

Notes for Y6 teachers regarding end of KS2 writing assessment

To ensure that schools have adequately prepared for their statutory assessments of Year 6 children, as well as for potential moderations, we have put together the following tips.

Writing – what needs to be in place by end of June:

Final judgements must be **based on the TAF**, not on the HfL criteria (or any other criteria). Pupil writing must evidence that each of the pupil can statements in the standard have been attained to be awarded that standard.

Think about the **quantity, type and variety of writing** needed for sound judgements. The exemplifications show not only the standards expected, but also the quantity and range (evidence base) of independent writing required.

A **range of writing** is needed. One piece can evidence a number of the ‘pupil can’ statements, but broader evidence is required to confidently assess against the TAF. For writing to meet the EXS and GDS there need to be examples of a child showing effective writing where grammatical structures are chosen for effect. This requires opportunities to do this in different text types where, for example, different registers or passive voice are utilised.

For GDS, evidence of pupils **drawing independently from reading** and consciously controlling **levels of formality** are required. Refer to GDS exemplification.

There need to be an adequate number of **independent pieces** of writing. For schools using a Pie Corbett approach or similar, writing needs to be at the ‘innovate’ stage and not be heavily modelled. If a number of children in the class have very similar sounding pieces, this would be a concern.

The explicit reference to ‘**awareness of the reader**’ in the ‘pupil can’ statements emphasises the importance of the writer’s intended audience. When setting tasks, be clear about who is the intended audience, and the purpose of the writing. Allow opportunities for pupils to select their own intended audience. Give plenty of opportunities to read their writing aloud.

Derive writing from reading. During reading, consider how the reader is affected, and how the author elicited these responses.

Avoid these pitfalls:

Lack of effective dialogue and sloppy punctuation of dialogue.

Dialogue is needed to meet EXS.

The comma splice (run-on sentence).

Go back to basics and re-teach the concept of a sentence/ phrase/ clause. This aids the accuracy of use of commas for clarity.

Not enough writing.

Keep writing! Ensure extended writing is continued during SATs preparation.

Teach grammar through the writing.

Not enough time devoted to crafting and explicit teaching of the writing process.

Develop a writer’s workshop culture in the classroom. Make the writing process explicit and allow time to critique and craft the writing, building autonomy over the year. Consider the use of editing flaps, or leaving the left hand side of the exercise book blank for redrafting sections.

‘Middle of the road’ writing: *Be explicit about what formal writing is so that pupils can manipulate vocabulary and sentence structure, consciously selecting formal and informal features for effect/audience.*

Lack of range of cohesive devices so work lacks flow.

Inaccurate or limited punctuation

Allow pupils time to edit and improve the punctuation used. GDS writers must also use the range of punctuation taught at KS2 accurately and to good effect (i.e. not over-use the semi-colon.) Use the punctuation tracker on the KS2 Optional record sheet to help to diagnose any issues or gaps.

Weak/poor spelling of Y3/4 statutory word list & spelling rules taught KS1 and KS2-

e.g. suffix endings, homophones, high frequency words, unstressed vowels. Crack the Y3/4 words before the Y5/6 as these are the ones the pupils use most in their writing. (Evidence of Y5/6 words is required for expected, but can be evidenced through dictation.) Model how to spell when modelling writing.

Commonly queried areas:

Editing – allow children to keep drafting/editing work – not necessary to have a copied out ‘final’ finished piece every time. There should be evidence of pupils editing for both technical and compositional reasons.

Success criteria – good practice to use these, but they need to *be not too directive* by mid-Spring Term for the writing that will inform the final judgements.

Marking – aim is to move away from over-directing children to the errors in/by Spring Term, towards indicating that there is an error(s) in a section or piece of work. Peer collaborative improvement is also absolutely to be encouraged.

Spelling – Year 3-6 word lists (in the NC) are statutory and should be evidenced through dictation or spelling tests, if not evidenced through independent writing.

A particular weakness – this applies to the ‘pupil can’ statement, not the child. Teachers can now use their discretion to ensure that, *on occasion*, a particular weakness does not prevent an accurate judgement being made of a pupil’s overall attainment.

Please see Assessment Team blogs for further detail. Links below.

Links and resources

HfL Blogs

There are a host of blogs from the English and Maths teams that can be of assistance. The following from the Assessment team are specifically addressing the requirements of the TAF for statutory assessment.

10 Key Updates for 2018 KS2 writing assessment

www.hertsforlearning.co.uk/blog/10-key-updates-2018-ks2-writing-assessment

Declaration of Independence

www.hertsforlearning.co.uk/blog/declaration-independence

A very particular weakness

www.hertsforlearning.co.uk/blog/very-particular-weakness

STA resources

Further resources are available on NCA tools including moderator training materials and further writing examples.

