

2026 national curriculum tests

Key stage 1

English grammar, punctuation and spelling

Administering Paper 2: questions

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 2: questions

The following information explains how to administer the key stage 1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test Paper 2: questions.

Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paper 2: questions consists of a single test paper. ● It is expected that Paper 2 will take approximately 20 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 some practice questions for you to use to introduce the contexts and question types to pupils. Test administrators should allow additional time to go through the practice questions 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 not explain any subject-specific terminology. If any other word in a question is unfamiliar to pupils, you may explain it, or show them objects or pictures to help them understand. ● You should not give alternative explanations, for example, explain 'commands' as 'instructions' or name punctuation. ● 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. ● Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is contained in the modified test packs. ● The document Notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test¹ gives examples of how to read particular types of question in Paper 2. ● The examples below illustrate how to deal with some common situations. <p>Question: I don't understand the question. Answer: Read the question again and underline the key words that tell you what to do.</p> <p>Question: What does 'adverb' mean? Answer: I can't tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test.</p>

1. www.gov.uk/government/publications/notes-for-readers-in-the-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-short-answer-questions

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, a reader 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 2: questions.
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 2: questions. 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 2: questions.</i></p> <p><i>The test will take around 20 minutes.</i></p> <p><i>You should have Paper 2: questions in front of you.</i></p> <p><i>Write your name on the front of your test paper.</i></p> <p><i>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>Now turn to page 3.</i></p> <p><i>There are 2 practice questions that we'll do together.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the sentence to the pupils. <p><i>Circle the noun in the sentence below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Then read the sentence. <p><i>My favourite socks are yellow.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give pupils the opportunity to answer the question in their booklet. If any pupil is not sure what to do, explain what they need to do to answer the question. Read the sentence to the pupils. <p><i>Write the present tense of <u>rode</u> in the box.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Then read the sentence. <p><i>The children <u>rode</u> their bikes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give pupils the opportunity to answer the question in their booklet. If any pupil is not sure what to do, explain what they need to do to answer the question.

This section continues on the next page.

How to introduce the test (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell the pupils that: <i>There will be other types of question. If you are unsure how to answer, you should put up your hand to ask.</i> <i>You need to work on your own. You need to think of your own answers and you should not talk about them with anyone else.</i> <i>Try to answer all of the questions. If you can't answer a question, move on to the next one and come back to it later if you have time.</i> <i>Read each question carefully so you know what it is asking.</i> <i>Remember to check your work carefully.</i> <i>If you have any questions during the test, you should put your hand up and wait for someone to come over. Remember, we can't help you answer any of the test questions.</i> <i>Do you have any questions?</i> <i>Turn to page 4 and start the test.</i>
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 answers, including spelling, 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.

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