

En

KEY STAGE

2

LEVELS

3–5

English tests

Definition of terms

Writing

Guide to technical terms used in the writing mark scheme for the internally marked test

2012

National curriculum assessments

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Introduction

This booklet provides brief definitions for the key technical terms used in the *Sentence Structure and Punctuation* and *Text Structure and Organisation* strands of the longer task writing mark scheme and in the *Sentence Structure, Punctuation and Text Organisation* strand of the shorter task writing mark scheme. The booklet is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all terms. Its purpose is to support the clear interpretation of the writing mark scheme, thereby assisting the process of making judgements about the relative strengths and weaknesses of a pupil's piece of writing.

Where appropriate, references to mark scheme band (Band A2, Band B3 etc.) have been made to indicate where a given technical term appears in the longer task mark scheme. However, it should not be assumed that this is the only reference to the term in the writing mark schemes.

Acknowledgements

The definitions in this booklet have been selected and derived from *The National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching* and *Grammar for Writing*. They have been supplemented with examples taken from writing by year 6 pupils produced during the trialling of these assessment materials.

Sentence Structure and Punctuation Strand (longer task mark scheme section A shorter task mark scheme section D)

The Sentence Structure and Punctuation aspects of writing to be assessed in these strands are pupils' ability to:

- vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect
- write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences.

adverbial:

An adverbial is a word, phrase or clause which gives extra meaning to a sentence or part of a sentence. It may be omitted without rendering the sentence grammatically incorrect (although the extra meaning will be lost).

- **simple adverbial (Band A2)**

In the mark scheme, a simple adverbial is exemplified as a word or brief phrase which gives extra meaning to a sentence:

I energetically thanked the balloon driver.

There was a special assembly in the hall.

- **adverbials (Band A3)**

Where adverbials are referenced at Band A3, they are typically more substantial than the simple adverbials cited in Band A2.

For example:

an adverbial phrase with expansion:

At the end of the performance she got a standing ovation.

an adverbial clause:

When the chicken reappeared, it was in the air!

clause:

A distinct part of a sentence including a verb. There are different types of clause:

- **main clause**

This is the main part of the sentence. The main clause makes sense on its own.

The main clause is underlined in the sentence below:

When the music stopped the crowd went wild.

- **subordinate clause**

This gives more information about the main clause. It does not make sense on its own.

A subordinate clause may come after or before a main clause.

The subordinate clause is underlined in the sentence below:

The crowd went wild when the music stopped.

connective:

Connectives are words and phrases used to link different parts of a text (clauses, sentences, paragraphs or chapters).

- **simple connectives (Band A2)**

In this mark scheme, simple connectives are identified as common, frequently-used connectives that link parts of a text in straightforward ways. For example: *and, but, so, when*

We were up there for hours but it felt like minutes to me.

They started dancing and they were really good.

- **subordinating connectives (Band A3)**

Subordinating connectives are identified as words that go at the beginning of a subordinate clause: (*because, if, while, before, after, since, until, although*).

Although it is an honour, I feel anxious.

Note: *when* (Band A2) is, grammatically, a subordinating connective. However, for the purposes of the mark scheme it is considered to be a simple connective, due to its frequency of use.

noun phrase:

This is a wider term than 'noun'. It can refer to a single noun (*picnics*), a pronoun (*it, she*) or a group of words that functions in the same way as a noun in a sentence (*a giant, multi-coloured balloon, the beautiful white marble walls*).

- **simple noun phrase (Band A2)**

In the mark scheme, a simple noun phrase is exemplified as a noun phrase consisting of a single noun (*air, countries*) or a noun prefaced by a determiner (a word such as *the, a, my, this*) –

the dancer

a judge

my trip

Band A2 also makes reference to noun phrases with limited expansion. In the mark scheme, this typically refers to a simple noun phrase expanded with a single adjective. For example:

the great dancer

a kind judge

my exciting trip

- **expanded noun phrase (Band A3)**

In the mark scheme, an expanded noun phrase is exemplified as a noun phrase consisting of more than either a single noun or a noun prefaced by a determiner. The expanded noun phrase found at Band A3 is typically more substantial than the noun phrase with limited expansion referred to in Band A2.

the outstanding, flexible flips

the wicker basket attached to the hot air balloon

a calm, relaxing family trip

a yellow wooden basket

sentence:

A sentence is a unit of written language which makes sense on its own. In writing, a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

- **simple sentence**

A sentence with only one clause:

The magician ate the card.

- **complex sentence**

A sentence containing a main clause and subordinate clause or clauses. The subordinate clauses are underlined in the complex sentences below:

I was afraid at first because the balloon was so high up.

If you saw it, you wouldn't believe your eyes.

Note: Band A5 of the longer task mark scheme refers to 'controlled use of several subordinate clauses'. For example:

I hope I get to see all the breath-taking views, although I am a little bit nervous because we will be so high – and, what if we crash?

Such a sentence contributes to economy of expression because it allows several ideas to be combined within the sentence.

subject:

In the sentence *I liked the balloon*, the subject is *I* and the object is *the balloon*. The subject is the person or thing about which something is said. In sentences with a subject and an object, the subject typically carries out an action, while the object is the person or thing affected by the action. In declarative sentences (statements), the subject normally goes before the verb; the object goes after the verb.

Band A2 refers to subjects and verbs being 'simple and frequently repeated'. For example:

I am so excited ... I am shocked ... I am no longer nervous.

Band A3 refers to 'Some variation of subjects'. For example:

The crowd started cheering – they liked her very much. Everybody loved it when she did her flips.

verb:

A verb is a word or group of words which names an action or state of being.

- **verb forms and tense**

A tense is a verb form that most often indicates time. English verbs have two basic tenses, present and past, and each of these can be simple or continuous. For example:

present

I watch (simple)

I am watching (continuous)

present perfect

I have watched (perfect)

I have been watching (perfect continuous)

past

I watched (simple)

I was watching (continuous)

past perfect

I had watched (perfect)

I had been watching (perfect continuous)

English has no future tense. Future time can be expressed in a number of ways using *will* or present tenses:

I will watch it tomorrow

I will be watching it tomorrow

I am going to watch it tomorrow

I am watching it tomorrow

I watch it tomorrow

At Band A4 and above, a ‘range or verb forms’ would involve evidence of some of the varied verb forms illustrated above.

- **modal verbs (Band A2, Band A3)**

The modal verbs are:

can / could

will / would

shall / should

may / might

must / ought

Modal verbs are used to express such ideas as possibility, willingness, speculation, deduction and necessity.

- **active and passive (Band A5)**

Many verbs can be active or passive. For example, the verb *to open*:

The man opened the cage (active)

The cage was opened by the man (passive).

In the active sentence, the subject (*the man*) performs the action. In the passive sentence, the subject (*The cage*) is on the receiving end of the action. The two sentences give similar information, but there is a different focus. In a passive sentence, the ‘doer’ (or agent) may be identified using *by ...*

The cage was opened by the man.

But very often, in passive sentences, the agent is unknown or insignificant, and therefore not identified:

The cage was opened.

Passive forms are common in impersonal, formal styles. However, they are not restricted to formal text types and may also be found in personal writing.

The balloon company has just been informed ...

Text Structure and Organisation

Strand (longer task mark scheme section B)

The aspects of writing to be assessed in this strand are pupils' ability to:

- organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events
- construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs.

Please note that the guidance below is also relevant to the shorter task mark scheme strand *Sentence structure, Punctuation and Text Organisation* (section D).

coherence:

Band B4 refers to 'coherent development'. The term coherence refers to the underlying logic and consistency of a text. The ideas expressed should be relevant to one another so that the reader can follow the meaning.

When I got in the balloon, I was extremely nervous so I had to close my eyes when we took off. Cautiously opening my eyes I looked to see how far we were above the ground, slowly but steadily. We were really high up! It is such a great and relieving feeling when you feel the wind whistling past your face as well as the mesmerizing views that your eyes lay upon.

cohesion:

The term cohesion refers to the grammatical features in a text which enable the parts to fit together. One way of creating cohesion is through the use of connectives (words and phrases used to link different parts of a text):

I never had such an amazing sensation in my entire life. However it was a bit chilly ...

Cohesion is often achieved by the use of words such as pronouns (e.g. *I, he, she*) that refer to other parts of the text.

A girl named Sam came and dazzled everyone. She was like a little firework ...

The tea I have just had made no difference to my mood, even though it was my favourite.

