



Oxford Primary Assessment

Fully aligned to the 2014
National Curriculum

The Oxford Writing Criterion Scale

Assess writing
Identify next steps
Track progress

Developed by Ros Wilson

OXFORD

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

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This Edition published in 2015

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1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Typeset in Myriad Pro and FS Lola Primary

Acknowledgements:

Oxford University Press would like to thank the following schools for their contribution
to the development and trialling of the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale:

Tracey Sharkey, Sarah Threkheld-Brown, Lorna Walters and the Big Writing team at Andrell Education Ltd

Cravenwood Primary Academy, Crumpsall

Ludworth Primary School, Marple Bridge

Sir John Barrow Primary School, Ulverston

St. Bartholomew's C of E Primary School, Wiggington

Oldfields Hall Middle School, Uttoxeter

Aston Fields Middle School, Bromsgrove

Burchetts Green CE Infants School

Lowbrook Academy, Maidenhead

The following schools in Gloucestershire LA:

King's Stanley Primary School

Sherborne C of E Primary

Warden Hill Primary

Woodchester Endowed Primary

Harewood Juniors

Rodmarton Primary

Great Rissington Primary

Redbrooke Primary

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Bledington CE Primary

Bibury Primary

Sheepscombe Primary

Haresfield Primary

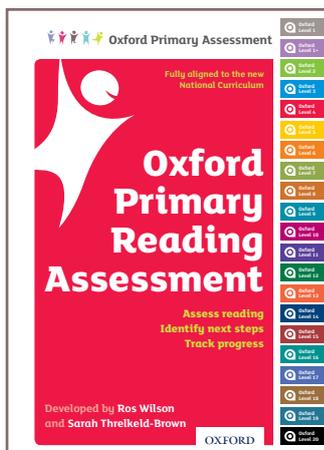
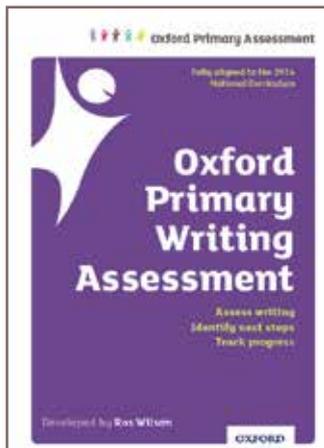


Introduction

All schools know that high quality assessment – linked to targeted and effective teaching – is the key to ensuring children make good progress. It allows teachers to identify and address any challenges children are facing as early as possible and also to extend and deepen learning for those who are ready.

The **Oxford Writing Criterion Scale (OWCS)** offers a comprehensive solution to assessment without Levels and can be used both as a periodic summative teacher assessment tool and as a tool to inform next steps for success, both in the short and long term. The OWCS has been matched to the yearly expectations of the 2014 National Curriculum in England, so that teachers can assess, track and report pupil attainment and progress against these expectations, and can do so consistently across a school.

Schools outside of England, or those not following the National Curriculum in England, can also use the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale with confidence. That is because it is based on a deep understanding of progression in writing and the skills children need to master along the way, and goes far beyond simply ‘ticking the boxes’ of the 2014 National Curriculum in England. The Oxford Writing Criterion Scale is a curriculum-neutral assessment tool that sets high expectations for all children and draws on best practice and expert subject knowledge.



Oxford Primary Writing Assessment

The *Oxford Primary Writing Assessment* handbook, together with its sister publication, the *Oxford Primary Reading Assessment* handbook, provides a whole school solution to teacher assessment in English.

Developed by Ros Wilson, *Oxford Primary Writing Assessment* provides comprehensive support for teacher assessment of writing using the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale. It includes:

- an expanded version of the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale, offering supplementary detail and additional examples of the evidence that teachers might expect to see for a particular skill
- advice and simple tools to help teachers record and track pupil attainment and progress
- clear next steps for children, in the form of Child Speak Targets, to ensure they make good progress
- exemplification of writing standards for each year group, with detailed commentary about judgements and next steps
- additional writing samples for staff training and to support moderation
- a choice of writing ‘starters’ to use for summative assessment purposes.

For more information, visit www.oxfordprimary.co.uk

About the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale

The Writing Criterion Scale was developed by assessment expert Ros Wilson. It describes the writing journey that children make, from their first pre-writing behaviours through to a more complex and sophisticated understanding and mastery of writing skills. The Writing Criterion Scale breaks down children’s writing development into small steps so that it is easy to identify the point children have reached, and the steps they need to make next in order to progress. Although the criteria are set out in a rough hierarchy, every child’s writing journey is different, so the Writing Criterion Scale supports a ‘best-fit’ teacher judgement against national expectations whilst also giving teachers (and other stakeholders) a very accurate, individual picture for every child.

Developed over more than 15 years and informed by over 20,000 pieces of children’s writing, the Criterion Scale for Writing has recently undergone further development to ensure that it matches the expectations of the 2014 National Curriculum in England, and it is now known as the **Oxford Writing Criterion Scale**.

About the author

Ros Wilson has over fifty years’ experience in education, including twenty seven years in schools, ten years in Senior Management positions and fourteen years in advisory and inspection work. She has taught in primary, middle and secondary schools in England and overseas, and has wide experience in teaching and advising on raising achievement for pupils with English as an additional language and also pupils with special educational needs.

Ros has a Masters Degree in Education, specializing in assessment. As well as being the creator of the Writing Criterion Scale and the widely used *Big Writing* approach to raising standards in writing, she is also co-creator of the Reading Criterion Scale and the *Big Reading* programme.



Ros Wilson



How to use the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale

The Oxford Writing Criterion Scale (OWCS) is designed to enable accurate, objective assessment of writing in schools and to be used to identify the next steps in a child's writing for them to make progress.

The OWCS is organized into a series of Standards that map to the primary year groups, from Standard 1 (Reception/P1) through to Standard 7 (Year/P7). Each Standard sets out a number of criteria against which children are assessed. The criteria are assessing the following strands or aspects of writing:

- Features of type/genre
- handwriting
- spelling
- grammar (including connectives and punctuation)
- ambitious vocabulary
- length, detail and description leading into writing voice.

The OWCS and National Expectations

Assessments against each Standard result in a score which determines whether a child is **Developing**, **Secure** or **Advanced** against the expectations of their year group. Children should be judged as 'Secure' within a Standard by the end of each year in order to be tracking national expectations.

NOTE: By 'national expectations' we mean the aspirations of the 2014 National Curriculum in England. These aspirations are high and, at least in the short term, the required National Standard at the end of each key stage may well be lower.

Year Group	OWCS Assessment Standard	National Expectations by the end of the year
Reception/P1	Standard 1	Secure Standard 1
Year 1/P2	Standard 2	Secure Standard 2
Year 2/P3	Standard 3	Secure Standard 3
Year 3/P4	Standard 4	Secure Standard 4
Year 4/P5	Standard 5	Secure Standard 5
Year 5/P6	Standard 6	Secure Standard 6
Year 6/P7	Standard 7	Secure Standard 7

A very low score, usually below 6 points, means that a child is not yet working within that Standard and should be assessed against the Standard for the prior year group; a very high score – 2 or more points into the 'Advanced' category – prompts teachers to assess against the next Standard. Nevertheless, teachers will want to ensure children have mastered all the criteria in each Standard – and give children opportunities to deepen their understanding – before moving them on.

There is also a Pre-writing Standard which sets out the more common very early writing behaviours and skills. Dependent on their pre-school experience, some children will have acquired the majority of these skills before entering Reception/P1 whilst others will need more help to develop the basics. The Pre-writing Standard is designed to support an early baseline assessment of children's needs; those who tick most of the boxes can quickly be assessed and developed against Standard 1.



Making an informed assessment of a child's writing

When introducing the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale, most schools begin by conducting an initial or baseline summative assessment. It is recommended that a summative assessment is conducted once a term, e.g. in December, March and May/June, although some schools prefer a single 'end of year' assessment only.

Using the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale for summative assessment

It is vitally important that summative assessments are carried out on a piece of writing that is truly independent and unsupported and which, from Standard 2 onwards, is close to a side of A4 or more in length.

The summative assessment process is as follows:

Step	What to do	Notes
Step 1	Set an appropriate independent writing task for assessment purposes. You may want to offer children a choice of stimulus but it is important to ensure that every child is writing to the same text type.	<i>The OWCS can be used to assess all text types, although poetry, recount of a known story and narrative are not, usually, useful genres for assessment.</i>
Step 2	Select the appropriate OWCS Standard for the year group of the child, or children, you wish to assess.	<i>If you know, from other assessments or knowledge of a child, that a child is working well below expectations select the Standard from the prior year.</i>
Step 3	Photocopy a Standard for each child – adding their name and the date of the assessment.	
Step 4	Read through the piece of writing carefully. Then complete the OWCS using the following marks to indicate your judgement against each criterion: ✓ –there is clear, secure evidence in this piece that the child has mastered this skill ● –there is some evidence in this piece that the child is beginning to do this ✗ – there is no evidence in this piece that the child can do this (this could also indicate skills that have not been taught yet)	<i>You should expect to see three good examples to make a secure judgement although two particularly strong examples may be sufficient. At the higher Standards, one accurate and effective example of e.g. metaphor or the subjunctive would be acceptable.</i> <i>Remember: even if you think a child is secure or developing in a skill from previous work you must base your summative judgement on the evidence in this piece only.</i>
Step 5	Sometimes the text type or genre of the piece means that one or more criteria cannot be assessed. Each criterion that cannot be assessed should be marked with a dash [-].	
Step 6	Add up the number of ticks to generate a score and use the box at the bottom of the Standard to make a judgement.	<i>If one or more criteria are marked with a dash, reduce the points required to achieve each category accordingly. For example, if 'Developing' requires a score between 6–9 points it can be awarded for a score between 5–8 points if one criterion is unassessed or between 4–7 points if two criteria are unassessed.</i>
Step 7	If the piece of writing does not make the entry threshold for 'Developing' at the required Standard for the year group you should assess against the Standard for the prior year. If the piece of writing reaches an Assessment Point for a particular Standard you may assess against the Standard for the next year. However, if the piece does not meet the entry threshold for 'Developing' at the next Standard it should be recorded as 'Advanced' at the current Standard.	<i>This child will need focused support and intervention to help them make accelerated progress.</i> <i>You will want to ensure that this child has opportunities to broaden and deepen their skills within the Standard for their year group, as well as providing stretch in the form of new learning, as appropriate.</i>
Step 8	Children's basic skills – spelling, handwriting, punctuation – any 'pre-requisite' criteria listed on the Standard and those criteria marked with a dot ● can be used to inform the child's immediate next steps.	
Step 9	Retain the assessed piece of writing and the OWCS judgement in a class folder of evidence. Use a spreadsheet to record the pattern of assessments across the class over an academic year.	



NOTE: The 'cold' assessment does not need to be time limited but must be done in one session. The child may re-read, edit and uplevel, providing that the process is self-initiated and unprompted, and is completed within the same extended writing session.

Using the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale for formative assessment

For assessment to be effective in informing learning and leading to progress (the primary purpose of assessment, after all) it is important that it empowers children by giving them a very clear understanding of what they can do and what they need to do next to succeed.

The OWCS facilitates this by providing both a snapshot of a child's secure skills and evidence of the specific skills that are developing and/or need to be taught next in order for the child to make progress. The summative assessment will also flag up skills that really should be secure at a given point such as legible handwriting, accurate use of full stops and capital letters, or correct spelling of high frequency words. Teachers will want to focus on just two or three 'next steps' in setting individual targets for pupils and these targets can be shared with both pupils and parents. It is progress against these targets – and in spelling, handwriting and use of interesting vocabulary generally – that teachers need to focus on when marking children's writing between summative assessment points. These targets can be reviewed as progress is made. Teachers will want to gather evidence of children applying and experimenting with new skills, and making progress against their targets, across a wide range of writing for different purposes, including different text types – and this is fine for formative assessment purposes. However, it is important to remember that only independent, unsupported writing should be used for summative assessment.

Tracking progress and ensuring mastery using the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale

It is the responsibility of every teacher to ensure children make progress in writing throughout the year and, with higher attainment targets and standards, the importance of being able to track and provide evidence of pupil progress cannot be understated. However, teachers need to be aware that progress in writing is not always about acquiring new skills and moving 'up'; depth and breadth of understanding and the ability to confidently apply knowledge and skills for a range of purposes and audiences is very important within a mastery curriculum.

The OWCS allows teachers to track both kinds of progress. At the summative assessment points children may move category – from developing to secure, for example – but should also increase their points score on the Standard for their year group. This means that, even if a child remains within the 'Developing' category between summative assessment points, teachers will be able to show progress in terms of points and against specific criteria.

Within each category – **Developing**, **Secure** and **Advanced** – there will usually be a number of criteria against which children are not yet judged to be secure. Focusing on these as next steps for development – and indeed providing children with a range of opportunities to deepen their secure skills – will help teachers ensure mastery.

More importantly, the OWCS – linked to effective teaching through *Big Writing* – enables teachers to identify and focus on a small number of next steps for each child, thus ensuring that progress and mastery actually happens.



THE OXFORD WRITING CRITERION SCALE

Pre-writing Standard: Early Years

The Pre-writing Standard supports the observation and recording of early writing behaviours and oral language skills. It is designed to help teachers evaluate children’s pre-school experiences so that they can best meet the needs of the whole class. It is not designed as a summative assessment tool.

Children whose experience of talk, writing and language is good prior to starting school will readily demonstrate many of these behaviours and you will be able to teach, observe and assess these children against ‘Standard 1’ fairly quickly. Other children will need more exposure to language and early motor skills before they are ready for the more formal teaching of writing to begin.

PRE-WRITING STANDARD: Early Years

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, X, ●)
1	Will tolerate hand manipulation.	
2	Will work with another to allow mark-making using body parts or an implement.	
3	Will attempt to mark-make independently.	
4	Can recognize mark-making materials.	
5	Can use and enjoys mark-making materials.	
6	Can show some control in mark-making.	
7	Can produce some recognizable letters.	
8	Can differentiate between different letters and symbols.	
9	Shows some awareness of the sequencing of letters.	
10	Can copy over/under a model.	
11	Can imitate adults’ writing and understands the purpose of writing.	
12	Can name three or more different purposes of writing.	
13	Can ascribe meaning to own mark-making (‘reads’ what has been ‘written’).	
14	Knows print has meaning and that, in English, it is read from left to right and top to bottom.	
15	Can write the initial letter of their own name.	
16	Can attempt to ‘write’ things, including their own name, using random letters.	
17	Can write their own name, although it may be with wrong letter formations or mixed lower/upper case.	
18	Can recognize their own first name when it is written in clear print.	



Standard 1: Reception/P1

Standard 1 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 1/P2 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Pre-writing skills

Before being assessed against Standard 1, children must be beginning to draw identifiable letters and/or write his/her own name.

Standard 1: Reception/P1 – end of year expectation

By the end of the Reception Year, children should be able to:

- Write three or more simple statements on a given subject that can be read without the child's help and that make sense, although letter shapes and spelling may not be fully accurate. There may be no full stops (or there may be one or more in the wrong places) and use of capitals and lower case letters may not be fully established.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 1' by the end of the Reception Year in order to be on track to meet National Expectations at the end of KS1. NOTE: Children moving up into Year 1/P2 who have not achieved against criteria 18 and 19 from Standard 1 must focus on these as a priority.

Standard 1: Reception/P1

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria (listed in an approximate hierarchy)	Evidence? (✓, ✗, ●)
1	Can draw recognizable letters of the alphabet.	
2	Can write their own name.	
3	Can 'write' things using a mix of appropriate and random letters.	
4	Can sequence most of the letters of the alphabet.	
5	Can write their own name with the correct letter formations, although the size and shape may be slightly inconsistent.	
6	Can name the purpose of different texts/types of writing (at least three).	
7	Can 'read' what he/she has 'written'.	
8	Can hold and use a pencil effectively.	
9	Can spell some of the words from the Year R High Frequency Word list.	
10	Can spell CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words (e.g. sit, bag, cat) usually correctly.	
11	Can write simple labels and captions.	
12	Can usually leave a space between emerging words.	
13	Can show some control over word order, producing short logical statements, trying to use emergent phonics for spellings not known.	
14	Can produce two or more logical statements on the same subject.	
15	Can spell many words on the Year R High Frequency Word list.	
16	Is beginning to attempt to write simple known stories.	
17	Can say what they want to write, speaking in clearly defined statements or sentences.	
18	Can spell many common, single syllable words correctly in writing, including most of the words in the Year R High Frequency Word list and the Early Years Outcomes.	
19	Can write three or more simple statements on a given subject that can be read without the child's help and that make sense, although letter shapes and spelling may not be fully accurate.	

Assessment score

0–2 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Pre-Writing Standard.
3–8 ticks = Developing
9–16 ticks = Secure

17–19 ticks = Advanced
Assessment point: children with 18 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 2



Standard 2: Year 1/P2

Standard 2 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 1/P2 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Standard 1 skills

The following skills must be secured as quickly as possible in Year 1/P2:

- Write three or more simple statements on a given subject that can be read without the child's help and that make sense, although letter shapes and spelling may not be fully accurate. There may be no full stops (or there may be one or more in the wrong places) and use of capitals and lower case letters may not be fully established.

Standard 2: Year 1/P2 – end of year expectation

By the end of Year 1/P2, children should be able to:

- Produce a paragraph or more of developed ideas independently that can be read without help from the child. The outcome may be more like spoken than written language but must not be a retelling.
- Write one or more sentences extended by the use of 'and' or another conjunction and two or more sentences showing the correct use of full stops and capital letters.
- Usually spell most CVC words and most common words from the Reception and Year 1 Word lists correctly.
- Produce letter shapes which are mainly accurate, with clear spaces between most words.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 2' by the end of Year 1 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS1.



STANDARD 2: Year 1/P2

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, X, ●)
1	Can write their own first name with appropriate upper and lower case letters (may not be totally accurate).	
2	Can form all letters clearly, although size and shape may be irregular.	
3	Writes simple regular words, some spelt correctly.	
4	Almost always leaves spaces between words.	
5	Makes sensible phonic attempts at words.	
6	Can spell all CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words (e.g. sit, bag, cat) correctly.	
7	Confidently writes some captions and labels and attempts other simple forms of writing (e.g. lists, stories, retellings etc.).	
8	Can show some control over letter size, shape and orientation in writing.	
9	Can say what their writing says and means.	
10	Can retell known stories in writing.	
11	Can produce their own ideas for writing (not a retelling).	
12	Can show some control over word order, producing logical statements.	
13	Can spell most of the Year R and 1 High Frequency Words and the Year 1 words in the National Curriculum. Appendix 1.	
14	Can make recognizable attempts at spelling words not known (almost all decodable without the child's help). (If all are spelt correctly, tick this criterion so as not to penalize the child).	
15	Can write simple texts such as lists, stories, reports, recounts (of a paragraph or more).	
16	Begins to show awareness of how full stops are used in writing. (May be in the wrong places or only one, final full stop.)	
17	Can usually give letters a clear and regular size, shape and orientation (ascenders and descenders and use of upper and lower case are usually accurate).	
18	Can use ANY connective (may only ever be 'and') to join two simple sentences, thoughts, ideas, etc.	
19	Can use appropriate vocabulary (should be coherent and sensible) in more than three statements.	
20	Can always use logical phonic strategies when trying to spell unknown words in more than three statements.	
21	Can usually use a capital letter and full stop, question mark or exclamation mark to punctuate sentences.	
22	Can produce a paragraph or more of developed ideas independently that can be read without help from the child (may be more like spoken than written language but must not be a retelling).	

Assessment score

0–6 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 1.

7–12 ticks = Developing

13–17 ticks = Secure

18–22 ticks = Advanced

Assessment point: children with 20 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 3.



Standard 3: Year 2/P3

Standard 3 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 2/P3 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Standard 2 skills

The following skills must be secured as a priority in Year 2/P3:

- Produce a paragraph or more of developed ideas independently that can be read without help from the child. The outcome may be more like spoken than written language but must not be a retelling.
- Write one or more sentences extended by the use of 'and' or another conjunction and two or more sentences showing the correct use of full stops and capital letters.
- Usually spell most CVC words and most common words from the Reception and Year 1 word lists correctly.
- Produce letter shapes which are mainly accurate, with clear spaces between most words.

Standard 3: Year 2/P3 – end of year expectation

By the end of Year 2/P3, children should be able to:

- Produce close to a side (or more) of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with one or more strong features, responding mainly correctly to stimulus and purpose (not in a retelling, narrative or poem).
- Write sentences which show some variety, at least in the words with which they open, and which include some descriptive language and/or detail, including adjectives, adverbs and associated expanded phrases.
- Use some ambitious words for their age (occasional misuse is acceptable).
- Spell all CVC and most common words on the Year R, 1 and 2 word lists correctly, plus most simple compound words. Spelling of unknown complex words should be phonetically logical.
- Use simple past and present tenses mainly correctly.
- Correctly use three or more different connectives and three or more different types of punctuation, with most sentences demarcated with final punctuation followed by a capital letter.
- Produce handwriting which is controlled, mainly regular in size and becoming neat. There may be evidence of joining.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 3' by the end of Year 2 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS1.



STANDARD 3: Year 2/P3

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, X, ●)
1	Can communicate ideas and meaning confidently in a series of sentences of at least a paragraph in length. (May not be accurate, but mainly 'flows' as it has lost the 'list like' form typical of some early writing.)	
2	Can control use of ascenders/descenders and upper/lower case letters in handwriting.	
3	Can write in three or more text forms with reasonable accuracy. (If the writing is a narrative, simple report or recount of a known story, this cannot be ticked as they should already know these three text forms. If it is another genre, it can be ticked).	
4	Can provide enough detail to interest the reader (e.g. is beginning to provide additional information or description beyond a simple list).	
5	Can vary the structure of sentences to interest the reader (e.g. questions, direct speech or opening with a subordinate clause, etc.).	
6	Can sometimes use interesting and ambitious words (they should be words not usually used by a child of that age, and not a technical word used in a taught context only, e.g. 'volcano' in geography or 'evaporate' in science).	
7	Can usually sustain narrative and non-narrative forms (can write at length – close to a side of A4 at least – staying on task).	
8	Can match organization to purpose (e.g. showing awareness of the structure of a letter, openings and endings, the importance of the reader, organizational devices, beginnings of paragraphing, etc.).	
9	Can usually maintain the use of basic sentence punctuation (full stops followed by capital letters) in a piece close to a side of A4 in length. (May be on a shorter piece or may not be accurate to achieve the 'Developing' category.)	
10	Can spell most common words correctly and most of the Years R, 1 & 2 High Frequency Words, and the Year 1 & 2 words in the National Curriculum. Appendix 1.	
11	Can use phonetically plausible strategies to spell or attempt to spell unknown polysyllabic words. (If all the spelling is correct in a long enough piece to provide secure evidence, tick this criterion.)	
12	Can use connectives other than 'and' to join two or more simple sentences, thoughts, ideas, etc. (e.g. but, so, then, or, when, if, that, because).	
13	Can use a range of punctuation, mainly correctly, including at least three of the following: full stop and capital letter, exclamation mark, question mark, comma (at least in lists), apostrophe for simple contraction and for singular possession (at least), e.g. 'John's dog...', 'The cat's bowl...'	
14	Can make their writing lively and interesting (e.g. provides additional detail, consciously uses humour, varies sentence length or uses punctuation to create effect, etc.).	
15	Can link ideas and events, using strategies to create 'flow' (e.g. Last time, also, after, then, soon, at last, and another thing . . .).	
16	Can use adjectives and descriptive phrases for detail and emphasis (consciously selects the adjective for purpose, rather than using a familiar one, e.g. a title: 'Big Billy Goat Gruff').	
17	Structures basic sentences correctly, including capitals and full stops in a longer piece (one error is acceptable).	
18	Can use accurate and consistent handwriting (in print at a minimum, can show consistent use of upper/lower case, ascenders/descenders, size and form).	
19	Begins to show evidence of joined handwriting.	
20	Uses past and present tenses correctly.	
21	Can produce close to a side (or more) of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with one or more strong features.	

Assessment score

0–5 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard

6–9 ticks = Developing

10–16 ticks = Secure

17–21 ticks = Advanced

Assessment point: children with 18 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 4.



Standard 4: Year 3/P4

Standard 4 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 3 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Standard 3 skills

The following skills must be secured as a priority in Year 3/P4:

- Produce close to a side (or more) of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with one or more strong features, responding mainly correctly to stimulus and purpose (not in a retelling, narrative or poem).
- Write sentences which show some variety, at least in the words with which they open, and which include some descriptive language and/or detail, including adjectives, adverbs and associated expanded phrases.
- Use some ambitious words for their age (occasional misuse or 'purple prose' is acceptable).
- Spell all CVC and most common words on the Year R, 1 and 2 word lists correctly, plus most simple compound words. Spelling of unknown complex words should be phonetically logical.
- Use simple past and present tenses mainly correctly.
- Correctly use three or more different connectives and three or more different types of punctuation, with most sentences demarcated with final punctuation followed by a capital letter.
- Produce handwriting which is controlled, mainly regular in size and becoming neat. There may be evidence of joining.

Standard 4: Year 3/P4 – end of year expectation

By the end of Year 3/P4, children should be able to:

- Produce close to a side or more of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with some of the features below.
- Interpret the stimulus and purpose broadly accurately and demonstrate about 75% accuracy in basic skills.
- Show variety in sentence structure, including opening in a range of ways, adding detail and/or description and using a wider range of connectives and punctuation.
- Use interesting language with some use of words that are ambitious for their age (occasional misuse or 'purple prose' is acceptable).
- Use most past and present tense verbs accurately.
- Begin to use direct speech and a wider range of connectives (conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions) to show time, place and cause.
- Begin to use paragraphs.
- Produce handwriting that is neat and mainly joined.
- Initiate edits and improvements to their work by proof reading what they have written.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 4' by the end of Year 3 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS2.



STANDARD 4: Year 3/P4

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, ✗, ●)
1	Can produce work which is organized, imaginative and clear (e.g. simple opening and ending).	
2	Can usually join their handwriting.	
3	Can use a range of chosen forms appropriately and consistently. (If the writing is a narrative, simple report or recount of a known story, this cannot be ticked as they should already know these three text forms. If it is another genre, it can be ticked).	
4	Can adapt their chosen form to the audience (e.g. provide information about characters or setting, make a series of points, use brackets for asides, etc.).	
5	Can sometimes use interesting and ambitious words (they should be words not usually used by a child of that age, and not a technical word used in a taught context only, e.g. 'volcano' in geography or 'evaporate' in science).	
6	Can develop and extend ideas logically in sequenced sentences (but they may still be overly detailed or brief).	
7	Can extend sentences using a wider range of connectives to clarify relationships between points and ideas (e.g. when, because, if, after, while, also, as well).	
8	Can usually use correct grammatical structures in sentences (nouns and verbs generally agree).	
9	Can use pronouns appropriately to avoid the awkward repetition of nouns.	
10	Can use most punctuation accurately, including at least three of the following: full stop and capital letter, question mark, exclamation mark, comma, apostrophe.	
11	Can structure and organize work clearly (e.g. beginning, middle, end; letter structure; dialogue structure).	
12	Is beginning to use paragraphs.	
13	Can adapt form and style for purpose (e.g. there is a clear difference between formal and informal letters; use of abbreviated sentences in notes and diaries, etc.).	
14	Can write neatly, legibly and accurately, mainly in a joined style.	
15	Can use adjectives and adverbs for description.	
16	Can spell phonetically regular or familiar common polysyllabic words accurately (sometimes for the 'Developing' category) and most or all of the Year 3 High Frequency Words and the Year 3 words in the National Curriculum Appendix 1.	
17	Can develop characters and describe settings, feelings and/or emotions, etc.	
18	Can link and relate events, including past, present and future, sensibly (afterwards, before, also, after a while, eventually, etc)	
19	Can attempt to give opinion, interest or humour through detail.	
20	Can use generalizing words for style (e.g. sometimes, never, always, often, mainly, mostly, generally, etc.) and/or modal verbs/the conditional tense (e.g. might do it, may go, could rain, should win).	
21	Is beginning to develop a sense of pace (writing is lively and interesting).	

Assessment score

0–5 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 3.

6–9 ticks = Developing

10–17 ticks = Secure

18–21 ticks = Advanced

Assessment point: children with 19 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 5.



Standard 5: Year 4/P5

Standard 5 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 4/P5 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Standard 4 skills

The following skills must be secured as a priority in Year 4/P5:

- Produce close to a side or more of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with some of the features below.
- Interpret the stimulus and purpose broadly accurately and demonstrate about 75% accuracy in basic skills.
- Show variety in sentence structure, including opening in a range of ways, adding detail and/or description and using a wider range of connectives and punctuation.
- Use interesting language with some use of words that are ambitious for their age (occasional misuse or 'purple prose' is acceptable).
- Use most past and present tense verbs accurately.
- Begin to use direct speech and a wider range of connectives (conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions) to show time, place and cause.
- Begin to use paragraphs.
- Produce handwriting that is neat and mainly joined.
- Initiate edits and improvements to their work by proof reading what they have written.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 4' by the end of Year 3 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS2.

Standard 5: Year 4/P5 – end of year expectation

By the end of Year 4/P5, children should be able to:

- Produce more than a side of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with strong features and accurate interpretation of the stimulus and purpose.
- Spell most common words on the Year 3 and 4 word lists correctly, plus all compound words and many complex words.
- Show variety in sentence type and structure, including more sophisticated sentence openings, adding detail and/or description and using a wider range of sophisticated connectives.
- Use interesting language with a wide range of words that are ambitious for their age (occasional misuse is acceptable).
- Use a wide range of punctuation accurately.
- Use a wider range of connectives (conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions) to show time, place and cause.
- Produce handwriting that is neat and joined.
- Organize writing appropriately for the purpose, including using paragraphs.
- Initiate edits and improvements to their work by proof reading what they have written.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 5' by the end of Year 4 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS2.



STANDARD 5: Year 4/P5

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, ✗, ●)
1	Can write in a lively and coherent style.	
2	Can use a range of styles and genres confidently and independently. (If the writing is a narrative, simple report or recount of a known story this cannot be ticked. If any other genre, it can be ticked as they will already know these three text forms.)	
3	Can sometimes use interesting and ambitious words (they should be words not usually used by a child of that age, and not a technical word used in a taught context only, e.g. 'volcano' in geography or 'evaporate' in science).	
4	Can organize ideas appropriately for both purpose and reader (e.g. captions, headings, bullets, fonts, chapters, letter formats, paragraphs, logically sequenced events, contextual and background information etc.).	
5	Can use a wide range of punctuation mainly accurately, including at least three of the following: full stop and capital letter, question mark, exclamation mark, apostrophe and comma.	
6	Can write neatly, legibly and accurately, usually maintaining a joined style.	
7	Can use more sophisticated connectives (e.g. although, however, nevertheless, despite, contrary to, as well as, etc.).	
8	Can use links to show time and cause.	
9	Can open sentences in a wide range of ways for interest and impact.	
10	Can use paragraphs, although they may not always be accurate.	
11	Can produce thoughtful and considered writing (uses simple explanation, opinion, justification and deduction).	
12	Can use or attempt grammatically complex structures (e.g. expansion before and after the noun: 'The little, old man who lived on the hill...'; '... by the lady who taught me the guitar...'; subordinate clauses: 'I felt better when...'; etc.).	
13	Can spell unfamiliar regular polysyllabic words accurately and most or all of the Year 4 High Frequency Words and the Year 4 words in the National Curriculum. Appendix 1.	
14	Can use nouns, pronouns and tenses accurately and consistently throughout.	
15	Can use apostrophes and/or inverted commas, mainly accurately. (If direct speech is not appropriate to the task, apostrophes alone can score the tick).	
16	Can select from a range of known adventurous vocabulary for a purpose, with some words being particularly well chosen.	
17	Can select interesting strategies to move a piece of writing forward (e.g. asides, characterization, dialogue with the audience, dialogue, etc.).	
18	Can advise assertively, although not confrontationally, in factual writing (e.g. 'An important thing to think about before deciding...'; 'We always need to think about...'; etc.).	
19	Can develop ideas in creative and interesting ways.	

Assessment score

0–5 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 4.

6–9 ticks = Developing

10–15 ticks = Secure

16–19 ticks = Advanced

Assessment point: children with 17 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 6.



Standard 6: Year 5/P6

Standard 6 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 5/P6 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Standard 5 skills

The following skills must be secured as a priority in Year 5/P6:

- Produce more than a side of A4 writing that is clear and coherent with strong features and accurate interpretation of the stimulus and purpose.
- Spell most common words on the Year 3 and 4 word lists correctly, plus all compound words and many complex words.
- Show variety in sentence type and structure, including more sophisticated openings, adding detail and/or description and using a wider range of sophisticated connectives.
- Use interesting language with a wide range of words that are ambitious for their age (occasional misuse is acceptable).
- Use a wide range of punctuation accurately.
- Use a wider range of connectives (conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions) to show time, place and cause.
- Produce handwriting that is neat and joined.
- Organize writing appropriately for the purpose, including using paragraphs.
- Initiate edits and improvements to their work by proof reading what they have written.

Standard 6: Year 5/P6 – end of year expectation

By the end of Year 5/P6, children should be able to:

- Show variety in sentence type and structure, including the confident use of a range of sentence openings, punctuation for effect and the inclusion of additional detail and/or description.
- Use very interesting language with a wide range of words that are ambitious for their age and some literary features (e.g. alliteration, onomatopoeia, figurative language, etc.).
- Use the full range of punctuation accurately (as and when appropriate).
- Use a range of formal and informal styles or 'voice' when appropriate.
- Use a wide range of connectives for the full range of purposes and begin to use more sophisticated connectives.
- Produce handwriting that is fluent, neat and joined.
- Organize writing appropriately, including the use of paragraphs and a range of organizational devices.
- Initiate edits and improvements to their work by proof reading what they have written.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 6' by the end of Year 5 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS2.



STANDARD 6: Year 5/P6

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, X, ●)
1	Can produce well-structured and organized writing using a range of conventions in layout.	
2	Can use appropriate informal and formal styles with confidence (e.g. conversational, colloquial, dialect, Standard English).	
3	Can select the correct genre for audience and purpose, and use it accurately.	
4	Can select from a wide range of known imaginative and ambitious vocabulary (they should be words that are not usually used by a child of that age) and use them precisely. (All spelling, including that of complex words, is almost always correct.)	
5	Can use paragraphs consistently and appropriately.	
6	Can group things appropriately before or after a main verb (e.g. 'The books, the pens and the pencils were all ready on the table').	
7	Can use all grammar accurately except when consciously using dialect or colloquialism for purpose and audience.	
8	Can use different techniques to open or conclude work appropriately (e.g. opinion, summary, justification, comment, suspense or prediction).	
9	Can use complex sentence structures appropriately.	
10	Can use a wider range of punctuation, almost always accurately, to include three or more of the following (as appropriate to the text): comma, apostrophe, bullets, inverted commas, hyphen, brackets, colon or semi-colon.	
11	Can use punctuation appropriately to create effect (e.g. exclamation mark, dash, question mark, ellipsis).	
12	Can write neatly, legibly and accurately in a flowing, joined style.	
13	Can adapt handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes, including for effect.	
14	Can spell accurately in all but the most complex words (e.g. paraphernalia, quintessential etc.) and most or all of the Year 5 High Frequency Words and the Year 5 words in the National Curriculum Appendix 1.	
15	Can use the passive voice for variety and to shift focus (e.g. 'The cake was eaten by the child').	
16	Can use a range of narrative techniques with confidence, interweaving elements when appropriate (e.g. action, dialogue, quotation, formal or informal style, aside, observation, suspense).	
17	Can vary sentence length and word order confidently to sustain interest (e.g. 'Having achieved your goals at such an early age, what motivates you to continue? Why fight on?').	
18	Can use a range of devices to adapt writing to the needs of the reader (e.g. headings, sub-headings, bullets, underlining, parenthesis, introduction providing context, footnote, contents, bibliography).	
19	Can use literary features to create effect (e.g. alliteration, onomatopoeia, figurative language, dialect, metaphor, simile etc.).	
20	Can interweave implicit and explicit links between sections.	
21	Can use punctuation to show division between clauses, to indicate, to vary pace, to create atmosphere or to sub-divide (e.g. commas, colons, semicolons, dashes, ellipses).	
22	Can show confident and established 'voice'.	

Assessment score

0–7 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 5.

8–11 ticks = Developing

12–18 ticks = Secure

19–22 ticks = Advanced

Assessment point: children with 20 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 7.



Standard 7: Year 6/P7

Standard 7 can be used both for the termly formal assessment of children's writing throughout Year 6/P7 and to identify the next steps required for progress.

Essential Standard 6 skills

The following skills must be secured as a priority in Year 6/P7:

- Show variety in sentence type and structure, including the confident use of a range of sentence openings, punctuation for effect and the inclusion of additional detail and/or description.
- Use very interesting language with a wide range of words that are ambitious for their age and some literary features (e.g. alliteration, onomatopoeia, figurative language, etc.).
- Use the full range of punctuation accurately (as and when appropriate).
- Use a range of formal and informal styles or 'voice' when appropriate.
- Use a wide range of connectives for the full range of purposes and begin to use more sophisticated connectives.
- Produce handwriting that is fluent, neat and joined.
- Organize writing appropriately, including the use of paragraphs and a range of organizational devices.
- Initiate edits and improvements to their work by proof reading what they have written.

Children are expected to be a 'Secure Standard 6' by the end of Year 5 in order to be on track to meet national expectations at the end of KS2.

Standard 7: Year 6/P7 – end of year expectation

By the end of Year 6/P7, children should be able to:

- demonstrate a wide range of the criteria in Standards 6 and 7 effectively and in a well-managed and mature way, within a single piece of totally independent writing (one and a half sides or more)
- Write with at least 98% accuracy across all aspects of their writing, e.g.
 - text type/genre
 - response to stimulus or purpose
 - basic skills
 - 'writing voice'

A secure of Standard 7 requires the production of a striking piece of writing, similar to that of a literate adult, although the stimulus may be more age appropriate. When asked, "How might this be appropriately improved?" there should be little or no improvement identifiable.

Children who are a 'Secure Standard 7' should easily meet the curriculum expectations at the end of key stage 2.



STANDARD 7: Year 6/P7

Name:

Date:

No	Criteria	Evidence? (✓, ✗, ●)
1	Can spell all vocabulary correctly apart from rare technical or obscure words. (Must have used unusual, ambitious vocabulary that is spelt correctly.)	
2	Can open and close writing in interesting, unusual or dramatic ways, when appropriate.	
3	Can use the full range of punctuation accurately and precisely, including for sub-division, effect, listing, direct speech, parenthesis, etc.	
4	Can write neatly, legibly, accurately and fluently, in a joined style.	
5	Can vary font for effect or emphasis when appropriate (print, italics or capitalization). There may only be one example.	
6	Can use a wide range of conventions appropriately to the context, e.g. paragraphs, sub and side headings, addendum, footnote, contents, etc.	
7	Can use a wide range of sophisticated connectives, including conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions, to show time, cause, sequence and mode, including to open sentences sometimes.	
8	Can use clauses confidently and appropriately for audience and purpose.	
9	Can use implicit links within a text, e.g. referring back to a point made earlier or forward to more information or detail to come.	
10	Can use complex groupings for effect, before or after the verb. (For example: 'How I love the warmth of the summer breeze, the lapping of the waves and the soft swishing of the sand beneath my sandals.') There may only be one example.	
11	Can use a range of techniques to interact or show awareness of the audience, e.g. action, dialogue, quotation, aside, suspense, tension, comment.	
12	Can write with maturity, confidence and imagination.	
13	Can adapt writing for the full range of purposes, always showing awareness of audience and purpose.	
14	Can consciously vary levels of formality according to purpose and audience.	
15	Can sustain a convincing viewpoint throughout the piece of writing, e.g. authoritative, expert, convincing portrayal of character, opposing opinions, etc.	
16	Can use a wide range of ambitious vocabulary accurately and precisely (they should be words that are not usually used by a child of that age).	
17	Can use two or more stylistic features to create effect within the text, e.g. rhetorical questions, repetition, figurative language, passive voice, metaphor, simile, alliteration, onomatopoeia, groupings, elaboration, nominalization, impersonal voice, universal appeal (such as 'Everyone agrees that...').	
18	Can use creative and varied sentence structures when appropriate, intermingling with simple structures for effect.	
19	Can always construct grammatically correct sentences, unless using dialect or alternative constructions consciously for effect.	
20	Can use pertinent and precise detail as appropriate.	
21	Can demonstrate a wide range of the criteria in Standard 7 effectively and in a well-managed and mature way, within a single piece of totally independent writing (of at least one and a half sides of A4).	

Assessment score

0–6 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 6.
7–10 ticks = Developing

11–17 ticks = Secure
18–21 ticks = Advanced



Writing samples

The following pieces of writing exemplify the national expectations for writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2.

Sample 1 – Secure Standard 3: Year 2/P3



Assessment score

0–5 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 2
6–9 ticks = Developing
10–16 ticks = Secure
17–21 ticks = Advanced

Assessment point: children with 18 or more ticks may be assessed against Standard 4.

Score = 12/21.
Judgement = Standard 3 Secure.



Sample 2 – Secure Standard 7: Year 6/P7

Cell 13,
Deepest Dungeon,
His Majesty's Prison,
Waterside Rd.
9th May 1910.

Dearest Ratty,

No doubt word has reached you of my current and dismal whereabouts. Indeed, the rumours are true! You, Badger and Mole always knew best. I know you will never forgive me, but I deeply hope that you will try to understand why I did what I did.

Obviously, you will already know the beginning of my story (when you tried to help me, but, as the stubborn toad that I am, I ~~had~~ declined all help) but for the rest of the events you will have pieced together an inaccurate and untruthful version; probably not one that threw me into the best light!

To help you understand, I have enclosed an extract from yesterday's newspaper. Hopefully, it will be informative...

THE RIVERSIDE TIMES Volume 12
Issue 1

The Toad that Fought the Law...

<p>The Crown Court recently had an unusual defendant on show. Mr. Toad (aged 24) has a reputation among his fellow animals for being stubborn, a spoilt but kind-hearted creature who squanders his inheritance of over £200,000!</p> <p>Earlier today Mr. Toad surprised us all.</p>	<p>Being so wealthy, most would assume that he would have no need for this thing: Toad, however, proved them wrong. Toad inexplicably felt the need to take a motorcar that was left unattended outside the Red Lion Pub.</p> <p>With these clear allegations against him, the pompous P.T.O</p>
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<p>amphibean had no chance when his case was taken to court.</p> <p>Consequently, the toad was sentenced to 20</p>	<p>long years in His Majesty's Prison. He was dragged away screaming... "I am innocent!"</p> <p>Reported by Niamh Berry</p>
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The cheek of it! 'The pompous amphibian', 'spoilt, stubborn'. I don't know what an amphibian is, but it doesn't sound particularly friendly! Frankly, I suppose I am 'spoilt' and 'stubborn' but there is such a thing as fact.

I will surely perish in here, while this dark cloud of death hangs over me. Never have I realised how much I relished life on the riverbank. I miss the lush green fields, I miss the happy gurgle of the river. I miss the trips to your boat, I miss YOU, Mole and Badger, but most of all I miss the open road. I can feel the humming engines echoing past me in the world from above. Poop, poop...

Spare me a kind thought now and then, Ratty. And know that I will always be thinking of you as I deteriorate in this detestable, dank hole.

Give my love to Mole, Badger and all who reside on the river bank.

Yours Sincerely,
Toad
(Toad of Toad Hall)

Assessment score

0-6 ticks = not yet working at this Standard; review against Standard 6.
 7-10 ticks = Developing
 11-17 ticks = Secure
 18-21 ticks = Advanced

Score = 17/21
Judgement = Standard 7 Secure

Oxford Primary Writing Assessment

The **Oxford Writing Criterion Scale** is a comprehensive set of criteria created to inform consistent teacher assessment of reading across a whole school. It has been developed by leading experts in reading and assessment and trialled and tested in schools across the UK.

The **Oxford Writing Criterion Scale** reflects the structure and matches the expectations of the new national Curriculum in England, whilst providing a much more detailed breakdown of reading skills and the gradual progression and development of these skills. It includes criteria for pre-reading and the Reception year right through to Year 6 to give schools a continuous reading assessment tool.

The **Oxford Writing Criterion Scale** is simple to use yet provides:

- a robust and consistent framework for teacher assessment
- a means of identifying what children can do and what they need to do next
- a means of tracking progress – within and across year groups
- a means of identifying where children are, in relation to national expectations
- a common language for reporting to parents and other stakeholders

Use alongside the **Oxford Writing Criterion Scale** for a complete approach to teacher assessment in English.



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