English Department: Key Stage Three Depth of Understanding Descriptors



HOW DO WE ASSESS PROGRESS AND UNDERSTANDING?

In the first half term of Year 7, our pupils do a baseline test assessing their reading and writing skills to allow us to build a picture of their skills and knowledge. Thereafter each unit of work assesses reading, writing or spoken language skills over nine levels that span the whole of Key Stage Three.

Each unit of work has two assessment points. The first is a 'formative' assessment where the criteria against which they are being assessed is explained to pupils and they receive feedback which gives them specific targets to focus on so they can make progress. Pupils are then given time to practise these skills, building to a second assessment point, the summative assessment, where they receive an overall level of progress, as well as understanding the finer skills that form this judgement.

SKILLS LADDERS

Our pupils are measured against a set of nine ability descriptors which mark their attainment. Across each assessment point, and Key Stage Three, our pupils aim to climb the ladder.



S I am excelling in a sustained evaluation of the text I am achieving a sustained evaluation of the text O I am beginning to achieve a sustained evaluation of the text 🗘 I am excelling in a detailed and developed analysis of the text S I am achieving a detailed and developed analysis of the text

 I am beginning to achieve a detailed and developed analysis of the text
 I am achieving a clear response to the text with explanations

 I am beginning to achieve a clear response to the text with explanations
 I am achieving some comprehension and some comment on the text I am excelling in thoughtful writing that uses a wide range of impressive skills with sophisticated elements and a high level of accuracy
 I am achieving thoughtful

writing that uses a wide range of impressive skills with sophisticated elements and a high level of accuracy

 I am beginning to achieve thoughtful writing that uses a wide range of impressive skills with sophisticated elements and a high level of accuracy
 I am excelling in detailed writing that uses a range of effective skills, consistently and accurately

I am achieving detailed writing that uses a range of effective skills, consistently and accurately

I am beginning to achieve detailed writing that uses a range of effective skills, consistently and accurately

I am achieving clear writing that uses key skills

I am beginning to achieve clear writing that uses key skills
I am achieving writing that uses some skills SPEAKING AND LISTENING

• I am excelling in thoughtful, carefully structured and responsive communication that engages the audience through a range of strategies

 I am achieving thoughtful, carefully structured and responsive communication that engages the audience through a range of strategies

• I am beginning to achieve thoughtful, carefully structured and responsive communication that engages the audience through a range of strategies

I am excelling well organised communication that engages my audience with some strategies

I am achieving well organised communication that engages my audience with some strategies

• I am beginning to achieve well organised communication that engages my audience with some strategies

I am achieving clear communication with some purpose with some attempt at using strategies

O I am beginning to achieve clear communication with some purpose with some attempt at using strategies

 I am achieving some communication of ideas with some organisation

HOW DO WE ARRIVE AT AN OVERALL DESCRIPTOR?

Each area of assessment (Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening) comprises different areas of assessment called assessment objectives (AO). Each assessment is marked against these, and an overall descriptor decided by best fit. The pages that follow show these in detail.

This system allows our pupils to see where they are with each specific skill; demonstrating their strengths and areas for improvement. With their teacher's guidance, our pupils can follow their pathway of progress, celebrating the successes they achieve whilst also identifying what they need to do to continue making the best progress of which they capable.

READING

Planning AO: How carefully/independently pupils plan their work before beginning Reading AO1: How pupils show their understanding of what they have read and studied

Reading AO2: How pupils write about a writer's choices and the effect these have on readers and/or audiences

Reading AO3: How pupils show their understanding of the connections between texts and the contexts in which they were written

Proofreading AO: How well/carefully pupils check and improve their finished work.

Planning AO: How carefully/independently pupils plan their work before beginning Writing AO1: How effective pupils' writing is Writing AO2: How pupils organise and layout their writing

Writing AO3: How ambitious and accurate pupils' writing is

Proofreading AO: How well/carefully pupils check and improve their finished work.

C SPEAKING AND LISTENING

S&L AO1: How pupils speak

S&L AO2: How pupils convey their ideas

S&L AO3: How pupils organise their ideas

S&L AO4: How pupils listen to, and participate in, discussions with their peers.



Key Stage 3 Reading Assessment What skills have you achieved?

| Skills levels → | Working towards | I am achieving | I am beginning to achieve | I am achieving | I am beginning to achieve | I am achieving | I am excelling in | l am beginning to achieve | I am achieving | I am excelling in |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| Criteria 🗸 | some comprehension and | some comment on the text | a clear response to t | he text with explanations | d | etailed and developed analysis o | ed and developed analysis of the text | | a sustained evaluation of the text | |
| P1 Pre- assessment: How carefully you plan your work | With support: With guidance, I am able to discuss the ideas for what my answer might include | Sometimes, with support: I am able to summarise the discussions we have had in class out loud I can explain my ideas for what my answer might include | □ I am able to think about the question and understand the task without support □ I have been able to fill in a plan given to me | □ I have added my <i>own</i> ideas and quotes to a plan created in class □ I know what the key words are in the question and plan to answer these | ☐ I have used ideas from the plans we have made in class but have chosen the final structure myself | ☐ I have included an introduction and conclusion using my own, thoughtful ideas ☐ I know what the key words are in the question and my response is based around these | □ I have planned my answer independently □ I know what the key words are in the question and my response is based around these | ☐ All of my points connect to each other and my essay has coherence and flow linked to the key words in the question | ☐ I have created a personalised response (an argument) that addresses the key words in the question and refer back to this through my essay | My introduction lays out a personal and conceptualised response which flows through all the ideas in my essay My conclusion does not just recap my main ideas but brings my ideas together |
| R1: How you show your understanding of what you | With support: I can verbally say what like or dislike about the text in response to questions I can follow the text and recall some simple ideas I can remember things that have happened in the text to support my ideas | Sometimes with support: | I have identified some simple, obvious points about the text I can explain what is suggested about a character or idea, but not explicitly said (inference) I have included some evidence from the text but sometimes this is inaccurate or retells/paraphrases the narrative I have used a writing frame to organise my writing | ☐ I have clear ideas about the text ☐ I have selected quotations that support my ideas ☐ I have organised my ideas into paragraphs ☐ My paragraphs follow a clear and sensible format (e.g. PEA) | □ I have explained relevant ideas about the text □ I have included my own ideas □ I have carefully chosen short, suitable quotes to support my points □ I have organised my work into clear paragraphs and used appropriate connectives to link my ideas | ☐ I have used relevant topic sentences that begin to link ideas from across the text ☐ I have used clear topic sentences to outline my paragraphs and show the organisation of my ideas | ☐ I have used topic sentences that often link to ideas from across the text ☐ I have varied the sentence types I have used to explain my ideas e.g. complex sentences for complex ideas | □ I use some thoughtful and interesting topic sentences that link to ideas from across the text □ I have begun to consider 'big ideas' in my analysis □ I embed the quotations I have chosen confidently □ I have experimented with using different paragraph structures to develop my ideas □ If relevant: I have made interesting and analytical comparisons between the ideas in two different texts | I use consistently thoughtful and interesting topic sentences that link ideas from across the text I write clearly about 'big ideas' in my analysis I know when to use embedded quotations or other textual references to support the points I am making | I use developed topic sentences that link across the texts and build upon one another to create a detailed, conceptual response I write confidently about 'big ideas' in my analysis |
| have read | | | | | | □ I use my own ideas through □ I have chosen short, meani points clearly □ I have tried to embed my c always flow in the sentence (<i>I</i>) square brackets to 'fix' a quot □ <i>If relevant</i> : I have made co ideas in two different texts | ingful quotes that link to my quotations but it doesn't I haven't used ellipses or re's tense or meaning) | | I am confident using a perso that are fluent rather than forr I frelevant: I have made eva between texts | nulaic |
| R2: How you write about the writer's choices and the effect these have on readers. | Usually with support: I am able to say how words in a text make me feel I am able to say how a character/event/moment in a text makes me feel | Sometimes with support: I am able to spot and explain why the writer has used a certain word I can verbally explain what a writer has told me about a character, but not explicitly said I am able to explain my ideas out loud and then write it down clearly | □ I have identified some features and/or simple language techniques □ I have explained why the writer may have chosen certain words □ I have made reference to refer to them | □ I have identified some language techniques and explained their effect in a general way (e.g. the use of repetition makes it memorable) □ I am able to explain what a writer is suggesting through their word choice (inference) □ I have explained the effect of a text on a reader in a general way (e.g. this makes the reader feel happy for Priya) □ I have used the writer's surname to refer to them | □ I have identified and analysed language used by the writer using some subject terminology □ I have explained the effect of short quotes, including (where relevant) individual words □ I have explained the effect of a text on a reader clearly □ I have explained some structural aspects of the text | □ I have explored language choices in quotes in detail and examined their effects □ I have examined the effect of a text on a reader using clear examples from the text □ I have begun to analyse a writer's structural choices (explaining how characters or ideas change/develop across a text) □ If relevant, I have commented on the form of the text and explained its effect on the reader's understanding | □ I have begun to consider layers of meaning □ I have begun to examine a writer's choice of language techniques □ I have begun to offer multiple interpretations of a writer's language choices □ I have begun to analyse the structural choices a writer has made and explained the effects | □ I have analysed layers of meaning □ I have examined a writer's choice of language techniques clearly and, where relevant, offered multiple interpretations of a writer's language choices with confidence □ I can explain how a reader's reaction might change or develop across a text, or how they are left feeling and offer explanations for this | □ I have evaluated the effect of aspects of language, form and structure □ I recognise that the text is consciously crafted and can explore how and why the writer has done this □ I have compared how different readers/audiences might feel and why | □ I have confidently and perceptively evaluated how the writer has communicated an idea through language, form and structure |
| R3: How you show your understanding of the connections between texts and the contexts in which they were written. | Usually with support: lidentify some obvious conventions of a text type (e.g. the use of 'Once upon a time' as the start of a fairy tale, or the use of a headline) | Sometimes with support: I am aware that texts are set in different times and places and can discuss this | I have added in some ideas about the writer and the time they lived in I can explain the differences between the time of the text and now | □ I have included some clear ideas about the historical, social and/or cultural context of the text and these are relevant to the point I am making | □ I have included relevant ideas about the social and/or cultural context of the text and these are clearly linked to the point I am making | I have linked the contextual information I have used to the effect had on the reader If relevant, I have commented on the genre of the text | □ I have begun to explain how the context of the text can affect the reader's understanding of the ideas or characters □ My contextual points are embedded into my essay | I have clear understanding of how different readers/audiences might receive the text different based on their social or historical background I can explain how and why a writer's ideas are relevant to a modern audience I have explained how the genre of a text can affect the reader/audience's understanding I have linked some of my points to generic features of the text e.g. The dark labyrinth is typical of a gothic setting | | □ I am able to evaluate how the social, historical and/or generic context of the text affects the meaning and/or the reader's understanding. |
| P2 Post- assessment: How well you check your work | With support: I can verbally offer improvements to my written work when these have been identified for me | Sometimes with support: I can verbally identify what I have done well and what I could have done differently | spelt correctly and under I have identified what | ds that I am not sure I have rlined these with wiggly lines t went well and what I could ave labelled this on my work | I have gone through my work and corrected spelling and punctuation errors I have checked my target and shown where I have tried to meet this in my work | | I have gone through my work, added in connectives where necessary and improved my word choices, paragraphing and have used more ambitious vocabulary and punctuation choices (e.g. semicolons) I have evaluated my topic sentences or introduction/conclusion and revised my ideas | | ☐ I have looked at my writing and independently worked out what I need to do to improve as a critical reader and noted this on my work ☐ My proofreading is thorough | □ I have evaluated my own writing and made changes which fit the purpose, tone and form of my writing. |



Key Stage 3 Writing Assessment What skills have you achieved?

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|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| Skills levels → Criteria ↓ | Working towards | I am achieving | l am beginning to achieve | I am achieving | I am beginning to achieve | I am achieving | I am excelling in | I am beginning to achieve | I am achieving | I am excelling in | | |
| | writing that uses some skills | | clear writing that uses key skills | | detailed writing that uses a range of effective skills, cor | | consistently and accurately | insistently and accurately thoughtful writing that uses | | a wide range of impressive skills with sophisticated elements and a high level of accuracy | | |
| P1 Pre- assessment: How carefully you plan your work | With support: With guidance, I am able to discuss the ideas for what my answer might include | Sometimes, with support: I am able to summarise the discussions we have had in class out loud I can explain my ideas for what my answer might include | I am able to think about the question and understand the task without support I have been able to fill in a plan given to me | □ I have added my <i>own</i> ideas to a plan created in class | I have used ideas from the plans we have made in class but have chosen the final structure myself | | □ I have planned my answer independently | All of my points connect to each other and my writing has coherence and flow | □ I have planned my writing to include a range of elements best suits the form I am writing in (e.g. opening a persuasive speech with an appropriate technique) | ☐ My writing is planned around a central idea (conceit) that I build upon through the piece | | |
| W1: How effective your writing is | With support: I have written some simple ideas on the page I have added some ideas to a piece of writing given to me | Sometimes, with support: I have used adjectives and verbs in my writing I am aware of the purpose of my writing I have used ideas from a model piece of writing | I am beginning to use some relevant ideas of my own in my writing I am aware of the purpose of my writing and am using some conventions of the form (<i>e.g. headlines for an</i> <i>article</i>) I have created a character and/or setting which suits the style of the writing I have tried to use some literary techniques in my writing (e.g. similes, alliteration) | □ I have used some simple, original ideas □ I am aware of the purpose of my writing and am simple conventions of the form (headlines etc.) □ I have attempted to use a range of literary devices | □ I have used my own, relevant and appropriate original ideas throughout □ The purpose of my writing is clear and I use the conventions of the form with confidence □ I have used a range of literary devices | ☐ I have used my own ideas in an imaginative way, though not always with full control (e.g. beginning to use an informal tone for humour) ☐ I have tried to establish a clear point of view to convey the purpose of my writing ☐ I have used a wide range of literary devices and these are linked to my purpose | □ I have used my own ideas in an imaginative way successfully □ My writing shows that I have a sense of a reader and I am trying to appeal to/have an effect on them □ I have established a clear and sustained point of view in my writing □ I am beginning to use imaginative literary techniques, such as juxtaposition effectively | ☐ I have imaginatively suited my writing for purpose and maintain a consistent 'voice' throughout ☐ My writing demonstrates that I have a clear sense of a reader and am able to affect them ☐ I have used an ambitious range of literary techniques and devices, such as extended metaphors and foreshadowing ☐ My writing explores a 'big idea' | □ If relevant, I have been able to use a range of voices for effect □ I have successfully affected the reader's reaction in a way which matches the genre/form of the task □ I have used an ambitious range of literary techniques that are closely linked to the effects I am trying to achieve in my reader (e.g. sensory imagery to invoke disgust) □ My writing explores a 'big idea' subtly and throughout | ☐ I have created a convincing text which suits the genre/form of the task ☐ My writing shows flair and sophistication throughout ☐ My writing explores a 'big idea' with sophistication | | |
| W2: The organisation of your writing | With support: I can put my ideas into a piece of writing I am able to write a complete paragraph I have used simple sentences accurately in my writing | Sometimes, with support: | ☐ I am able to divide up my own writing into units using // ☐ I have used simple and compound sentences accurately | □ I have divided my writing into paragraphs □ I have begun to use complex sentences with some accuracy □ I have stayed in the right tense and the right person (unless you are experimenting with flashbacks etc.) | | □ I have used a range of paragraph lengths for effect, mostly accurately □ I have used appropriate connectives/discourse markers at the start of paragraphs and followed these with a comma | □ I have varied the lengths of my paragraphs for effect with accuracy □ I have used a range and variety of paragraph beginnings □ I have used sentences with fronted adverbial phrases correctly (e.g. After dark, Sami left) □ I am beginning to match my sentence types to the effects I | I have experimented with structural features (cyclical, flashbacks) with some success I have used a variety of sentence lengths and types in my writing to create effects with consistent success | □ I have experimented with structural features (<i>cyclical</i> , <i>flashbacks</i>) effectively □ I have manipulated the lengths of my sentences for a particular effect which matches the tone and topic of my writing □ I have created a cohesive piece of writing which has fluency across my paragraphs □ In my non-fiction writing, I ha argument. | □ I have manipulated the structure of my sentences and/or paragraphs with techniques (e.g. anaphora) and the placement of subordinate clauses for a particular effect which matches the tone and topic of my writing. | | |
| W3: How ambitious and accurate your writing is | With support: I have used clear spaces between words I have used full stops at the end of some sentences and/or paragraphs I have tried to make all my letters the right size and in the right place on the line | sentences Sometimes, with support: I have used consistent spacing between words have mostly used capital letters for 'I' and names and places (proper nouns) I have used full stops to end most of my sentences I have made sure that all my letters are the right size and in the right space on the line | □ I have used apostrophes mostly accurately for contractions (don't) and possession (Abisha's shoes) □ I have used capital letters and full stops accurately □ I have mostly used commas accurately □ My writing is mostly legible, but difficult to read in places | I have used commas accurately I have punctuated speech (dialogue) mostly correctly I have spelt most common words correctly o My handwriting is legible and easy to read | accurately I have chosen my adjectives, verbs and adverbs carefully I have punctuated dialogue accurately I have begun to vary my punctuation to try to create effects I have spelt common homophones correctly | □ I have tried to use some interesting vocabulary □ I have tried to use some more ambitious punctuation (e.g. ellipses, semicolons) but not always accurately □ I have spelt common words and homophones with accuracy | would like to achieve | □ I have used a wide range of ambitious vocabulary accurately □ I have used ambitious punctuation accurately □ I have spelt almost everything correctly, even complex, unusual words | □ I have used a wide range of ambitious vocabulary accurately and for effect □ I have used the full range of punctuation with a high level of accuracy and for effect □My spelling is accurate throughout, including very complex words | □ I have crafted punctuation to create particular effects (e.g. using a colon to present a key idea, using a semicolon or colon to indicate causation) □ I have judicously used vocabulary to create subtle and sophisticated patterns which match the tone and gene/form or my writing | | |
| P2 Past- assessment: How well you check your work | Usually, with support: I can verbally offer improvements to my written work when these have been identified for me | Sometimes, with support: I can verbally identify what I have done well and what I could have done differently | I have corrected my use of apostrophes (especially if I have used them for plurals!) I have identified what went well and what I could have done better and label this on my work I have identified words that I am not sure I have spelt correctly and underlined these with wiggly lines | | I have worked on my target and shown where I have tried to meet this in my work I have gone through my work and corrected spelling and punctuation errors I have looked at the verbs I have chosen and made improvements to make them convey exactly what I mean (e.g. changing 'I yelled' to 'I bellowed') | | I have gone through my work, added in connectives where necessary and improved my word choices, paragraphing and have used more ambitious vocabulary and punctuation choices (e.g. semicolons) I have made some changes to try to ensure that my language use is original and imaginative | | □ I have looked at my writing and independently worked out what I need to do to improve as a critical reader and noted this on my work □ I have been through my worl structural choices are clear and would affect my reader | | | |



Key Stage 3 Speaking and Listening Assessment What skills have you achieved?

| | Manda a tananda | Lans askindar | I am beginning | Lana ankin da a | l am beginning to | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| Skills levels → Criteria ↓ | Working towards I am achieving some communication of ideas with some organisation I am achieving | | to achieve I am achieving clear communication with some purpose with some attempt at using strategies | | achieve I am achieving I am excelling in well organised communication that engages my audience with some strategies | | | I am beginning to achieve I am achieving I am excelling in thoughtful, carefully structured, and responsive communication that engages the audience through a range of strategies | | |
| S1: How you speak | With support: I can sometimes respond non- verbally to directed questions | Sometimes with support: I am sometimes able to respond to directed questions | □ I can speak audibly and intelligibly □ With some assistance, I can speak about a given topic □ I am beginning to be able to share and explain my ideas | □ I can show some confidence when speaking about topics that are of interest to me □ I know that some situations require more formal ways of speaking than others do | ☐ I know what standard English is and when it should be used ☐ I can speak in some different situations | ☐ I can speak and listen in a range of different situations ☐ I generally use standard English, when appropriate | □ I speak and listen confidently in a range of situations □ I use standard English in formal situations consistently. | □ I change the way I speak in a wide variety of different situations so that what I says is always appropriate □ I use standard English fluently in formal situations | □ I am confident speaking in all situations, even those that are new to me □ I use standard English fluently and can assess when it is required | I speak purposefully and convincingly in a range of contexts I use standard English fluently and can assess when it is required, adapting it as necessary |
| S2: How you convey your ideas | With support: ☐ I can non- verbally agree or disagree with ideas offered to me | Sometimes with support: I can repeat some of the ideas that have been discussed with me or in class I can sometimes use complete sentences to | I have some of my own ideas and can speak about these I can use complete sentences to express these ideas | □ I can explain some of my ideas □ I am careful in the words that I choose | I can explain my ideas I have chosen some words deliberately for effect (<i>e.g. powerful</i> <i>verbs</i>) | □ I express clear ideas/information/feelings □ I have tried to use some interesting vocabulary | I express developed ideas/information/feelings When I speak, I vary my expression and vocabulary I have included some rhetorical devices in my speaking (e.g. rule of three) | I express thoughtful ideas/information/feelings My vocabulary and expression are varied and lively when I speak I have included a range of f | I express challenging ideas/information/feelings I use vocabulary precisely and creatively I use intonation and emphasis for effect hetorical devices in my | I express a wide range of sophisticated ideas/feelings/information I use a sophisticated vocabulary I use intonation and emphasis appropriate to the purpose I am trying to achieve I have used an ambitious range rhetorical devices |
| S3 :How you organise your ideas | | express these ideas | | ☐ I am able to follow a structure given to me | □ I am able to order my ideas in a simple way | ☐ There is a beginning, middle and an end to my presentation | □ I am beginning to organise my presentation in a way that conveys my ideas clearly | speaking, linked to the purpos | | □ I organise my presentation in a sophisticated way using a range of structural techniques linked to the purpose of my presentation and my audience |
| S4: How you listen to, and participate in, discussions | With support: I am able to follow some of the discussion taking place, but I don't, or I rarely, contribute verbally | Sometimes with support: I can listen to discussion and can give simple answers to questions from my peers | □ I can listen to discussion and give clear answers to questions from my peers | □ I sometimes make appropriate comments in discussions | □ I can show that I have listened through asking questions | □ I listen carefully in discussions and ask question that show I have engaged with what I have heard | I listen carefully in discussions and often ask and answer questions that develop the idea of my peers | ☐ I take an active part in discussions and can assume different roles based on what has been said | □ I make significant contributions to discussions □ I am able to listen sensitively and build on others' ideas | I show that I have listened perceptively and can evaluate others' ideas I am able to respond to questions with elaboration and further ideas |