

2026 national curriculum tests

Key stage 1

English grammar, punctuation and spelling

Administering Paper 1: spelling

Key stage 1 tests are designed to be taken at the end of the key stage 1 programme of study. It is suggested that schools administer the tests during **May**, to help inform the support that can be given to pupils ahead of their transition to key stage 2.

Schools may choose to administer the non-statutory key stage 1 tests under test conditions. To help maintain the integrity of the tests for those doing so, we ask that all schools treat all test materials as confidential until **June 2026**.

For test administration

Key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test

The key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test consists of 2 papers. The papers should be administered in order. Pupils do not have to sit both papers on the same day. If both papers are administered on the same day, pupils may benefit from a break between papers. Both papers can be administered to the whole class, smaller groups of pupils or on an individual basis.

Paper 1: spelling

The following information explains how to administer the key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test Paper 1: spelling. The transcript for administration of the test is included in these instructions.

Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paper 1: spelling consists of an answer booklet for pupils to complete and a test transcript to be read by the test administrator. The transcript is included in this guidance. ● It is expected that Paper 1 will take approximately 15 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed. ● It is at your discretion to choose when, or if, a pupil requires a break during the test or whether, if appropriate, to stop the test early. ● The paper includes a practice question for you to use to introduce the contexts and question type to pupils. Test administrators should allow additional time to go through the practice question with pupils.
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Each pupil will need the equipment specified below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a pencil or blue or black pen. ● Highlighter pens may be used if this is normal classroom practice. ● Rubbers are allowed, but please encourage pupils to cross out answers they wish to change instead of rubbing them out. ● Pupils are not allowed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a dictionary or thesaurus - electronic spell checkers - bilingual word lists or electronic translators.
Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You should ensure that nothing you say or do during the test could be interpreted as giving pupils an advantage, for example, indicating that an answer is correct or incorrect, or suggesting the pupil look at an answer again. ● You should take care not to overemphasise spelling when reading out the words that pupils need to spell. ● There is no specific hearing impairment guidance for this test, but be careful when signing to ensure you do not convey information that could give pupils an advantage. If this paper is presented through sign language, fingerspelling should not be used. ● Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is contained in the modified test packs.
Before the test begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the list of pupils with any particular individual needs, for example, pupils who may need support from a scribe or a transcript made at the end of the test.
What to do at the start of the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check seating is appropriately spaced and that no pupil can see another pupil's test paper. ● Check pupils do not have mobile phones or other disruptive items. ● Check pupils do not have any materials or equipment that may give them extra help. ● Ensure each pupil has a copy of Paper 1: spelling.

How to introduce the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to brief pupils fully at the start of each test. Use these instructions to introduce Paper 1: spelling. The wording of these instructions can be adapted, provided the meaning is retained. <p><i>This is the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test</i> <i>Paper 1: spelling.</i></p> <p><i>The test will take around 15 minutes.</i></p> <p><i>You should have Paper 1: spelling in front of you.</i></p> <p><i>Write your name on the front of your answer booklet.</i></p> <p><i>When we are doing the test, if you want to change an answer, you should put a line through it or rub out the answer you do not want to be marked.</i></p> <p><i>You need to work on your own. You should think of your own answers and you should not talk about them with anyone else.</i></p> <p><i>Do you have any questions?</i></p> <p><i>Now turn to page 2.</i></p> <p><i>There is one practice question that we'll do together.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the practice spelling to the pupils. <p><i>The word is snow.</i></p> <p><i>The snow covered the branches.</i></p> <p><i>The word is snow.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check all pupils have understood that 'snow' should be written in the first blank space. Explain that you will now read the rest of the sentences and the missing words. Leave at least a 12-second gap between spellings. The target words may be repeated if needed. The 20 spellings should be read as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Give the spelling number Say: <i>The word is...</i> Read the context sentence Repeat: <i>The word is...</i> You should take care not to overemphasise spelling when reading out the words.
Please find the transcript of Paper 1: spelling on pages 4 and 5.	
What to do at the end of the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you need to make a transcript of a test script, complete it with the individual pupil at the end of the test under test conditions. Particular care should be taken to ensure accurate transcriptions are made and the pupil's spellings are not corrected or amended.
Marking the test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the key stage 1 test mark schemes to mark the test, following both the general guidance and any specific guidance for each question.

Spelling

Spelling 1: The word is **bell**.

The **bell** rings at the end of playtime.

The word is **bell**.

Spelling 2: The word is **bank**.

My auntie works in a **bank**.

The word is **bank**.

Spelling 3: The word is **goat**.

The **goat** lived on the mountain.

The word is **goat**.

Spelling 4: The word is **lake**.

There are lots of fish in the **lake**.

The word is **lake**.

Spelling 5: The word is **wider**.

The path is **wider** here.

The word is **wider**.

Spelling 6: The word is **skip**.

I can **skip** across the playground.

The word is **skip**.

Spelling 7: The word is **city**.

There are lots of buildings in the **city**.

The word is **city**.

Spelling 8: The word is **roots**.

The **roots** of the tree are under the ground.

The word is **roots**.

Spelling 9: The word is **lady**.

The **lady** sat at the front of the bus.

The word is **lady**.

Spelling 10: The word is **place**.

Please find your **place** and sit down.

The word is **place**.

Spelling 11: The word is **Monday**.

I am going to the park on **Monday**.

The word is **Monday**.

Spelling 12: The word is **called**.

My best friend is **called** Orla.

The word is **called**.

Spelling 13: The word is **active**.

Bats are **active** at night.

The word is **active**.

Spelling 14: The word is **shortest**.

Dan has the **shortest** hair in his class.

The word is **shortest**.

Spelling 15: The word is **another**.

I would like **another** pen please.

The word is **another**.

Spelling 16: The word is **knife**.

I use a **knife** and fork to eat my lunch.

The word is **knife**.

Spelling 17: The word is **wrote**.

Ethan **wrote** an excellent poem.

The word is **wrote**.

Spelling 18: The word is **fry**.

We will **fry** some eggs for breakfast.

The word is **fry**.

Spelling 19: The word is **hurries**.

Max **hurries** to get to school on time.

The word is **hurries**.

Spelling 20: The word is **fossil**.

There was a **fossil** in the museum.

The word is **fossil**.

- **You should now read all 20 sentences again.**
- Give the pupils the opportunity to make any changes they wish to their answers.
- At the end of the test say:

This is the end of the test. Please put down your pen or pencil.



Standards
& Testing
Agency

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