



Department
for Education

English grammar, punctuation and spelling test

Information for parents

What is the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test?

The English grammar, punctuation and spelling test assesses your child's English skills in five key areas in Year 6:

- spelling
- punctuation
- grammar
- vocabulary; and
- handwriting (to be confirmed Autumn 2012).

It forms part of the National Curriculum tests which are taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Your child's teacher will be able to explain what each of these key areas cover.

Why does my child have to take this test?

The Department for Education is introducing the test because we want to make sure that when children leave primary school they are confident in grammar, punctuation and spelling. The test will ensure that primary schools place a stronger focus on the teaching of these skills than in previous years.

The end of Key Stage 2 is a key point of a child's education, and we expect parents to want to know how well their child is learning the most important skills. Just as you will receive information from your child's school about how they perform in reading and maths, you will also receive information about how they are doing in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

The test results will provide teachers with useful information about your child's progress in each of the key areas. Most children will move to a secondary school the following term, and their new English teachers can use this information to focus their lessons on areas of need.

How will my child benefit from the test?

The ability to write and communicate are key life skills. Next term, your child will draw on these skills when taking part in new work across all of the different secondary subjects. In the long term, your child will be able to use these skills throughout their education and employment, and their adult life.

Changes are also being made to GCSEs so that from 2013 there will be marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar in key subjects. By developing confidence in these skills early on, your child will improve their chances of succeeding in important qualifications later on in their education.

Is this an extra test?

No. The original English writing test is being discontinued, and the new English grammar, punctuation and spelling test will be introduced in May 2013. From 2013, teachers will make a separate judgement on how well your child is doing in writing composition - such as composing letters or stories – instead.

How long is the test?

We expect that most children will take about an hour to complete the test.

When will I know how well my child has performed in the test?

Your school will let you know your child's result before the end of the summer term.

What if my child finds the test difficult?

Ask your child's teacher about what steps they can take to help your child to improve their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. They may also be able to suggest how you can help your child to practise these skills at home.

Will this test be appropriate for my child as they have special educational needs?

Ask your child's teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator how your child's needs will affect the way in which they complete the test, and what adjustments are available. They will also be able to tell you how the test result will be used to inform the support they receive as they move onto the secondary curriculum.

Where can I find more information about the test?

Further information about Key Stage 2 tests is available at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

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