

Getting it 'Write'

Secure Teacher Assessment of Key Stage 2 Writing

Introduction

This document is designed to support Year 6 teachers in making accurate, consistent, and confident teacher assessment judgements in writing at the end of Key Stage 2. It aligns with the statutory requirements set out in the following documents:

[Pre-key stage 2: pupils working below the national curriculum assessment standard \(PKS\)](#)

[Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment Frameworks \(TAF\)](#)

[Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment Guidance](#)

Making secure teacher assessment judgements

To make secure judgements, teachers must draw on three key areas of professional expertise:

- 1. Subject knowledge:** Teachers need to have an in-depth knowledge of the English programme of study and associated appendices (spelling, and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation), relating to writing, in the 2014 national curriculum
- 2. Understand the criteria:** Teachers need to understand each 'pupil can' statements within each standard of the Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF) for writing. Then they need to be able to recognise the 'pupil can' statements in the pupil's writing.
- 3. Professional judgment:** Teachers need to know whether there is enough evidence to judge that a child has met the 'pupil can' statement.

The 'Secure Fit' Model and the 'Particular Weakness' Clause

The TAF is a secure fit model. This means that a pupil must meet all of the 'pupil can' statements within a standard to be awarded that standard, *and* all the criteria in the preceding standards.

However, teachers can 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. (Note: 'Particular weaknesses relate to the writing – to a whole or part of one, or maximum two, 'pupil can' statements - NOT to the child.) The overall standard of attainment, set by the 'pupil can' statements, remains the same.

Key questions to consider, on a pupil-by-pupil basis, when considering making a teacher judgement taking into account a 'particular (writing) weakness':

- Is the particular weakness in a part or whole of a 'pupil can' statement(s) fundamental to the holistic judgement of the writing?
- How much impact does this weakness have on the writing as a whole? Does it significantly impact the pupil's ability to meet the standard?
- Is the rest of the evidence consistently strong across the other statements?

For further guidance about a 'particular weakness' please read: 6.1 A more flexible approach <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance>

⚠ Important: The overall standard of attainment remains unchanged. The ‘particular weakness’ clause is not a lowering of standards, but a recognition of the complexity of writing and the need for holistic judgement.

Evidence

Evidence should come from day-to-day work in the classroom and can be drawn from a variety of sources: the only requirement is that it supports the judgement being made. The type of evidence will vary from school to school, class to class, and even pupil to pupil. A pupil’s work in books will often have all the evidence a teacher needs, but evidence might come from a number of potential additional sources, such as projects, assessment notes, classroom tests and assessments.

Take note of the **Qualifiers: some, many, most**

Statements contain qualifiers to indicate that pupils will not always consistently demonstrate the skill required:

Some – indicates that the skill/knowledge is starting to be acquired, and is demonstrated correctly **on occasion**, but **is not consistent or frequent**

Many – more than some – not as many as most

Most – indicates that the statement is generally met with only occasional errors

Exemplification and ‘independence’

It is not statutory to use the exemplification, but the exemplification does provide concrete examples of what the criteria *could* look like.

It exemplifies the “secure fit” model – some pupils meet almost all the criteria for a higher standard.

It shows evidence for writing that is allowed as “working independently”: writing evidence has been redrafted by the pupil. This is acceptable as independent work.

Writing is likely to be independent if it:

- emerges from a text, topic, visit, or curriculum experience in which pupils have had opportunities to discuss and rehearse what is to be written about
- enables pupils to use their own ideas and **provides them with an element of choice**, for example writing from the perspective of a character they have chosen themselves
- has been **edited, if required, by the pupil without the support of the teacher**, although this **may be in response to self, peer, or group evaluation**
- is produced by pupils who have, if required, sought out classroom resources, such as dictionaries or thesauruses, **without prompting** to do so by the teacher

Writing is not independent if it has been:

- modelled or heavily scaffolded
- copied or paraphrased
- edited as a result of direct intervention by a teacher or other adult, for example when the pupil has been directed to change specific words for greater impact, where incorrect or omitted punctuation has been indicated, or when incorrectly spelt words have been identified by an adult for the pupil to correct
- produced with the support of electronic aids that automatically provide correct spelling, synonyms, punctuation, or predictive text

- supported by detailed success criteria that specifically direct pupils as to what to include, or where to include it, in their writing, such as directing them to include specific vocabulary, grammatical features, or punctuation

A piece of writing may provide evidence of a pupil demonstrating some 'pupil can' statements independently, but not others. For example, a pupil may produce an independent piece of writing which meets many of the statements relating to composition and the use of grammar, but does not demonstrate independent spelling where the teacher has provided the pupil with domain specific words or corrected their spelling. **This does not mean that the entire piece is not independent.** It may be used to evidence 'pupil can' statements for which support has not been provided. ([KS2 TA guidance](#) section 6.2)

Key point: You don't know which children can independently identify and fix their errors, until you put it to the test. For example, give work back to pupils, with a highlighter if necessary, and ask them to highlight all the words they think they have spelt incorrectly. (Or for a poor speller – ask them to highlight all the words they know they have spelt correctly.)

You don't have to use a tick-list but –

- Teachers do need to assess against each statement
- Teachers do need to be able to identify evidence to support each judgement

Working towards expected standard

The pupil can:

'Write for a range of purposes'

e.g. description, balanced argument, narrative, letter, report, explanation etc.

See the left column in the table [here](#) on page 18, for a description of possible writing features that would evidence this statement at WTS.

'Use paragraphs to organise ideas'

Paragraphs help to structure text; every new paragraph starts on a new line. We start a new paragraph to signal that the person, place, time or topic of the sentences has changed. In fiction text, paragraphs are usually used to mark breaks in time. A new paragraph may also be started if the point of view switches from one character to another. A good way to encourage children to use paragraphs in a story is to introduce this idea at the planning stage. A story map or story mountain with boxes can help children to think about each paragraph before they start writing.

In a non-fiction text, a paragraph is a group of sentences that usually all have one theme in common. One useful strategy to encourage children to use paragraphs when writing a non-fiction text is to give them a spider diagram with sub-headings for making notes on, or other graphic organisers.

'In narratives, describe settings and characters'

Examples of describing settings: 'a glorious sunny day...', 'a happy place to live.'

Examples of describing characters: 'eyes...like the stars of the night sky', 'eyes...as brown as bark'.

'In non-narrative writing, use simple devices to structure the writing and support the reader (e.g. headings, sub-headings, bullet points)'

'Using capital letters, full stops, question marks, commas for lists and apostrophes for contraction **mostly correctly'**

Secure the sentence: ensure that pupils are able to punctuate a sentence correctly, mostly avoiding comma splices and the run-on sentence.

'Spelling **most words correctly* (years 3 and 4)'**

'Spelling **some words correctly* (years 5 and 6)'**

The frameworks refer to the word lists within the spelling appendix to the [national curriculum](#) to exemplify words that pupils should be able to spell. At KS2, the lists for years 3, 4, 5 and 6 within the national curriculum are statutory. These are a mixture of words pupils frequently use in their writing and words they often spell incorrectly. As these form part of the curriculum, and should be assessed on an ongoing basis. They should generally be evident in pupils' writing.

The expectation at WTS is that pupils can spell the Y3/4 statutory word list **mostly** correctly and spell **some** of the words from the Y/5 statutory word list. The WTS expectation includes the correct use of apostrophes for possession: singular, plural, regular, and irregular.

Please note: Pupil work presented as WTS in which there are significant errors with the key stage 1 (KS1) common exception words, and in which spelling is not generally phonically

plausible, would not meet PK6 requirements. Therefore, it could not be validated as meeting the WTS standard, even if any year 3 / year 4 words included are correct.

'Write legibly' 1

A pupil's standard of handwriting should be evident throughout their writing. When assessing it, teachers should consider evidence from a pupil's independent writing to judge whether the statements have been met. Handwriting books or handwriting exercises can provide additional evidence, but these would not be sufficient on their own.

When assessing handwriting, referring to the Pre-KS2 standards can help clarify what is meant by 'writing legibly' by providing a foundation to work backwards from: -

In standard...	The pupil can:
Pre-KS2 standards 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> form correctly most of the 10+ lower-case letters in Standard 2 of English language comprehension and reading
Pre-KS2 standards 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> form correctly most of the 20+ lower-case letters in Standard 3 of English language comprehension and reading
Pre-KS2 standards 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form most lowercase letters correctly
Pre-KS2 standards 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
Pre-KS2 standards 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 letter
WTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write legibly.¹ <p><i>1 At this standard, there is no specific requirement for a pupil's handwriting to be joined.</i></p>

See also: [KS2 Moderator TE5 Exploring evidence systematically WTS](#)
[KS2 Moderator TE9 Distinguishing between PKS and WTS](#)
[KS2 Moderator TE6 Distinguishing between WTS and EXS](#)

Working at expected standard

The pupil can:

'Write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows good awareness of the reader (e.g. the use of the first person in a diary; direct address in instructions and persuasive writing)'

See the middle column in the table [here](#) on page 18, for a description of possible writing features that would evidence this statement.

Ensure that purposeful tasks enable the pupil to demonstrate an awareness of the intended audience, so pupils are able to adopt vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires, e.g. (from STA exemplification- Morgan) the polite recommendation in the letter of thanks, the impersonal constructions in the graffiti argument and technical vocabulary in the science piece. The explicit reference to awareness of the reader emphasises the importance of the writer's intended audience.

Key points:

- When setting tasks, be clear about who is the intended audience, (who are you writing *for*, or *to*?) and the purpose of the writing.
- As far as possible, use real audiences and purposes too: e.g. to make a class book to share with parents, to entertain people in a waiting room at the doctors, to write school letters for parent, to persuade your MP to make a change, etc.
- Discuss your audience and what they might need or want from you.
- Read as a writer (1): Read a number of mentor texts (and a non-example) to draw up a list of things that you will need to do to be successful at the writing task.
- Read as a writer (2): During reading, consider how the reader is affected, and how the author elicited these responses. Encourage magpie-ing words, phrases, situations, story arcs, dialogue, literacy techniques, flashback devices, sentence rhythms and structures etc.
- Allow opportunities for pupils to select their own form (genre), purpose or intended audience.
- Give plenty of opportunities for children to read their writing aloud.
- When giving feedback, ask the writer, "What **effect** do you want to have on the reader?" (e.g. to scare, intrigue, inform, persuade etc.) rather than, "Can you add in a fronted adverbial, an adjective, a noun phrase...etc.?"

See [Re-thinking 'success criteria': a simple device to support pupils' writing](#)

See also [KS2 Moderator TE13 Purpose](#)

'In narratives, describe settings, characters and atmosphere'

It should be noted that 'narrative' is defined as an account of connected events, real or imagined, which can include stories, plays, poetry, recounts, reports, biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, letters, diaries, news broadcasts etc.

Description of settings, characters and atmosphere can be depicted in various ways, e.g. through the use of descriptive noun phrases, use of the senses, or through characters' thoughts, actions, reactions and relationships with others. (Note: description within narrative is not interpreted in a reductive manner- as the examples below show.)

Use noun phrases, adjectives, verbs, the senses, figurative language, power of three, varied sentence structure and rhythm-

- **To better imagine/paint a picture** (Fluffy clouds/blazing sun/tranquil sea/ porcelain skin/cornflower blue eyes/the classroom was a zoo)
- to **show, not tell** the reader something about a character (Clenched fist/furrowed brow/He couldn't *even* tell Jamal (his best friend).)
- **to build tension (use of short sentences)**
- **to share inner thoughts** (Yesterday, I would have jumped at the chance)

From the STA exemplification: Morgan (EXS)

'Ana's mother stroked her on the back.'

Morgan shares seemingly small details from the scene to help the reader to picture what is happening and to share information about the characters and their relationship without telling the reader explicitly. This technique is used later in the story too: (**'...allowed her clear tears fall freely down her cheeks'**).

Morgan (EXS)

'...is this me? Has she climbed into my mind?'

Rhetorical questions as Macbeth questions whether he can go through with the murder give information about his character and serve to create tension at this pivotal moment.

Leigh (EXS)

'Determined to escape'

A fronted subordinate clause foregrounds Lauren's determination and resourcefulness...

'Should I risk my life...?'

Modal verb expresses Jack's doubt and uncertainty.

'Everything was still apart from Jack...'

The atmospheric stillness contrasts with Jack's mother's agitation and excitement...

'Integrate dialogue in narratives to convey character and advance the action'

To evidence this statement, ask the following three questions:

How well is the dialogue integrated into the piece?

How well does the dialogue convey character?

How well does the dialogue advance the action?

To achieve this statement, read as writers to see how authors use dialogue to advance action or convey characters. You can explore with the class, through multiple examples drawn from reading, how authors use dialogue:

- to reveal character, background and culture through their tone, word choice, voice and what they choose to say, or not say. In giving them a 'voice' the character also becomes 'real'.
- To advance the story by introducing new information, backfilling the story, or creating conflict
- To present a character's perspective on events, or points of view – even if only hinted at through 'tone'.
- To 'reveal details about the setting, culture or backstory.

- To show relationships between characters: power imbalances, dynamic, degrees of friendships and family connections. For example, a child calling someone ‘Dad’, rather than ‘Sir’ etc.

Being able to *integrate* dialogue relates to how well dialogue fits into the ongoing narration or description within the piece. It suggests that dialogue flows from what preceded it, rather than standing out as a separate and distinct element. The events or description that follows continue the piece without the sense of an interruption. The dialogue should not take the reader out of the action but should instead further involve them in the piece, supported by effective reporting clauses.

A key aspect to evidence this pupil can statement is that the dialogue has been placed deliberately and developed beyond brief exclamations or statements.

Characters listen and respond to each other in a two-way exchange. There is often also a secure grasp of the punctuation of direct speech (though this is not addressed by the statement itself).

See too [KS2 Moderator TE Dialogue](#)

‘select vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires, doing this mostly appropriately (e.g. using contracted forms in dialogues in narrative; using passive verbs to affect how information is presented; using modal verbs to suggest degrees of possibility) ‘

Pupils should apply their knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structures to writing for different contexts, which may include those that are formal or informal.

Key to achieving and evidencing this pupil can statement is that the writer understands the purpose, form and audience and the expectations and needs of their reader. This is, in fact, all about register and selecting appropriate vocabulary and grammatical forms to establish that register. ([See Activity 3 page 18 in the 2023 KS2 Moderator TE 14](#))

Ensure too that pupils understand the sentence and also teach functional grammar: what is the effect on your reader of writing your story in the past tense, or present tense? First or third person? When to use the contracted form? And how passive verbs affect how information is presented. Why is a relative clause useful when writing an academic text? Why use a relative clause? Or as dash instead of a comma or bracket? When is something repetition for effect, and when is it just a poorly structured or boring piece of writing? When is a short or simple sentence more effective than a complex sentence? How do sentences contribute to rhythm or build suspense?

Fiction:

Does the use of language fit the style and formality of the genre? For example:

- using archaic language appropriately, to support the effect.
- in dialogue, using contracted forms, ‘multi-word’ verbs (e.g. ‘find out’ rather than ‘discover’), question tags, or vernacular forms.
- consistency within the use of historically accurate cultural reference points.
- repetition of key language/sentence structures/events to emphasise a point (grammatical structures).

In non-fiction:

Is vocabulary deliberately selected to reflect the level of formality and evoke a particular feeling? For example:

- maintaining objectivity through using impersonal grammatical constructions such as 'some people believe...,'.
- using appropriate technical vocabulary in relation to subject-specific content i.e. habitat instead of home, or carnivore instead of meat-eater.
- repetition of key language/sentence structures/events, to emphasise a point (grammatical structures).

Is the pupil using a range of sentence structures, as appropriate to purpose and audience? e.g. single clause or multi-clause

Examples of different multi-clause structures:

- Main clause/main clause
- Main clause/subordinate clause
- Fronted subordinate clause/main clause
- Main clause with embedded clause in the middle
- Main clause with a relative clause

These can be joined by:

- Co-ordinating conjunctions/ subordinating conjunctions
- A variety of punctuation (comma, colon, semi-colon, parenthetical punctuation)

Display the list above: can pupils find these different sentences in their writing? Or can they try one sentence out, using the different sentence structures? What effect does it have on the reader to write the sentence in these different ways?

Examples of simple sentences:

- I'm happy.
- Robert doesn't eat meat.
- My brother and I went to the mall last night.
- This new laptop computer has already crashed twice.

Simple sentences are not necessarily short.

A **compound sentence (main clause, main clause)** has two independent clauses joined by a linking word (and, but, or, so, yet, however).

Each independent clause could be a sentence by itself, but we connect them with a **linking word**:

- I'm happy, **but** my kids are always complaining.
- Robert doesn't eat meat, **so** Barbara made a special vegetarian dish for him.
- My brother and I went to the mall last night, **but** we didn't buy anything.
- This new laptop computer has already crashed twice, **and** I have no idea why.

A **complex sentence** has one independent clause and one or more **subordinate clauses**.

A subordinate clause cannot be a complete sentence by itself.

- I'm happy, *even though I don't make much money*.
- Robert, *a friend I've known since high school*, doesn't eat meat.
- My brother and I went to the mall last night, *while my sister stayed home and studied*.
- This new laptop computer, *which I bought yesterday*, has already crashed twice.

Is the pupil able to use **passive and modal verbs** appropriately?

A **passive verb** has a subject which is undergoing the action of the verb, rather than carrying it out.

It is most often used in formal and impersonal contexts:

- The apple was eaten
- The clouds were seen to disperse
- It was thought

Examples of Passive Verbs

Journalistic writing:

- Police were called late last night when...
- Two masked figures were seen entering the jewellers...

Persuasion/Argument:

- It could be argued that... It was often thought that...

Report:

- Polar bears are found in...
- Test tubes were placed in the rack...

Narrative:

- '...but the ghostly figure was nowhere to be found.
- The rules had been explained - but they would be broken...

Modal verbs indicate likelihood: -

- used in discursive and persuasive writing
- Will, would, can, could, may, might, shall, should, must and ought. Indicating degrees of possibility:
- Every right-thinking person will agree that... Surely it could be possible for....
- In summary, it must change now that...

Subjunctive mood

- Used to add an element of wishful or hypothetical thinking or speculation (*If I were the queen, I'd chop off your head/ If I were you, I would listen carefully*).

Take note of the qualifier 'mostly appropriately' here. Slips or inconsistencies might be evident within a piece of writing, but it is important to recognise evidence of vocabulary and grammatical features which establish register for the reader.

See: [KS2 Moderator TE11 Verbs activity 4](#) p27 & [KS2 Moderator TE14 Register](#)

'use a range of devices to build cohesion (e.g. conjunctions, adverbials of time and place, pronouns, synonyms) within and across paragraphs'

Pupils working at EXS should demonstrate the ability to sustain cohesion within individual pieces, and demonstrate this consistently across their writing collection, with only occasional lapses.

A text has [cohesion](#) if it is clear how the meanings of its parts fit together. [Cohesive devices](#) can help to do this.

To meet EXS at the end of KS2, pupils should demonstrate the ability to draw from the full range of devices described in the programmes of study to build cohesion, selecting those appropriate for the purpose and nature of the writing.

NB The references within the bracket in the pupil can statement are included only as examples. Refer to the NC for further examples e.g. manipulation of verb tenses and forms, prepositions, subordinating conjunctions, determiners, ellipsis, repetition, etc. [2022 KS2 Moderator TE 7](#) investigates progression in cohesion with reference to the NC PoS, and explores the role of various key cohesive devices in building cohesion.

Overall cohesion

Adverbials to say **when, where, how** or how often (the main reasons to change paragraph **time, place** and **action**...).

Repetition of a key idea across the piece (a 'secret string' or a 'golden thread' holding it together).

Linking opening and endings (i.e. same setting, characters or dialogue, or reiteration of something from the opening in non-fiction).

Layout devices such as headings, sub-headings, columns, bullet points etc...

Appropriate selection of vocabulary maintains thematic cohesion across the whole piece (viewpoint).

Remember that the planning stage is also crucial to support overall cohesion. Teach a variety of planning strategies.

Internal cohesion

Use of pronouns, noun phrases and expanded noun phrases to link ideas, provide more information and avoid repetition (*i.e. the car, it, the VW Beetle, Herbie, the loveable automobile*).

Elaborating on the 'topic sentence', with additional points/ideas.

Adverbs/adverbials to support the elaboration of ideas

Use of conjunctions to connect sentences within paragraphs

'Hooks' to link paragraphs together (*i.e. repetition of key words, synonyms, pronouns, prepositions, references back to earlier comments etc...*).

Verbs tenses and forms used correctly to guide the reader.

Key question: Have some pupils become over-reliant on the same cohesive devices/vocabulary?

Edit to remove 'stringy' (and then... and then... or and... and...) 'jumpy' (lack of detail or explanation, that leaves your reader confused) or 'yawny' (repetition of action or a word, overly boring parts), parts.

See also: [KS2 Writing Moderator training TE 7 Cohesion](#) , [Morgan's cohesive devices :and activity 3 in KS2 Writing Moderator Training Exercise 11 Verbs](#)

'use verb tenses consistently and correctly throughout their writing'

Pupil writing will often move between tenses, taking in the past, present and future. Using tenses consistently does not mean that a text remains in a single tense and a uniform fashion. When considering this aspect of pupil writing, consider if any shifts in tense are appropriate.

Ask pupils why the following sentence is confusing: *Mark finished his essay, tidies his room, and went out for supper.*

How could it be changed?

e.g. Mark finished his essay, tidied his room, and went out for supper. Or:
 Mark finished his essay and went out for supper, and now he is tidying his room.
 If the writer pays close attention to verb tense agreement, they will find that readers can easily understand their writing.
 Using verb tenses correctly is also an aspect of cohesion.

See [KS2 Writing Moderator Training Exercise 11 Verbs](#) Activity 2

use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 mostly correctly^ (e.g. inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech)

Pupils should demonstrate mostly correct use of the range of punctuation taught at KS2, but this does not mean that every punctuation mark needs to be evident across their writing.

Punctuation Expectations			
Punctuation taught at KS2	Working Towards	Expected	Greater Depth
Capital Letters	Most	Range of punctuation used mostly correctly. Not all punctuation needs to be evident	Range of punctuation used correctly, and, where necessary, used precisely to enhance meaning, and avoid ambiguity. Not all punctuation needs to be evident.
Full stops	Most		
Question marks	Most		
Exclamation marks			
Commas for lists	Most		
Apostrophes for contraction	Most		
Inverted commas			
Commas for clarity			
Parenthesis			
Semi-colons*			
Dashes			
Colons*			
Hyphens		What are the implications for your teaching of punctuation?	

Punctuation should contribute to the purpose, style and formality of the writing. You don't need to see all forms of punctuation in every piece.

Inverted commas

Remember to use a comma after the reporting clause; end punctuation within inverted commas: *The conductor shouted, "Sit down!"*

Commas for clarity

Using commas:

After fronted adverbials (taught year 4)

After a subordinate clause (taught year 5)

Parenthesis: Using commas, brackets and dashes to make an interruption

Parenthesis encapsulates a portion of a sentence which **adds extra information**. If you can take this 'interruption' out of the sentence without losing the meaning of the sentence, use commas, dashes or brackets to close it off, e.g.

Mary, who has two young children, has a part time job in the library.

Thousands of children – like the girl in this photograph – have been left homeless. He'd clearly had too much to drink (not that I blamed him).

Commas, dashes and brackets can all indicate parenthesis. However, it is not necessary for pupils to demonstrate all three forms of punctuation to indicate parenthesis across a collection of writing.

Semi-colon

Most commonly, the semi-colon is used between two independent clauses (i.e., clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences) when a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) is omitted.

The semi-colon is also used between two independent clauses linked by an adverb or subordinating conjunction (e.g., accordingly, consequently, for example, nevertheless, so, thus).

'Heavy snow continues to fall at the airport; consequently, all flights have been grounded.'
The semicolon can also be used in lists with internal commas. In this usage, the semicolon acts as a sort of super-comma!

'The new store will have groceries on the lower level; luggage, housewares, and electronics on the ground floor; men's and women's clothing on the second floor; and books, music, and stationery on the third floor.'

Colon

The colon is used to introduce a list of items.

The colon is used to separate two independent clauses when the second explains or illustrates the first. In such usage, the colon functions in much the same way as the semicolon. The colon can be used to emphasize a phrase or single word at the end of a sentence. A dash can be used for the same purpose.

'After three weeks of deliberation, the jury finally reached a verdict: guilty.'

A colon or semi-colon should always be followed by a lower-case letter, unless the word is a proper noun or the pronoun I.

At the expected standard, pupils do not need to evidence the use of semi-colons and colons to mark the boundary between independent clauses (although they may do so). It is acceptable for pupils to use a colon to introduce a list and to use semi-colons within lists.

Dashes

The dash can be used as a break in a sentence where a comma, semicolon, or colon would be traditionally used:

One thing's for sure – he doesn't want to face the truth.

Things have changed a lot in the last year – mainly for the better.

and to denote interruption:

'I haven't come all this way to fight, I -'

Dashes can be used to mark the boundary between independent clauses or to mark parenthesis. A pair of dashes or a single dash can be used to mark a parenthetical afterthought. Any of these uses can provide evidence for dashes at the expected standard.

Hyphens

Can be used to avoid ambiguity within words:

'man eating shark' versus 'man-eating shark'

A note from the STA regarding Bullet points and ellipsis:

Bullet points may be referred to as punctuation marks or typographical symbols: they are typically used to introduce items in a vertical list. The NC refers to the consistent punctuation of bullet points; therefore, if they are used, the way they are punctuated must be consistent. For example, each item starting with a lower case or upper-case letter, but not mixed; each item ending with a full stop or no punctuation, but not mixed etc.

Pupils do not need to demonstrate the use of ellipsis dots as part of the full range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 (although they may choose to do so). In the NC, ellipsis is referenced as a cohesive device, even though it is grouped under 'terminology' alongside other punctuation marks.

'spell correctly most words from the year 5 / year 6 spelling list,* and use a dictionary to check the spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary'

The frameworks refer to the word lists within the spelling appendix to the [national curriculum](#) to exemplify words that pupils should be able to spell. At KS2, the lists for years 3, 4, 5 and 6 within the national curriculum are statutory. These are a mixture of words pupils frequently use in their writing and words they often spell incorrectly. As these form part of the curriculum, and should be assessed on an ongoing basis, they should generally be evident in pupils' writing. Teachers may find it helpful to group the word list by subject to support coverage, though this is optional. However, if pupils do not use any of the words from the statutory lists in their day-to-day writing, evidence from tests and exercises alone is sufficient.

Don't forget the second part of this pupil can statement: *...and use a dictionary to check the spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary.*

This means that pupils are also expected to have a **range of strategies** to support their spelling of uncommon and more ambitious vocabulary:

- 'Uncommon' words can be understood in the context of writing at KS2 as words that are irregular; words which do not follow the spelling patterns taught to date; and those not familiar from other sources of teaching, such as the statutory word lists. Pupils can use dictionaries **or aids** to look these up.
- 'More ambitious' refers to vocabulary choices. Pupils should use knowledge of spelling rules to spell.

Evidencing independent spelling:

Independent	Not independent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils use the strategies of a writer and independently draw on available resources, including dictionaries and thesauri, and words already in their books or on display	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers direct pupils to include specific vocabulary in a piece of writing and provide them with spelling support, such as word lists or mats specifically related to the task.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils draw on peer support to identify and amend incorrect spellings in their writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers indicate the words that need amending.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils correct errors independently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers provide correct spellings.

FAQ:

At KS2, if child spells words from the years 5 and 6 word list correctly but not words from the years 3 and 4 word list or KS1 common exception words, can they be judged to be 'working at the expected standard'?

To be judged to be 'working at the expected standard', the guidance states that teachers should be confident that pupils have met the standards preceding the one at which they judge them to be working at. A pupil at KS2 should be able to spell the words from both the year 3 and 4 word list and the KS1 common exception words, as well as the words from the year 5 and 6 word list.

See also : [KS2 Moderator Training exercise 12 Spelling](#)

'maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.'²

The national curriculum states that pupils should be taught to 'use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined'.

A progression for 'legible handwriting' can be seen by picking out the pupil can statements in [the pre-KS2 standards](#). This can be helpful when backward chaining feedback to give next step feedback: -

In standard...	The pupil can:
Pre-KS2 standards 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> form correctly most of the 10+ lower-case letters in Standard 2 of English language comprehension and reading
Pre-KS2 standards 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> form correctly most of the 20+ lower-case letters in Standard 3 of English language comprehension and reading
Pre-KS2 standards 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form most lowercase letters correctly
Pre-KS2 standards 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
Pre-KS2 standards 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 letter
WTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write legibly.¹ <p><i>1 At this standard, there is no specific requirement for a pupil's handwriting to be joined.</i></p>
EXS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.² <p><i>² The national curriculum states that pupils should be taught to 'use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined'.</i></p>
GDS	No further handwriting criteria.

Evidence for joined handwriting can come from handwriting books or exercises, but this would not be sufficient on its own.

Publishing writing for an audience can aid motivation, and support the development of legible handwriting, as this can be the sole focus for a child – removing the additional cognitive load of composition.

FAQ

How many pieces of work could be word-processed within a collection for a pupil?

Evidence should come from day-to-day work in the classroom. There is no limit to the number of word-processed pieces of work a teacher can draw upon when making their judgement. However, pupils must demonstrate their handwriting in their day-to-day writing in order to meet the relevant 'pupil can' statement.

Working at Greater Depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

'write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure)'

Independence at Greater depth

At Greater Depth, writers demonstrate a **greater level of independence**, assurance and consistency in writing for purpose and audience. The independence bit is key – it's more than the whole class application of an impressive phrase taken from the class text. Hence, make sure that your higher attaining writers can step away from a class or scheme model and have some choice over form, purpose, audience or perspective. For example, they could write a story in the third person or first person, past tense or present. They may decide to produce, not a newspaper, but a Vlog, or a 'Faction'. They may choose the topic and conduct their own research (thus drawing on their own reading) to write a persuasive letter etc. Correspondingly, they have developed an autonomy over the writing process and their own iterative writing processes. Give them time away from class instruction, so that they are able to manage, control and make decisions about how to approach and refine their writing.

Drawing independently on what they have read

Writers may independently draw on their wider reading in different ways, including in:

- their selection of text type and content (information, research, ideas and themes)
- the way they structure, organise and present their texts
- the choices they make around vocabulary, grammar and punctuation and intertextuality

Children will naturally use their own wider reading, either consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, make sure that children have time in abundance to read independently and for pleasure. If time is short, and you have good writers who haven't completely caught the reading bug, introduce them to quality short stories and articles, and give them further and ambitious mentor texts both when setting up writing tasks, *and* during the writing itself. Magpie or jotting books can also be useful aids, to capture the language and phrases from their reading.

Independence and reading combined = intertextuality

In addition, we expect to see children using intertextuality when coming up with their own writing ideas. Intertextuality is when one story *talks to* or *borrow from* another story. You can think about as creative play(giarism), cross-fertilization, creative reconstruction, remixing, borrowing, or 'writing under the influence' (Ferguson & Young [2023](#)). Look for intertextuality when reading: similar story arcs, references from other books or films, figurative devices, borrowed 'characters', settings, or spoken words etc. and feed this back into idea generation for writing tasks. Discuss differences in writing styles between authors, and ensure that children have access to whole texts and articles, so that they can understand the architectures used.

Utilising [Michael Rosen's](#) key questions can support intertextuality:

- Does the passage/book/poem etc that you have just read remind you of any other passage/book/poem/film/tv programme/etc that you have read or seen on TV or at the cinema or anywhere else?

- Can you talk about why and how it reminds you?
- Can you share all this with someone else?
- Can we share this in the whole class by making a list of them and discussing why and how?

The following table, from the [STA Moderator training material](#), is a useful assessment guide to map the features we could see when writing for purpose and audience at each of the standards:

Key points – the distinctions between the 3 statements

<p>WTS The pupil can write for a range of purposes.</p>	<p>EXS The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows good awareness of the reader.</p>	<p>GDS The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writers adapt their writing for a range of purposes such as to inform, persuade and entertain the reader • individual pieces demonstrate knowledge of conventions, including how the text is structured and grammar, punctuation and vocabulary typical of the form • use of the form may be formulaic or heavily reliant on a model text, underdeveloped and perhaps unsustainable • writing may lack the level of detail needed to meet the purpose and engage the reader • language choices may be simple and not consistently relevant to purpose and audience • writers may be unable to select or sustain an appropriate tone or level of formality • their ability to express ideas and information in varied and well-constructed and accurate sentences may also be inconsistent, and writing may lack cohesion • inconsistencies may also inhibit their intent and reduce reader comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writers demonstrate the ability to identify the purpose and audience of their writing and write in different forms in response • they demonstrate good knowledge of the chosen text type, perhaps drawing on a model text • they usually use the structural and linguistic features of the form appropriately and consistently • content is mainly relevant to purpose and usually extended and developed with a level of detail appropriate to the reader • language choices are made with their specific audience in mind and may sometimes be ambitious, if not always precise • the level of formality chosen is appropriate but may occasionally slip • writers use a variety of sentence types, appropriate to purpose, to achieve cohesion within and across paragraphs, with some lapses of control • they demonstrate an ability to manipulate language to fulfil intent effectively and to support reader comprehension and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writers demonstrate greater level of independence, assurance and consistency in writing for purpose and audience • they write appropriately for purpose and audience with control, sustaining form and appropriate levels of formality throughout • they may draw on a class text but also demonstrate wider knowledge of the form drawn from independent reading, and an ability to imitate writing in the same form by different authors • their rich repertoires of language drawn from reading, combined with an assured ability to select and manipulate language, enable them to express complex ideas and information in detail and with clarity, producing texts which have a distinct effect on the reader • their response to purpose and audience may be sophisticated, for example, their use of figurative language in descriptive writing, the ability to communicate shades of meaning through word choices, or the expression of well-researched, considered points of view • writing may demonstrate confidence and the emergence of an independent and distinctive authorial voice, for example, they may playfully experiment with form and language, perhaps subverting convention

See too: [KS2 Moderator TE2 Distinguishing between GDS & EXS](#)
[KS2 Moderator TE3 Exploring evidence systematically at GDS](#)
[KS2 Moderator TE13 Purpose](#)

'distinguish between the language of speech and writing₃ and choose the appropriate register'

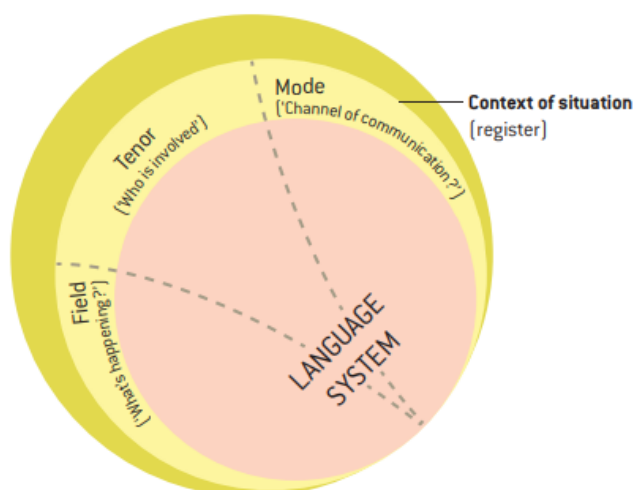
Footnote: Pupils should recognise that certain features of spoken language (e.g. contracted verb forms, other grammatical informality, colloquial expressions, long coordinated sentences) are less likely in writing and be able to select alternative vocabulary and grammar

Register refers to different styles of spoken or written language that are tailored to specific audiences, purposes, and contexts. Variations between registers can often be identified by distinct vocabulary and grammatical structures and are reflected too in the relationship between the writer, and their audience.

To illustrate, consider a doctor. They possess a specialised vocabulary and lexical range due to their medical knowledge and training. However, their register will change depending on the audience, purpose, and context. For example:

- When speaking with a patient, the doctor uses a more accessible and empathetic register to ensure the patient understands their condition and treatment.
- When discussing a patient with other doctors, the register becomes more technical and precise, utilising medical jargon and complex terminology.
- When presenting at a medical conference, the register shifts again to be formal and authoritative, suitable for addressing a large audience of medical professionals.

It can be helpful to consider linguist Michael Halliday's description of register ([field, tenor and mode](#)) of a particular situation:



- **Field** is about *what* the communication is about—the topic or subject matter. It's the content of what's being said or written. For example, if a teacher is explaining how plants grow, the field is science. If they're telling a story about a lost puppy, the field is storytelling or narrative. Understanding the field helps us choose the right words and structure for the topic. It means sharing ideas and stories in a way that readers will enjoy and understand. Simply put, does the writer/speaker pick good topics for both themselves and their audience?

- **Tenor:** This is more than just thinking about who your audience is. It's about the kind of relationship you have with them. When someone speaks or writes, they choose their words and tone based on who they're talking to and what kind of connection they want to build. For example, a teacher talking to their class will sound different from a teacher writing a report for parents. Tenor is therefore both about considering the needs of your audience and about being true to yourself or the role you're playing—whether you're being friendly, formal, encouraging, or authoritative.
- **Mode** is about *how* the communication is happening. Is it spoken or written? Is it a conversation, a formal speech, a text message, or a storybook? Mode also includes whether the communication is planned or spontaneous. For example, a teacher chatting with a student in the playground is using a different mode than when writing a newsletter to parents. The mode affects how formal or informal the language is, and how carefully it's put together.

Hence 'register' refers to pupils selecting vocabulary and grammar appropriate to the context of the writing, for example, indicators of formality in a letter of complaint; concision within a stage direction; contracted forms in casual dialogue.

See [KS2 Moderator TE 14 Register](#) and [KS2 Moderator TE15 GDS](#)

'exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this'

This statement is closely linked to the concept of register, particularly the 'tenor' of the piece, as this dictates the level of formality. Simply put, has the child considered their role as the writer, who their reader is, and how they will interact with that readership? Formality, of course, also plays a key role in the development of characterisation in fiction tasks.

The emphasis on 'assured and conscious control' highlights that the vocabulary and grammar choices made in writing are deliberate and considered.

This 'pupil can' statement is often harder to evidence, as most children tend to write neither formally, not informally, but 'down the middle'. Here, it is useful to refer to the 'Leigh' exemplification file as a benchmark, as Leigh is a strong expected, who shows elements of Greater Depth. In one piece—piece B—Leigh meets the 'assured and conscious control' statement. If your pupil can write like piece B more often, they have a chance of achieving 'Greater depth'. The annotations on the remaining pieces show where Leigh has been less consistent, which is why the award remains at the expected standard.

As you read the collection, reflect on the purpose and audience for each piece. Are there enough opportunities for Leigh to write formally? Could more opportunities for formal writing have helped Leigh achieve 'Greater depth'? Does the recount provide any evidence for Greater depth? (No!) Additionally, has Leigh been given adequate time to re-draft sections of her work to consider precision of language or tidy up punctuation?

The following table, is a useful assessment tool to identify formal and informal writing:

Features that may indicate informal and formal writing

Some features that may indicate informality	Some features that may indicate formality
<p>Contracted forms, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Let's get you an ice pack...</i> • <i>They wouldn't have...if they hadn't...</i> • <i>They've taken the sheep!</i> 	<p>Some modal verbs in certain grammatical structures, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Should it rain, we may have to cancel the picnic.</i> • <i>This village would appear normal...</i> • <i>Most people might ask...</i>
<p>Question tags, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He's your friend, isn't he?</i> • <i>These are your shoes, aren't they?</i> 	<p>The subjunctive, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If I were to come in...</i> • <i>Were they to come in...</i> • <i>They requested that he leave immediately.</i>
<p>'Multi-word' verbs, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>find out</i> rather than <i>discover</i> • <i>ask for</i> rather than <i>request</i> 	<p>Some use of abstract nouns, and noun phrases used as the subject of the verb, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i><u>Darkness</u> was being whispered in...</i> • <i>...full of <u>despair</u>.</i> • <i><u>Of course, the most significant matter of evacuation is...</u></i>
<p>Passives using 'get', for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I got my hair cut last week.</i> • <i>He got told off by the teacher.</i> 	<p>Some passive constructions, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is widely believed that...</i> • <i>You are provided with a life-jacket...</i> • <i>Flocks of sheep have been taken...</i>
<p>Second person direct address to the reader, and some usage of first person, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If you love a challenge – however difficult – then you will...</i> • <i>Are you nervous about the London trip?</i> • <i>When we arrived at school we...</i> 	<p>The personal pronoun 'one', for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>One should not be concerned about...</i> • <i>It is better to do this oneself.</i>
<p>Vernacular (everyday) language, including idioms, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>...do your bit for the war.</i> • <i>...the words are stuck in my throat.</i> • <i>Take selfies with no teacher in!</i> 	<p>Vocabulary that is technical, or context/subject-specific, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>...plea for mercy...</i> • <i>...oil producers... plantations... nonsustainable...</i> • <i>...these are my words of farewell.</i>
<p>Features that replicate spoken language, such as ellipsis, discourse markers and some non-standard forms, for example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'OK...what time?' 'Eleven.'</i> • <i>Well stop right there!</i> • <i>"C'mon, he wasn't doin' nothin'!"</i> 	<p>Nominalisation (use of nouns rather than verbs or adjectives), for example</p> <p><i>The <u>arrival</u> of the mysterious stranger caused considerable <u>excitement</u>, rather than We were very <u>excited</u> when the mysterious stranger <u>arrived</u>.</i></p>

See [KS2 Moderator TE 14 Register](#) , [KS2 Moderator TE15 GDS](#) and [KS2 Moderator TE11 Verbs](#) Activity 4 p 27, and [Tier 2 words for academic writing](#)

'use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.'

The statement does not refer to specific punctuation marks, or to how they should be used.

The key here is that punctuation is used accurately and to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity. At this standard, pupils may decide to use a dash, rather than a bracket, to support the informality of a piece of writing. Or they may decide to use a full stop, rather than a colon, for increased emphasis

E.g.

'She was like that about most things. Infuriating.'

(Rather than 'She was like that about most things: infuriating.')

Punctuation plays a key role in avoiding ambiguity by clarifying meaning, separating ideas, and indicating relationships between parts of a sentence. Consider the meaning of the following two sentences:

Let's eat, Grandma! vs. *Let's eat Grandma!*

Writers at this standard may not use all the punctuation, but if they are using it, they are using it correctly, and to good effect (not over-using).

[There are no additional statements for spelling or handwriting]

Appendix 1: Word lists

Word list – years 3 and 4

accident(ally)	early	knowledge	purpose
actual(ly)	earth	learn	quarter
address	eight/eighth	length	question
answer	enough	library	recent
appear	exercise	material	regular
arrive	experience	medicine	reign
believe	experiment	mention	remember
bicycle	extreme	minute	sentence
breath	famous	natural	separate
breathe	favourite	naughty	special
build	February	notice	straight
busy/business	forward(s)	occasion(ally)	strange
calendar	fruit	often	strength
caught	grammar	opposite	suppose
centre	group	ordinary	surprise
century	guard	particular	therefore
certain	guide	peculiar	though/although
circle	heard	perhaps	thought
complete	heart	popular	through
consider	height	position	various
continue	history	possess(ion)	weight
decide	imagine	possible	woman/women
describe	increase	potatoes	
different	important	pressure	
difficult	interest	probably	
disappear	island	promise	

Word list – years 5 and 6

accommodate	embarrass	persuade
accompany	environment	physical
according	equip (–ped, –ment)	prejudice
achieve	especially	privilege
aggressive	exaggerate	profession
amateur	excellent	programme
ancient	existence	pronunciation
apparent	explanation	queue
appreciate	familiar	recognise
attached	foreign	recommend
available	forty	relevant
average	frequently	restaurant
awkward	government	rhyme
bargain	guarantee	rhythm
bruise	harass	sacrifice
category	hindrance	secretary
cemetery	identity	shoulder
committee	immediate(ly)	signature
communicate	individual	sincere(ly)
community	interfere	soldier
competition	interrupt	stomach
conscience*	language	sufficient
conscious*	leisure	suggest
controversy	lightning	symbol
convenience	marvellous	system
correspond	mischievous	temperature
criticise (critic + ise)	muscle	thorough
curiosity	necessary	twelfth
definite	neighbour	variety
desperate	nuisance	vegetable
determined	occupy	vehicle
develop	occur	yacht
dictionary	opportunity	
disastrous	parliament	

Appendix 2: Verb forms

What do verbs express?

Verbs perform a number of different functions and play an especially important part in expressing 'what is happening' in a piece of writing. They also provide information about time and relationships.

The table below summarises key information with examples. Please note, the information in the table goes beyond what is taught at KS2 and pupils are not expected to demonstrate knowledge of all of these elements of grammar. Additionally, there is no expectation that moderators and teachers must use these terms, but they can support a broad understanding of how verbs and related elements of grammar work together within writing.

Term	Explanation	Examples
verb	A verb expresses actions, states or occurrences, providing key information about what someone does (she paints pictures), their state (she is busy) and the associated event or occurrence (she painted).	
	physical actions	she paints pictures the leaves fall sadness spread everywhere
	mental processes	she decided to paint we noticed the leaves fell they remember the sadness
	states	she likes painting the leaves seem golden we felt sad
	occurrences or events	she painted pictures the leaves fell it was sad
main verb	This is a verb that can be used on its own, without another verb. Some verbs can be used as a main verb and can also act to support another verb as an auxiliary verb, depending on how they are used (for example, we were sad – main verb; we were feeling sad – auxiliary verb).	she painted a picture the leaves fall we were sad

infinitive verb	This is the basic form of the verb , without any marker of number or tense, usually formed with 'to' (for example, to be, to paint).	she wants to paint they paint leaves fall we are likely to feel sad
auxiliary verb	Also referred to as a helping verb , it is used to support a main verb, to form tense or other constructions, such as the perfect .	she has painted the picture she had finished painting the leaves might fall we were feeling sad
modal verb	A modal verb is a type of auxiliary or helping verb, which supports the main verb. It expresses different degrees of permission, ability, obligation, or prediction: may / might, can / could, shall / should, must, will / would.	she must paint she could paint the leaves will fall we should feel sad
tense	This makes clear when actions, states or occurrences happen, or their location in time .	
	the present tense addresses what is happening now or what habitually takes place	she is painting she paints
	the past tense shows what has happened already	she painted
	what is yet to happen is expressed through the future tense or future form (as it is not strictly a tense, because it does not affect the main verb itself)	she will paint she is going to paint
participle	This is a verb that is used to form the present or past tense .	
	a present participle is the -ing form of a verb, often used to form the progressive aspect (for example, she is painting)	she is painting pictures the leaves were falling we are feeling sad
	a past participle is the -ed form of a verb (or other form that is the same as the past tense), often used to form the perfect (she had painted) or the passive (pictures were painted)	she had painted pictures the leaves have fallen pictures were painted sadness was felt
	participles also appear by themselves, without any indication of tense or other feature	painted at speed, the picture was a success falling from the trees, the leaves floated feeling sad is normal

aspect	This shows the specific time relationship of an action, state or occurrence to the present moment or to a specific subsequent moment.	
	a completed action uses the simple past tense	she painted pictures
	a completed action that is still relevant to the present time uses the perfective aspect (also known as the perfect tense)	she has painted (present perfect) she had painted (past perfect)
	an ongoing action in the present uses the progressive aspect (also known as the continuous form)	she is painting (present progressive) she was painting (past progressive)
mood	Also known as modality , this shows the relationship of an action, state or occurrence to what is actual and to what is experienced by the participant.	
	the indicative mood expresses fact or strong belief	she painted pictures the leaves fall we feel sad
	the imperative handles commands	paint pictures now!
	the interrogative expresses questions	why is she painting pictures? when do the leaves fall? what made us sad?
	the subjunctive expresses hypotheses or what is possible or desired	she wishes she were painting I suggest that she paint quickly it is important that her painting skills be recognised
voice	This indicates the relationship between an action, state or occurrence and any participant.	
	the active voice is used when the subject of a clause is performing an action, and it is expressed in the following order: subject – verb – object, with an active verb (she paints pictures)	she paints pictures the leaves fall we feel sad

	the passive voice is used when the usual object of a clause becomes the subject – the action is no longer actively performed by the subject	pictures are painted by her the leaves were shed by the tree sadness was felt by everyone
subject-verb agreement	This is the correct matching of noun and verb within a clause so that they 'agree' or correspond. The subject is the doer of the action in the verb. The object is the person or thing that the verb's action is performed on.	
	a singular noun subject requires a corresponding verb	she paints a picture a leaf falls he feels sad
	a plural noun subject also requires an appropriate verb	the children paint a picture the leaves fall they feel sad

As well as understanding what verbs express, we need to understand how they function within a piece of writing, where they contribute to the writer's purpose and audience, and where verb and tense choice have an impact on the whole text.