Getting started guide

KS3 English Language assessments

For support of Pearson Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1) in English Language (First teaching of GCSE from September 2015)

PEARSON

This KS3 support pack is not required to achieve the Edexcel GCSE (9–1) English Language qualification. Use of this pack does not guarantee that candidates will achieve a 9–1 grade.

About Pearson

Pearson is the world's leading learning company, with 40,000 employees in more than 70 countries working to help people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives through learning. We put the learner at the centre of everything we do, because wherever learning flourishes, so do people. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at: www.pearson.com/uk.

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Introduction

The Pearson Key Stage 3 (KS3) assessments are designed for use in Edexcel centres and have been mapped to the requirements of the Pearson Edexcel GCSEs (9–1) in English Language and in English Literature.

Purpose of the assessments

These tests were developed with the intention to:
- track progress across KS3
- provide baseline and summative assessment against the GCSE requirements
- prepare students for the demands of the new GCSEs
- familiarise students with the new GCSE test papers.

A baseline assessment for the start of Year 7 is available for both Literature and Language – supplying you with a swift initial assessment and serving as a diagnostic to inform your teaching and to introduce students to secondary study.

This assessment is accompanied by end-of-year tests for Year 7, which build upon the baseline tests, allowing for analysis of progression. Further end-of-year tests for Literature and Language are available for Years 8 and 9 with increasingly demanding questions for each year.

English Language

The KS3 tests are closely mapped to the structure of the GCSE papers with relevant, appropriately pitched coverage of the GCSE Assessment Objectives.

The KS3 English Language assessments are split into Reading and Writing sections with Reading questions ramped up to longer, extended-answer questions. As with the GCSE, the KS3 papers are thematic with Writing questions linked to the Reading tasks. Research has shown that students' focus on structure, audience, spelling, punctuation and grammar is improved if they have already read around the topic they are then asked to write about.

Years 7 and 8 assessments have been split into separate Reading and Writing papers (to break up the time students sit for examination), but they are meant to be treated as pairs (Paper 1 linked to Paper 2 and Paper 3 linked to Paper 4) and it is advisable that testing is done in quick succession.

Skills

The following key skills are assessed to varying degrees across the KS3 Language tests.

Reading	Writing
• interpretation and synthesis • explanation, comment, analysis of language, structure and effect • comparison • evaluation	• adaptation of tone/style/register for different forms/purposes/audiences • organisation of information/ideas • use of vocabulary and sentence structures, accurate spelling and punctuation

Text choices

These are influenced by the requirements of the GCSE specification but we have also taken into consideration the age of the students, length of the text or extract, and the inclusion of texts on existing curriculums.

Editable

The tests are available in both PDF and MS Word formats to ensure flexibility. You can edit the tests to suit your students and your KS3 curriculum.

Overview of assessment

Below is a breakdown of how the Language assessments are split into papers and the texts that are covered. For detailed information on the ramping up of questions per year per paper, please see the KS3 assessment journey.

Year 7: baseline test

Paper 1	19th-century fiction: extract from *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri	40 mins
Paper 2	Imaginative or Transactional Writing	45 mins
Paper 3	Non-fiction: extract from *Bookshop Memories* by George Orwell	50 mins

Year 7: end-of-year test

Paper 1	19th-century fiction: extract from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll	1 hour
Paper 2	Imaginative Writing	45 mins
Paper 3	Non-fiction Text 1: extract from *Selected Letters of Raymond Chandler* by Frank MacShane Text 2: extract from *Understanding Cat Behaviour* by Dr Gordon Roberts	1 hour 15 mins
Paper 4	Transactional Writing	45 mins

Year 8: end-of-year test

Paper 1	19th-century fiction: extract from *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens	1 hour
Paper 2	Imaginative Writing*	45 mins
Paper 3	Non-fiction Text 1: extract from *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson Text 2: 'Bristol restaurant opts for ingredients plucked from supermarket skips' from *The Guardian*	1 hour 15 mins
Paper 4	Transactional Writing*	45 mins

* Before sitting the Writing assessment, students may need to re-read the extracts from the accompanying Reading paper to allow them to complete one of the writing tasks.

Year 9: end-of-year test

Paper 1, Section A	19th-century fiction: extract from *The Swiss Family Robinson* by Johann David Wyss	1 hour
Paper 1, Section B	Imaginative Writing	45 mins
Paper 2, Section A	Non-fiction Text 1: extract from *Taking on the World* by Ellen MacArthur Text 2: newspaper articles reporting on Ernest Shackleton	1 hour 15 mins
Paper 2, Section B	Transactional Writing	45 mins

Assessment journey

	19th Century Fiction	Imaginative Writing	Non-fiction	Transactional Writing	Structure and mark scheme
Baseline	• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed • *Heidi* suitable for age group • extract ~250 words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • one writing paper • question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed • no synthesis or comparison • Q5 scaffolded with suggested points • *Bookshop Memories* suitable for age group (one extract only) • extract ~400 words • five questions • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • one writing paper • question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• three papers • simplified mark scheme • Age related expectation for 2015 cohort: 66%
Year 7	• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed • Q3 fill in table, focusing on effect of writer's choices • Q4 command word 'explore'; scaffolded with suggested points • *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* suitable for age group • extract ~350 words • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed • synthesis, no comparison • Q2 scaffolded with suggested points • Q4 command word 'explore'; scaffolded with suggested points • five questions • *Letters of Raymond Chandler* and *Understanding Cat Behaviour* suitable for age group • extracts ~450 words • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• four papers • simplified mark scheme • Age related expectation for 2015 cohort: 90%
Year 8	• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed • Q3 scaffolded with a table for planning • Q4 command word 'explore; scaffolded with suggested points • *Oliver Twist* suitable for age group • extract ~450 words • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4 assessed • synthesis and comparison • Q3 scaffolded with suggested points and a table for planning • Q6 command word 'explore'; scaffolded with suggested points • Q7b scaffolded with suggested points • seven questions • *Notes from a Small Island* and *Guardian* article suitable for age group • extracts ~850 words • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• four papers • uses GCSE mark scheme • Levels 4 and 5 separated as stretch. • Age related expectation for 2015 cohort: 48%

	19th Century Fiction	Imaginative Writing	Non-fiction	Transactional Writing	Structure and mark scheme
Year 9	• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed • Q4 command word 'evaluate'; scaffolded with suggested points • *The Swiss Family Robinson* suitable for age group • extract ~500 words • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • Question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4 assessed • synthesis and comparison • Q3 scaffolded with suggested points • Q6 command word 'evaluate'; scaffolded with suggested points • Q7b scaffolded with suggested points • seven questions • *Taking on the World* and Shackleton articles suitable for age group • extracts ~900 words • glossary of challenging words	• AO5 and AO6 assessed • Question scaffolded with suggested points • SPAG scaffolded with suggested points	• Two papers • Uses GCSE mark scheme • Level 5 separated as stretch. • Age related expectation for 2015 cohort: 56%

Measuring progress: the Pearson Progression Steps

Pearson has developed a Progression Map and Scale for English, ages 11–16. This represents our view of how learning progresses in reading and writing at KS3 and KS4. The progression map identifies eight different strands of reading and writing and each of these strands is divided into 12 Steps of progression. Students are expected to make one Step of progress per year.

Students who are confidently, securely and consistently meeting end of KS2 Age Related Expectations (as set out in the 2014 English National Curriculum for KS2) would be at around the 4th Step of the Progression Scale. The Year 7 cohort starting in September 2016 will be the first who will have been assessed against these new KS2 expectations (although they will only have been taught the new curriculum in Y5 and Y6).

The Year 7 cohort starting in September 2015 will have followed the previous national curriculum and will have been measured against this in their statutory Year 6 assessments. For this cohort, a confident and secure National Curriculum Level 4 is indicative of performance at around the 3rd Step of the Progression Scale. To support the 2015 cohort through this transition period, our senior examiner team created Year 7 assessments indicative of the 3rd Step to ensure that subject confidence is maintained and enthusiasm fostered.

Students who are confidently, securely and consistently meeting age expectations in 2015 might be expected to achieve as follows:

- at least 66% in the baseline Y7 test
- at least 90% in the end of Y7 test
- at least 48% in the end of Y8 test
- at least 56% in the end of Y9 test.

Progression Step marking grids

To help you translate the marks in the Years 8 and 9 assessments, we have provided marking grids that indicate the Step at which students may be working. However, these test results give only one indication of the student's performance and should be used in conjunction with teacher judgement about their performance.

It is worth stressing that one of the great values of the Progression Map and Scale is how it can be used for formative assessment. For example, the Progression Map can support a more detailed consideration of student performance across the different strands of the Scale; it can help with identifying areas of weakness and offers barriers and boosters to help move students on in specific areas.

KS3 English Language (Y8 and Y9) Total marks	
Marks	**Indicative step**
1–42	1st Step
43–53	2nd Step
54–65	3rd Step
66–76	4th Step
77–89	5th Step
90–100	6th Step
101–111	7th Step
112–122	8th Step
123–133	9th Step
134–145	10th Step
146–156	11th Step
157–160	12th Step

KS3 English Language (Y8 and Y9) Reading Total marks	
Marks	**Indicative step**
1–21	1st Step
22–26	2nd Step
27–32	3rd Step
33–38	4th Step
39–44	5th Step
45–50	6th Step
51–55	7th Step
56–61	8th Step
62–66	9th Step
67–72	10th Step
73–78	11th Step
79–80	12th Step

KS3 English Language (Y8 and Y9) Writing Total marks	
Marks	**Indicative step**
1–21	1st Step
22–26	2nd Step
27–32	3rd Step
33–38	4th Step
39–44	5th Step
45–50	6th Step
51–55	7th Step
56–61	8th Step
62–66	9th Step
67–72	10th Step
73–78	11th Step
79–80	12th Step

At Year 7 we have focused the assessments on the 3rd Step. Further guidance will be issued to support assessment of Year 7 students who are working above the 3rd Step. Once students under the new 2014 national curriculum reach secondary level, we will review the KS3 assessments and age related expectations and we will provide appropriate additional support.

Markbook

An Excel Markbook has also been created to help relate test scores to indicative Steps on the Progression Scale. The Markbook will be available on the Edexcel website Autumn 2015.

For more information about the Progression Map and Scale, click here.

Marking guidance

General guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment.

- Teachers must mark the last candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the first.

- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than be penalised for omissions.

- Teschers should mark according to the mark scheme.

- Where some judgment is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification/indicative content will not be exhaustive.

- Crossed-out work should be marked unless the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Year 7 guidance

The Year 7 assessments have fewer levelled questions than the Years 8 and 9 papers as the mark scheme diverges at this stage from the GCSE format. Students are also able to access full marks. This reflects the level at which the test papers are pitched and we felt this would help to build confidence with GCSE-style assessments at an early stage in students' secondary education.

For schools using the Pearson Progression Map and Scale for English (11-16), further guidance will be issued to support assessment of Year 7 students who are working above the 3rd Step (see above).

Years 8 and 9 guidance

Years 8 and 9 end–of-year assessments closely match the GCSE sample assessment mark schemes to enable clear progression links from the KS3 papers to the GCSE assessments. We encourage that it is made clear to students that they are not expected to get full marks for these KS3 tests.

Exemplars for the GCSE Sample Assessment Materials are available on the Edexcel website. We recommend reading the examiner comments to familiarise yourself with what is expected at each level.

Specific marking guidance for Years 8 and 9

- The marking grids have been designed to assess student work holistically. The grids identify the Assessment Objective being targeted by the level descriptors.
- When deciding how to reward an answer, teachers should consult both the indicative content and the associated marking grid(s). When using a levels-based mark scheme, the 'best fit' approach should be used.
- Teachers should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level.
- The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.
- In cases of uneven performance, the points above will still apply. Candidates will be placed in the level that best describes their answer according to the Assessment Objective described in the level. Marks will be awarded towards the top or bottom of that level depending on how they have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points.
- Indicative content is exactly that – it consists of factual points that candidates are likely to use to construct their answer. It is possible for an answer to be constructed without mentioning some or all of these points, as long as they provide alternative responses to the indicative content that fulfil the requirements of the question. It is the teacher's responsibility to apply their professional judgment to the candidate's response in determining if the answer fulfils the requirements of the question.