 mark for all three correctly circled. The (crumbling) castle stood high on the (rocky) hill. The views over the countryside were (glorious).	1m

Qu.	Requirement	Mark										
17 G5.9	Swimming, which strengthens muscles in the arms and legs, is great exercise. ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	1m										
18 G3.1a G1.5b	Award 1 mark for a grammatically correct relative clause that retains the meaning of the sentence in the box, for example: - My uncle, <u>who lives on a farm</u>, is going to plant potatoes. - My uncle, <u>who's a farmer</u>, is going to plant potatoes. Do not accept misspellings of relative pronouns or verb forms. Do not accept errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m										
19 G1.2	<u>Space</u> yourselves out in the hall for PE. ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	1m										
20 G6.3	Award 1 mark for all four matched correctly. <table><thead><tr><th>Word</th><th>Suffix</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>recruit</td><td>ate</td></tr><tr><td>advert</td><td>ise</td></tr><tr><td>class</td><td>ment</td></tr><tr><td>alien</td><td>ify</td></tr></tbody></table>	Word	Suffix	recruit	ate	advert	ise	class	ment	alien	ify	1m
Word	Suffix											
recruit	ate											
advert	ise											
class	ment											
alien	ify											
21 G5.8	to show that who's is the contracted form of 'who has' ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐	1m										
22 G5.6b	When the waitress came over, I asked which flavours were the most popular. ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	1m										

Qu.	Requirement	Mark												
23 G5.12	Award 1 mark for a dash correctly inserted. I must repair my backpack – the zip is broken and I need it for our camping trip.	1m												
24 G3.4	☐ ☐ ☐ a subordinate clause ☒	1m												
25 G3.1 G3.4	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sentence</th><th>Main clause</th><th>Subordinate clause</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>I walked to school with Hazel <u>as</u> we live on the same road.</td><td></td><td>✓</td></tr> <tr> <td><u>Hazel uses a wheelchair</u> so we went up the ramp.</td><td>✓</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td><u>Before we entered the classroom</u>, we greeted our friends.</td><td></td><td>✓</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Sentence	Main clause	Subordinate clause	I walked to school with Hazel <u>as</u> we live on the same road.		✓	<u>Hazel uses a wheelchair</u> so we went up the ramp.	✓		<u>Before we entered the classroom</u> , we greeted our friends.		✓	1m
Sentence	Main clause	Subordinate clause												
I walked to school with Hazel <u>as</u> we live on the same road.		✓												
<u>Hazel uses a wheelchair</u> so we went up the ramp.	✓													
<u>Before we entered the classroom</u> , we greeted our friends.		✓												
26 G2.3 G2.2 G2.4	Award 1 mark for all four matched correctly. Sentence Are you coming to the film night at school What a shame you can't come Don't worry about it There will be another one next term Form question command statement exclamation	1m												
27 G4.1c	☐ ☐ ☐ I must be at school early tomorrow. ☒	1m												

Qu.	Requirement	Mark																
28 G1.5	Award 1 mark for a response explaining that it is unclear who <i>they</i> refers to, for example: <i>You don't know who 'they' is referring to; you don't know if it is the tennis players or Kate and Ravi.</i> <i>Because we don't know who 'they' are.</i> <i>It doesn't clarify who they are referring to by 'they'.</i>	1m																
29 G6.2	Award 1 mark for re	1m																
30 G5.13	Award 1 mark for a hyphen correctly inserted. At the museum, we enjoyed dressing up in the old-fashioned costumes and fancy hats.	1m																
31 G5.7	Award 1 mark for inverted commas correctly inserted, i.e. “I think it is over here!” shouted Reena, pointing at the map. “Follow me!” ‘I think it is over here!’ shouted Reena, pointing at the map. ‘Follow me!’	1m																
32 G1.1 G1.2 G1.3	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Sentence</th><th>Verb</th><th>Noun</th><th>Adjective</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>He <u>folds</u> the letter carefully.</td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>The <u>folded</u> letter was put in the envelope.</td><td></td><td></td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>The letter had <u>folds</u> in it.</td><td></td><td>✓</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	Sentence	Verb	Noun	Adjective	He <u>folds</u> the letter carefully.	✓			The <u>folded</u> letter was put in the envelope.			✓	The letter had <u>folds</u> in it.		✓		1m
Sentence	Verb	Noun	Adjective															
He <u>folds</u> the letter carefully.	✓																	
The <u>folded</u> letter was put in the envelope.			✓															
The letter had <u>folds</u> in it.		✓																
33 G5.6a	Award 1 mark for a response explaining that the comma changes who is being addressed and/or who is being called, for example: <i>In the first sentence it's asking if you called Raheem. In the second sentence they are asking if Raheem called somebody.</i> <i>The second sentence makes it seem like it is the caller's name and the other does not.</i> <i>The 1st one means that they were talking about Raheem and the 2nd one shows that they are talking to Raheem.</i>	1m																
34 G3.1a	Award 1 mark for After her dance class, Jamila has a strawberry milkshake, <u>which</u> she buys from the local cafe.	1m																

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
35 G1.7	Award 1 mark for both correctly circled. Stef trained hard <u>before</u> the hockey tournament. Concentrating intensely, Emma hit the ball <u>into</u> the net.	1m
36 G1.9	Award 1 mark for the correct word circled. After the heavy rain, <u>Mum</u> decided not to water the garden.	1m
37 G4.4	Award 1 mark for a correctly punctuated sentence using the passive, for example: <i>The treasure was stolen by someone.</i> <i>The treasure was stolen by somebody.</i> <i>The treasure was stolen.</i> Do not accept misspellings of verb forms or errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m
38 G4.1a	Award 1 mark for both correct. I <u>brought</u> my violin to school. I <u>forgot</u> it last week. ↑ to bring ↑ to forget Do not accept misspellings or errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m
39 G1.1	Award 1 mark for all three correctly circled. He played the <u>piano</u> with great <u>confidence</u> and rarely made <u>mistakes</u> .	1m
40 G1.6	an adverb ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐	1m
41 G3.2	Award 1 mark for an appropriate noun phrase, for example: <i>The bus driver</i> <i>The owner of the house</i> <i>His big hands</i> <i>The old man who couldn't sleep</i> Do not accept errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m
42 G5.2 G5.1	Award 1 mark for This year, we have been on a number of school trips. M _{my} favourite was to the Science Museum because we saw some incredible experiments. H _{however} , Elise preferred our visit to Colchester Castle.	1m

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
43 G4.4	Award 1 mark for a correctly punctuated sentence using the active, for example: <i>The council maintain the local park.</i> <i>The council maintains the local park.</i> Do not accept misspellings of verb forms or errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m
44 G1.5a	Award 1 mark for both correctly circled. Dad told me that Mum's favourite sport is cycling and (his) is cricket. Tennis is Karen's favourite sport and (mine) is football.	1m
45 G1.4 G3.4 G3.3	Award 1 mark for all three correctly circled. (Since) Billy has started swimming lessons, he has been going to the pool every Saturday (and) sometimes on Wednesdays too, (if) his dad has time to take him.	1m
46 G4.3 G7.4	Award 1 mark for the correct word circled. If I (were) to help, I would start by clearing the tables.	1m
47 G1.8	Award 1 mark for all three correctly circled. There are (some) biscuits in (this) tin but there are not (any) chocolate ones.	1m
48 G4.1d G1.2	Award 1 mark for While we <u>were talking</u> to our friend, his phone started ringing. ↑ to talk Do not accept misspellings or errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m
49 G1.6	Award 1 mark for the correct word circled. Although Jane was a speedy runner, she was (almost) beaten in the race.	1m
50 G4.1b G1.2	Award 1 mark for The teacher told the class that he <u>had decided</u> not to give them any homework. ↑ to decide Do not accept misspellings or errors in punctuation or capitalisation.	1m

6. Paper 2: spelling

6.1 Content domain coverage for Paper 2: spelling

This information is provided in Table 3.

6.2 General marking guidance for Paper 2: spelling

The following guidance applies to all questions in Paper 2. Please read this carefully before applying the individual mark schemes.

- If the pupil makes more than one attempt, it must be clear which answer the pupil wishes to be marked.
- If the pupil makes two or more attempts and it is not clear which is to be considered, the mark is not awarded.
- The pupil 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 in lower-case letters with an initial capital letter for the award of the mark.
- If the pupil has answered with the correct sequence of letters but has incorrectly inserted an apostrophe or a hyphen, the mark is not awarded.
- If the 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.

6.3 Pupil version of Paper 2: spelling

Spelling	
1. There was a brave _____ in the story.	11. My sister stomped _____ up the stairs.
2. The children walked home _____ the park.	12. There was an _____ to the bus timetable.
3. We were _____ for our hard work.	13. Cold environments are the preferred habitats for _____.
4. I enjoy reading _____ stories.	14. I am looking forward to going on a _____ trip next year.
5. After a few days, the seeds _____ shoots.	15. The ship was held in place by an _____.
6. There was an _____ of colour during the firework display.	16. Brushing your teeth helps to remove _____.
7. They _____ a bridge on their way to school.	17. I hid my _____ when my friend won the contest.
8. There was a funny _____ in the school play.	18. The plants will _____ on the sunny windowsill.
9. The new phone is lightweight and _____.	19. Ava was _____ to miss the school trip.
10. It was a good _____ to move to a quieter room.	20. I look forward to _____ your reply.
END OF TEST	



7. Mark schemes for Paper 2: spelling

Information relating to the content domain reference codes in Table 3 can be found in the key stage 2 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test framework.

Table 3: Mark schemes and content domain references for Paper 2

Qu.	Spelling	Mark	Content domain reference
1	knight	1	S60 – words with ‘silent’ letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)
2	through	1	S59 – words containing the letter string <i>ough</i> S61 – homophones and near homophones (Years 3 and 4) homophones and other words that are often confused (Years 5 and 6)
3	rewarded	1	S38 – adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable
4	adventure	1	S44 – words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/
5	developed	1	S38 – adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable
6	explosion	1	S45 – endings that sound like /ʒən/
7	passed	1	S61 – homophones and near homophones (Years 3 and 4) homophones and other words that are often confused (Years 5 and 6)
8	scene	1	S51 – words with the /s/ sound spelt <i>sc</i> S61 – homophones and near homophones (Years 3 and 4) homophones and other words that are often confused (Years 5 and 6)
9	affordable	1	S56 – words ending in <i>-able</i> and <i>-ible</i> words ending in <i>-ably</i> and <i>-ibly</i> S38 – adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable
10	suggestion	1	S47 – endings that sound like /ʃən/, spelt <i>-tion</i> , <i>-sion</i> , <i>-ssion</i> , <i>-cian</i>
11	angrily	1	S43 – the suffix <i>-ly</i>
12	alteration	1	S42 – the suffix <i>-ation</i>
13	reindeer	1	S52 – words with the /eɪ/ sound spelt <i>ei</i> , <i>eigh</i> , or <i>ey</i>
14	residential	1	S54 – endings which sound like /ʃəl/
15	anchor	1	S48 – words with the /k/ sound spelt <i>ch</i>
16	plaque	1	S50 – words ending with the /g/ sound spelt <i>-gue</i> and the /k/ sound spelt <i>-que</i>
17	jealousy	1	S46 – the suffix <i>-ous</i>
18	flourish	1	S40 – the /ʌ/ sound spelt <i>ou</i>
19	disappointed	1	S41 – prefixes
20	receiving	1	S58 – words with the /i:/ sound spelt <i>ei</i> after <i>c</i>
Total		20	



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Paper 1: questions and Paper 2: spelling

Electronic PDF version product code: STA/25/8916/e ISBN: 978-1-83507-268-4

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