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)
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
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Notice to teachers
To reflect the changes at KS2, we have produced a new KS3 baseline test to support assessment of students who have been taught the new 2014 primary curriculum. We have also mapped the mark scheme to the Pearson Progression Scale, allowing teachers to better understand their students’ strengths and weaknesses. Teachers may continue to use the existing baseline tests if better suited to your centre’s needs.

Texts include: *Hard Times* and *Magical Mystery Treasure*

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.

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Text Details</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>19th-century fiction: extract from <em>Heidi</em> by Johanna Spyri</td>
<td>40 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>Imaginative or Transactional Writing</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 3</td>
<td>Non-fiction: extract from <em>Bookshop Memories</em> by George Orwell</td>
<td>50 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year 7: end-of-year test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Text Details</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>19th-century fiction: extract from <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em> by Lewis Carroll</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>Imaginative Writing</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 3</td>
<td>Non-fiction Text 1: extract from <em>Selected Letters of Raymond Chandler</em> by Frank MacShane Text 2: extract from <em>Understanding Cat Behaviour</em> by Dr Gordon Roberts</td>
<td>1 hour 15 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 4</td>
<td>Transactional Writing</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year 8: end-of-year test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Text Details</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>19th-century fiction: extract from <em>Oliver Twist</em> by Charles Dickens</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>Imaginative Writing*</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 3</td>
<td>Non-fiction Text 1: extract from <em>Notes from a Small Island</em> by Bill Bryson Text 2: ‘Bristol restaurant opts for ingredients plucked from supermarket skips’ from <em>The Guardian</em></td>
<td>1 hour 15 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 4</td>
<td>Transactional Writing*</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Text Details</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1, Section A</td>
<td>19th-century fiction: extract from <em>The Swiss Family Robinson</em> by Johann David Wyss</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1, Section B</td>
<td>Imaginative Writing</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2, Section A</td>
<td>Non-fiction Text 1: extract from <em>Taking on the World</em> by Ellen MacArthur Text 2: newspaper articles reporting on Ernest Shackleton</td>
<td>1 hour 15 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2, Section B</td>
<td>Transactional Writing</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Assessment journey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>19th Century Fiction</th>
<th>Imaginative Writing</th>
<th>Non-fiction</th>
<th>Transactional Writing</th>
<th>Structure and mark scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Baseline | • AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed  
• Heidi suitable for age group  
• extract ~250 words | • A05 and A06 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 A06 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 | • A05 and A06 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 A06 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 | • A05 and A06 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 A06 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% |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>19th Century Fiction</th>
<th>Imaginative Writing</th>
<th>Non-fiction</th>
<th>Transactional Writing</th>
<th>Structure and mark scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• AO1, AO2 and AO4 assessed</td>
<td>• AO5 and AO6 assessed</td>
<td>• AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4 assessed</td>
<td>• AO5 and AO6 assessed</td>
<td>• Two papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Q4 command word ‘evaluate’; scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• Question scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• synthesis and comparison</td>
<td>• Question scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• Uses GCSE mark scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>The Swiss Family Robinson</em> suitable for age group</td>
<td>• SPAG scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• Q3 scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• SPAG scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• Level 5 separated as stretch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• extract ~500 words</td>
<td>• Q6 command word ‘evaluate’; scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• seven questions</td>
<td>• Age related expectation for 2015 cohort: 56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• glossary of challenging words</td>
<td>• Q7b scaffolded with suggested points</td>
<td>• <em>Taking on the World</em> and Shackleton articles suitable for age group</td>
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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.
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.
- Teachers 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.