



Standards  
& Testing  
Agency

# Key stage 2 (KS2) English writing teacher assessment moderation

Self-led training resources: Exercise 8

2022

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## Introduction

This set of activities is designed for completion by local authority (LA) moderators and moderation managers. It addresses knowledge and skills needed to support the moderation of KS2 writing, as part of LA moderation visits.

The activities are designed for self-led learning and for completion independently as part of moderators' training. They can also be used within group and trainer-led moderation sessions. Discussion and reflection with colleagues are central to the moderation process and opportunities to do this when using these materials will support effective training.

## Training Exercise 8: Assessing pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment

This training exercise focuses on pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment.

The purpose of the exercise is to support moderators in:

- developing knowledge of the assessment arrangements for pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment
- expanding understanding of the pre-KS2 standards
- reflecting on how knowledge of the pre-key stage framework can support understanding of working towards the expected standard (WTS)
- validating or challenging a teacher judgement of WTS during a professional discussion.

The exercise should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. After completing the exercise, you may like to move on to Exercise 9 which examines pupil work against the pre-KS2 framework.

In addition to this exercise, you will need the following documents, on screen or in hard copy:

- [Teacher assessment \(TA\) frameworks at the end of KS2](#)
- [Pre-key stage 2: pupils working below the national curriculum assessment -TA framework.](#)

You may also wish to have the following materials available:

- [The engagement model](#)
- [KS2 assessment and reporting arrangements](#)
- [KS2 TA guidance.](#)

You can work through the activities and record your responses on a hard copy of this exercise document.

If working on screen, you can use the accompanying response document. This is editable and allows you to type and save your responses to some activities.

## Overview

This training exercise focuses on pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment described in the English writing frameworks, and aims to develop moderators' understanding of the assessment arrangements for these pupils. This knowledge may support you when challenging or validating a TA judgement of WTS.

After completing this exercise, you will have:

- stronger knowledge and understanding of the guidance related to the [pre-key stage 2 TA framework](#)
- familiarity with the pre-KS2 TA framework for writing
- an increased awareness of the distinctions between writing assessed as WTS and that assessed as Standard 6 (PK6) and Standard 5 (PK5).

## Your role

Your role as a moderator is to work alongside the teacher to build a picture of what a pupil can do from the evidence presented, benchmarked against your standardised knowledge of the frameworks. This is to validate or challenge a teacher's assessment judgement. Moderation by LA moderators supports the broader aim of quality assuring standards at a national level.

## Activity 1: Exploring the assessment of pupils working below the standards for the end of KS2

The role of LA moderator requires deep knowledge and understanding of the standards of national curriculum assessment and how the standards can be evidenced in pupils' written work.

As the writing selected for moderation will not always meet the standards described in the TA framework, moderators also require knowledge of the pre-KS2 TA framework to support the identification of pupils working below the TA standards.

Moderators visiting schools are less likely to encounter work by pupils assessed against the engagement model. However, for a more complete understanding of the ways in which pupils working below the end of key stage standards can be assessed, it may be useful for moderators to know when that model is applied.

In this exercise, you will be asked to reflect on your knowledge of the processes for assessing children working below the standards of national curriculum assessment in writing, and then to review the pre-KS2 writing framework.

### Activity 1a: Reflecting on prior knowledge

Reflect on your own knowledge of the assessment of children working below the standards of national curriculum assessment, and on the levels of understanding of this aspect of assessment that you encounter during visits to schools.

- if you are unable to validate a teacher judgement of WTS, how confident are you at following and explaining the arrangements for assessing children working below the national standards?



You may like to record your thoughts on the notepad.








## Notepad

- I feel confident that ...
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- I would like to develop my knowledge and understanding of ...

Now read the table on the next page, which outlines all the assessment arrangements for the end of KS2.

Assessing pupils in English (writing) at the end of KS2

Assessing pupils in English (writing) at the end of KS2		
Pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment		Pupils who have completed the programme of study (PoS) KS2 English (writing) and are working at the standard of national curriculum assessment
Pupils not yet engaged in subject-specific study	<p>Pupils engaged in subject-specific study and:</p> <p>... are working below national standards</p> <p>or</p> <p>... have not completed the English (writing) programme of study and are moving on to KS3</p> <p>or</p> <p>... cannot communicate in English</p>	 Assess against the TA frameworks at the end of KS2 (English writing). Award: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WTS</li> <li>• working at the expected standard (EXS)</li> <li>• or working at greater depth</li> </ul>
 Assess using the engagement model 	 Assess using the pre-KS2 TA framework 	
Assess progress and achievement in five areas of engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploration</li> <li>• realisation</li> <li>• anticipation</li> <li>• persistence</li> <li>• initiation</li> </ul>	Award pre-key stage standards 1-6: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PK1</li> <li>• PK2</li> <li>• PK3</li> <li>• PK4</li> <li>• PK5</li> <li>• PK6</li> </ul>	



## Key points

### Statutory TA at the end of KS2

The [KS2 assessment and reporting arrangements](#) outline the requirement for teachers to understand the TA frameworks, the pre-key stage frameworks and the engagement model, and to know how to select the relevant framework for their pupils. In instances in which you need to validate or challenge a judgement of WTS, your good knowledge of these assessment arrangements may support teachers in reaching an accurate judgement.

The engagement model and pre-key stage TA frameworks were developed in response to the [Rochford Review](#) of the assessment arrangements for pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment, and the subsequent public consultation. One of the guiding principles behind the review's recommendations was that primary statutory assessment arrangements should enable all pupils to demonstrate attainment and progress of all kinds. These recommendations also resulted in the improved alignment of assessment arrangements. Pupils can progress through the primary statutory assessment arrangements – from the engagement model to the pre-key stage standards and then the TA framework standards.

Pupils working below the standard of national curriculum assessment may be described as 'engaged in subject specific study' or 'not engaged in subject specific study'. Subject specific study occurs where a pupil can demonstrate recognisable and specific skills, knowledge and understanding in English language comprehension and reading, English writing and mathematics.

Pupils working below national curriculum assessment standards who are engaged in subject-specific study are assessed against the pre-key stage standards, while those who are not engaged are assessed against the engagement model.

The engagement model replaced P scales 1 – 4 in 2021 – 22. It is a formative TA tool for pupils working below the standard of the national curriculum and not engaged in subject-specific study. Pupils assessed using this model are usually described as having severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. They operate at very early stages of cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.

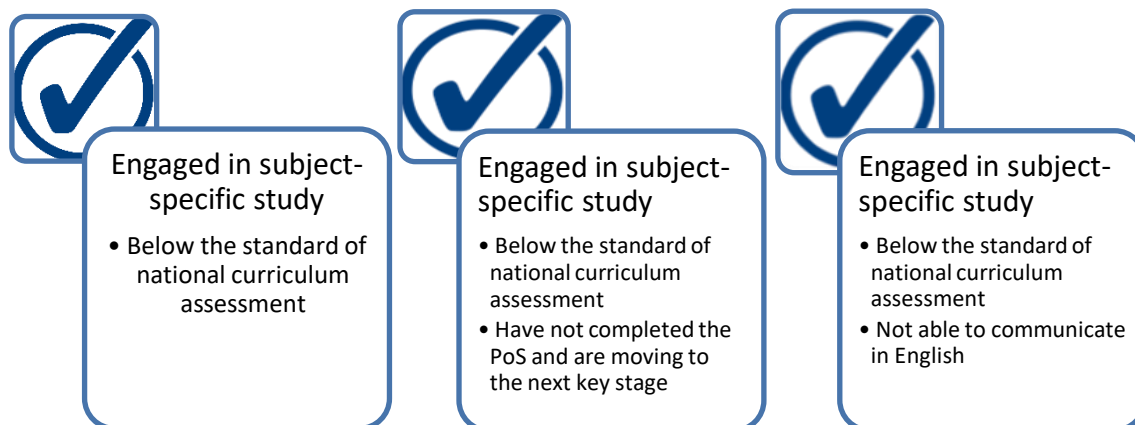
Schools are required to inform the Department of Education which pupils in both key stages are being assessed using this model, but not to submit data on individual pupils' achievements and progress.

Further information on the model can be found by following this link: [the engagement model](#).

## The pre-key stage standards

Pupils who are working below the standard of national curriculum assessment and are engaged in subject-specific study are teacher assessed at the end of KS2 in writing, mathematics and reading against the statutory pre-key stage standards.

This will include pupils who are:



The pre-KS2 standards for English writing are:

- PK6 (working at the KS1 EXS)
- PK5 (WTS in KS1)
- PK1 – 4 (these standards are shared with the pre-KS1 TA framework)

The pre-KS2 TA framework should only be used as a summative assessment at the end of the key stage. For formative assessment, teachers should assess individual pieces of pupils' work in line with their school's more detailed assessment policy and not against these standards.

The pre-key stage standards follow the same principles as the TA framework.

- each of the six standards of attainment contains 'pupil can' statements on which teachers base their judgements.
- teachers are required to evidence these judgements with a broad range of writing from a pupil's day to day work in the classroom, which demonstrates that the pupil meets the standard described overall.
- teachers should be confident that pupils have met the standard(s) preceding the one at which they judge them to be working. However, they are not required to have specific evidence for that judgement. A pupil's work which demonstrates a standard is met is sufficient to show that they are working above the preceding standards.

Reflection point: Are there any issues you have uncovered so far in this exercise? Are there any points that require clarification, or questions that have been raised? Record them here:



### Pupils working at the pre-key stage standard and moderation

There is no statutory moderation of TA judgements made against the pre-key stage standards. (However, the guidance in the pre-KS2 framework recommends that judgements made using the pre-key stage standards are, as far as possible, moderated internally and with other schools to quality assure those judgements.)

Work by pupils already assessed against the pre-key stage standards at the time of a moderation visit will not form part of the sample selected by LA moderators for review. The KS2 assessment guidance stipulates that moderators select work by pupils who are representative of their cohort and working within the standards described in the TA framework for writing.

However, should a moderator need to challenge a teacher judgement of WTS, an examination of the pupil's work against the pre-key stage framework during the professional discussion may help reach agreement on the final standard awarded. In Exercise 9, you will have the opportunity to examine a work set to determine whether a pupil is working within or below the TA framework at the end of KS2, using the pre-key stage framework to support your deliberations.

To be assessed at any standard, a pupil must have already met the 'pupil can' statements in the preceding standard(s). Therefore, good knowledge of the pre-key stage framework supports the application of the TA framework, and specifically the WTS framework. In Exercise 9 you can also examine a work set to explore the distinctions between PK5 and PK6, and this may develop your understanding of those two standards.

Before moving on to examine pupil work in Exercise 9, you might first find it useful to engage in Activity 2, which supports close examination of and reflection on the pre-KS2 framework for writing and how it compares to WTS.

## Activity 2: Reflecting on the pre-KS2 framework for writing, and comparing the statements for WTS and for PK5 and 6

The next set of activities in this exercise asks you to read and reflect on the pre-KS2 TA framework, and then to consider the distinctions between PK5 and 6, and the WTS at the end of KS2.

### Activity 2a: Reflecting on the pre-KS2 framework

Read through the pre-KS2 English framework below and consider these questions.

- is there anything that strikes you on reading the pre-KS2 standards?
- which of the pre-key stage standards might you encounter during a moderation visit?



Record your response by annotating the framework or by using the notepad.



Notepad

- is there anything that strikes you on reading the pre-KS2 standards?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- which of the pre-key stage standards might you encounter during a moderation visit?

Pre-KS2: pupils working below the national curriculum assessment standard – TA framework English (writing)

Qualifiers and examples

Some of the statements within the standards contain qualifiers ('some', 'many' and 'most') to indicate the extent to which pupils should demonstrate the knowledge or skill required. Where qualifiers are used, they have consistent meaning: 'most' indicates that the statement is generally met with only occasional errors; 'many' indicates that the statement is met frequently but not yet consistently; and 'some' indicates that the skill/knowledge is starting to be acquired and is demonstrated correctly on occasion but is not yet consistent or frequent. Some of the statements contain examples. These do not dictate the evidence required but show only how that statement might be met.

### Standard 1

#### Composition

The pupil can:

- say an appropriate word to complete a sentence when the adult pauses (e.g. 'We're going to the...zoo/park/shop/beach').

#### Transcription

The pupil can:

- draw lines or shapes on a small or a large scale (e.g. on paper or in the air or sand).

### Standard 2

#### Composition

The pupil can:

- say a clause to complete a sentence that is said aloud (e.g. 'When we went to the beach today, ... we ate ice cream / I played in the sand / it was hot').

#### Transcription

The pupil can:

- form correctly most of the 10+ lower-case letters in Standard 2 of English language comprehension and reading
- identify or write these 10+ graphemes on hearing corresponding phonemes.

### Standard 3

#### Composition

The pupil can:

- make up their own phrases or short sentences to express their thoughts aloud about stories or their experiences
- write a caption or short phrase using the graphemes that they already know.

#### Transcription

The pupil can:

- form correctly most of the 20+ lower-case letters in Standard 3 of English language comprehension and reading
- identify or write these 20+ graphemes on hearing the corresponding phonemes
- spell words (with known graphemes) by identifying the phonemes and representing the phonemes with graphemes (e.g. in, cat, pot).

### Standard 4

#### Composition

The pupil can:

- make up their own sentences and say them aloud, after discussion with the teacher
- write down one of the sentences that they have rehearsed.

#### Transcription

The pupil can:

- form most lower-case letters correctly
- identify or write the 40+ graphemes in Standard 4 of English language comprehension and reading on hearing the corresponding phonemes
- spell words by identifying the phonemes and representing the phonemes with graphemes, including words with consonant clusters and simple digraphs (e.g. frog, hand, see, chop, storm, splash)
- spell a few common exception words (e.g. I, the, he, said, of).

## Standard 5 (working towards the KS1 expected standard)

### Composition

The pupil can, after discussion with the teacher:

- write sentences that are sequenced to form a short narrative (real or fictional)
- demarcate some sentences with capital letters and full stops.

### Transcription

The pupil can:

- segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling some words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others
- spell some common exception words\*
- form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing
- use spacing between words.

## Standard 6 (working at the KS1 expected standard)

### Composition

The pupil can, after discussion with the teacher:

- write simple, coherent narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real or fictional)
- write about real events, recording these simply and clearly
- demarcate most sentences in their writing with capital letters and full stops, and use question marks correctly when required
- use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently
- use co-ordination (e.g. or / and / but) and some subordination (e.g. when / if / that / because) to join clauses.

### Transcription

The pupil can:

- segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically plausible attempts at others
- spell many common exception words\*
- form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

## Key points


- the six standards describe attainment in two key areas of writing – composition and transcription – and the statements within each standard are grouped under these two categories.
- what is perhaps most striking is the range of attainment described across the framework. For example, in composition, pupils working at PK1 can orally complete an adult's sentence; while pupils working at PK6 can write simple, coherent narratives after discussion with their teacher. This reflects the realisation of the aims of the Rochford Review, namely that statutory assessment arrangements encompass all types of achievement.
- the statements describing attainment in transcription in PK1-4 remind us that pupils working within these standards are in the very early stages of their journey towards securing the phonic knowledge necessary to achieving the EXS in reading and writing by the end of KS1. Pre-key stage standards 1 – 4 for writing are the same for pre-KS1 and 2.
- the 'pupil can' statements in PK5 and PK6 match those within WTS and EXS in the KS1 TA framework. Thus, pupils working below the standards of national curriculum assessment for KS2, may be assessed either as working at a standard equivalent to KS1 standards (PK5 and PK6), or below the standards for KS1 (PK1-4).
- as work by pupils working within this framework does not form part of the sample selected by moderators for moderation, you are unlikely to be presented with work evidencing PK1-4 during a school visit. There will, however, be occasions when you may need to challenge a teacher's WTS judgement, and therefore an understanding of the distinctions between the standards in the pre-key stage framework and the WTS in the TA framework for KS2 can be useful.
- an understanding of PK6 also supports understanding of WTS, as pupils must have secured all the 'pupil can' statements in this standard before being awarded WTS. Checking that a pupil has achieved all the PK6 statements may support the process of validating or challenging judgements at WTS.



## Activity 2b: Comparing the standards

Compare the statements describing PK5, PK6 and WTS in the table below.

- how able are you to articulate the distinctions between the three standards and summarise how the evidence for the standards might differ?

You may like to summarise your thoughts on the notepad. 



Notepad

'Pupil can' statements for English writing (KS2): PK5, PK6 and WTS

PK Standard 5 (working towards the KS1 expected standard)	PK Standard 6 (working at the KS1 expected standard)	WTS at KS2
<p>Composition The pupil can, after discussion with the teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write sentences that are sequenced to form a short narrative (real or fictional)</li> </ul> <p>• demarcate some sentences with capital letters and full stops.</p>	<p>Composition The pupil can, after discussion with the teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write simple, coherent narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real or fictional)</li> <li>• write about real events, recording these simply and clearly</li> <li>• use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently</li> <li>• use co-ordination (for example, or/and/but) and some subordination (for example, when/if/that/because) to join clauses.</li> </ul> <p>• demarcate most sentences in their writing with capital letters and full stops, and use question marks correctly when required</p>	<p>The pupil can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write for a range of purposes</li> <li>• in narratives, describe settings and characters</li> <li>• use paragraphs to organise ideas</li> <li>• in non-narrative writing, use simple devices to structure the writing and support the reader (for example, headings, subheadings, bullet points)</li> </ul> <p>• use capital letters, full stops, question marks, commas for lists and apostrophes for contraction mostly correctly</p>
<p>Transcription The pupil can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling some words correctly and making phonically plausible attempts at others</li> <li>• spell some common exception words (<b>see English Appendix 1</b>)</li> <li>• form lowercase letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place</li> <li>• form lowercase letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing</li> </ul>	<p>Transcription The pupil can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically plausible attempts at others</li> <li>• spell many common exception words (see English Appendix 1)</li> <li>• form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lowercase letters</li> </ul>	<p>The pupil can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spell correctly most words from the year 3/year 4 spelling list, and some words from the year 5/year 6 spelling list (see English Appendix 1)</li> <li>• write legibly.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use spacing between words.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.</li> </ul>	
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## Key points

- the pre-key stage framework states that pupils working at PK5 (WTS at KS1) and PK6 pupils (working at the KS1 EXS) should demonstrate the ‘pupil can’ statements for composition ‘after discussion with the teacher’. This reflects the acknowledgement in the national curriculum that writing may be produced through discussion with the teacher and peers, and that discussion and oral rehearsal with teachers is more typical of pupils working at KS1 standards. However, written work assessed against PK5 and 6 must still be produced independently, as detailed in the [KS1 TA guidance](#). Thus, the stipulation that assessed work should be independent is the same for all three standards in this table, despite the difference in wording.
- the progression in writing in different forms is clear across the three standards: moving from an expectation that pupils can write short narratives (PK5), to pupils being able to write for a ‘range of purposes’ and include descriptive detail in narrative writing (WTS). In the [exemplification](#) materials, for example, the work collection by the pupil working at WTS includes a variety of narratives, a letter, an argument piece, a biography and descriptive writing for different purposes.
- at PK6, pupils can achieve coherence through the mostly accurate use of the present and past tenses, and the use of co-ordinate and some subordinate clauses. At WTS, writing is further organised to enhance meaning using paragraphs and, where appropriate, headings and subheadings.
- the control of tenses is not specified at WTS in the TA framework. (To attain EXS, pupils must use verb tenses consistently and correctly throughout their writing.) However, to attain WTS, pupils must have attained all the ‘pupil can’ statements in the standard below (PK6) and therefore must use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently (namely the simple and progressive present and past tenses). So, a pupil unable to demonstrate that level of control over the tenses could not be awarded WTS. This is a good example of how knowledge of PK6 can support a fuller understanding of the WTS standard.
- the pre-key stage framework also usefully supports understanding of the handwriting requirements for WTS. At WTS, handwriting must be legible – as opposed to joined for EXS. The PK6 standard states that pupils must be able to form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lowercase letters and use spacing between words that reflects the

size of the letters. Thus, to achieve WTS, pupils' handwriting must meet these PKS statements as well as being legible.

- the statements describing punctuation and spelling clearly chart progression across these three standards.

## Summary

In Exercise 8, you have:

- explored the guidance related to the pre-KS2 teacher assessment framework
- familiarised yourself with the pre-KS2 TA framework for writing
- reflected on the distinctions between the statements describing pupil work at WTS and pupil work at PK5 and 6.

## Next

Please move on to KS2 Training Exercise 9 which examines work against both the WTS and pre-key stage frameworks.