

A Guide to KS2 Writing Moderation in 2017

Written by Shareen Mayers, Primary teacher and Independent English Consultant

For another two years, the [KS2 Interim teacher assessment framework](#) is to be used by schools to support writing judgments at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Schools will be notified if they have an external moderation visit on or after 19th May 2017. LAs have a statutory responsibility to externally moderate a minimum sample of 25% of their LA maintained schools, **plus** 25% of academies that opt to be included in the LA's external moderation provision – it is not just 25% for most LAs ([2017 teacher assessment and external moderation guidance](#), page 14). The deadline for submitting teacher assessments is Thursday 29th June 2017 and moderation visits will take place between Monday 5th and Thursday 29th June 2017. Shareen Mayers shares her views below and summarises the essential moderation information for schools, academy chains and local authorities.

Best practice for writing moderation in schools

- 1) Read the [2017 teacher assessment and external moderation guidance](#). This is essential reading for all schools and LAs. It has detailed information about the status of spelling, handwriting, independent work and expectations for KS2 writing moderators this year. For example, moderators not only have to take a test but must also be quality assured and manage a professional discussion during a moderation visit (page 15). On page 8–11, the moderation process is set out in detail. It explains what should happen before, during and after a moderation visit. It also explains the LA's responsibility to check all data, including having a defined data validation process, using local intelligence to investigate any unexpected pattern of attainment for **any** school.
- 2) Mark or give feedback to your pupils! Teaching writing and modelling the process can be a powerful aspect of teaching. For writing moderation, a few pieces of writing need to be independently completed by the pupils, but the rest of the work from across the year can be marked (where appropriate) as per the school's feedback policy. Even when pupils have edited and proofread their own work, teachers can still 'assess' the final piece as part of their ongoing assessments, rather than leaving it to the end of term.
- 3) Maximise opportunities to use quality texts, topics, visits, film clips, drama and curriculum experiences as a stimulus for writing. The best way to complete this is by teaching writing through audience and purpose. There is, of course, still room to teach text types but this approach enables pupils to apply their learning in a different context.

Purpose	Writing outcomes – quality text as a stimulus
To persuade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Persuasive letter (heavily scaffolded and modelled) Feedback helps pupils to understand any spelling errors. Feedback enables pupils to edit and evaluate their work and understand the key features of persuasive writing. This is not independent work.
	<p>Apply in a different context.</p> Pupils complete this independently because it has already been modelled and pupils have been taught how to edit and improve their work. There is no need to re-teach the purpose. Stimulus is from a book, topic, film clip etc. so no need to review content in detail.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Persuasive advert• Persuasive leaflet Some writing might also be a combination of purposes.

Preparing for a moderation visit

- 1) It is important not to prepare portfolios of work for a moderation visit. Indeed, it is crucial for the moderators to see the drafting and editing process. The best evidence for writing moderation is everyday work from English/literacy books and other subjects where relevant. Although it is not essential to provide evidence from other subjects, it is vital to note that evidence of writing across the curriculum is needed for Ofsted outstanding.

'Evidence of pupils' work is available for external moderation in order to demonstrate attainment of the 'pupil can' statements at the standard awarded. This should be in the form of day-to-day work from across the curriculum, although English and literacy work may produce the depth of evidence required.'
(2017 STA teacher assessment external moderation, page 8)

'Teachers embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics exceptionally well across the curriculum.'
(Ofsted Outstanding Descriptor, Ofsted School Inspection Handbook, page 48)

- 2) Although non-statutory, the exemplification materials are useful! Use these materials to understand what the statements 'some' and 'most' mean, especially for spelling. There is no set number and it is important not to make this up! It gives teachers an idea of the spelling errors that Morgan (Expected standard) makes and provides a sense of what 'most' might mean.

Piece A: 5–6 pages long – 4 errors

Piece B: 2 pages – 2 errors

Piece C: 1.5 pages – 1 error

Piece D: 5/6 pages – 4 errors

Piece E: 1.5 pages – 1 error (other errors not a KS2 spelling rule so does not count)

Piece F: 1.5 pages – 0 errors from KS2 spelling rules (one error for technical vocabulary)

'...in making consistent judgements on these ['some' and 'most'] is provided as part of the exemplification material. However, where they have been used, they have consistent meaning with 'most', indicating that the statement is generally met with only occasional errors and 'some' indicating that the skill/knowledge is starting to be acquired, and is demonstrated correctly on occasion, but is not consistent or frequent...'

(KS2 Interim teacher assessment framework, page 3)

KS2 spelling years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 word lists

'Pupils are not required to evidence all of these words across their range of writing. However, where listed words are used, some or most, must be spelt correctly in line with the interim TA framework 'pupil can' statements.'

(2017 STA teacher assessment external moderation, page 12)

Key stage 2 exemplification materials

- 1) Moderate with other schools and within your own school. This is an essential aspect to making judgements and supports consistency across a range of schools. It is also great to have an external viewpoint. Moderation is not just about an LA external moderation visit in June. It is also about ongoing assessments, standardising judgements internally and with other schools locally.
- 2) Be prepared to discuss independent work and to use the interim assessment framework to explain why a pupil is working at a standard. For example, *'We modelled the first part so this isn't independent, but then the pupils wrote the rest of the short story independently and you can see this from looking at the range of stories across the cohort.'* *'I know that pupil x is at the expected standard because you can see that they have used a range of cohesive devices in this piece and across the range of writing to help their paragraph to flow etc.'*

Success criteria will enable pupils to know how well they have done and what they need to achieve without modelling or heavily scaffolding with examples. This doesn't mean that over-aided success criteria are never used – it is great for some pupils, it just means that it won't be classed as independent work!

- 3) Refer to the [national curriculum](#) to understand what the 'pupil can' statements mean. Pupils might demonstrate a wider knowledge of the curriculum but this gives teachers a good guide. For example, teachers often ask about the passive but there are examples in the national curriculum:

Use of the passive to affect the presentation of information in a sentence [for example, 'I broke the window in the greenhouse' versus 'The window in the greenhouse was broken (by me)'].

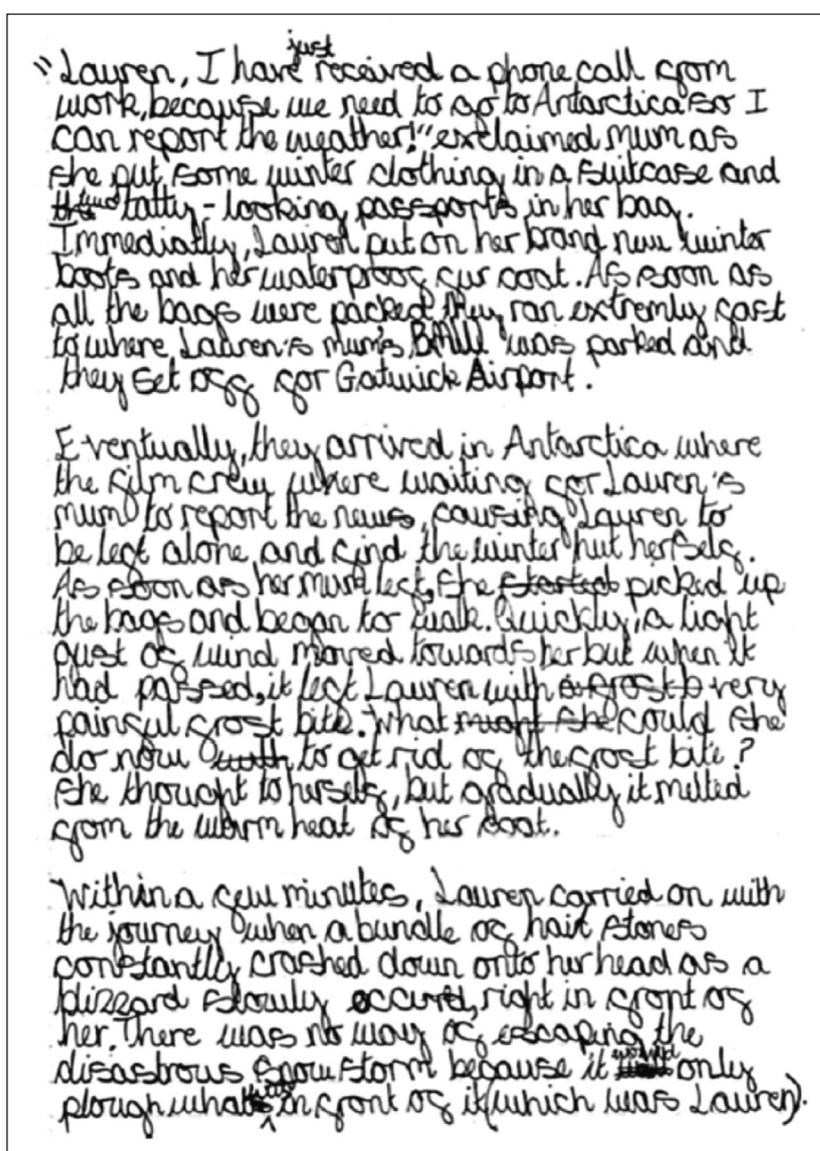
The verb 'be' ('was'), or some other verb such as 'get'.

'A visit was arranged by the school.' 'Our cat got run over by a bus.'

Making judgements about children's writing

The interim assessment framework is statutory for schools to make their end of key stage judgements. It is a judgement for a collection of work rather than single pieces of writing. Therefore, pupils do not need to demonstrate all the 'pupil can' statements in every single piece of writing – it is across the collection.

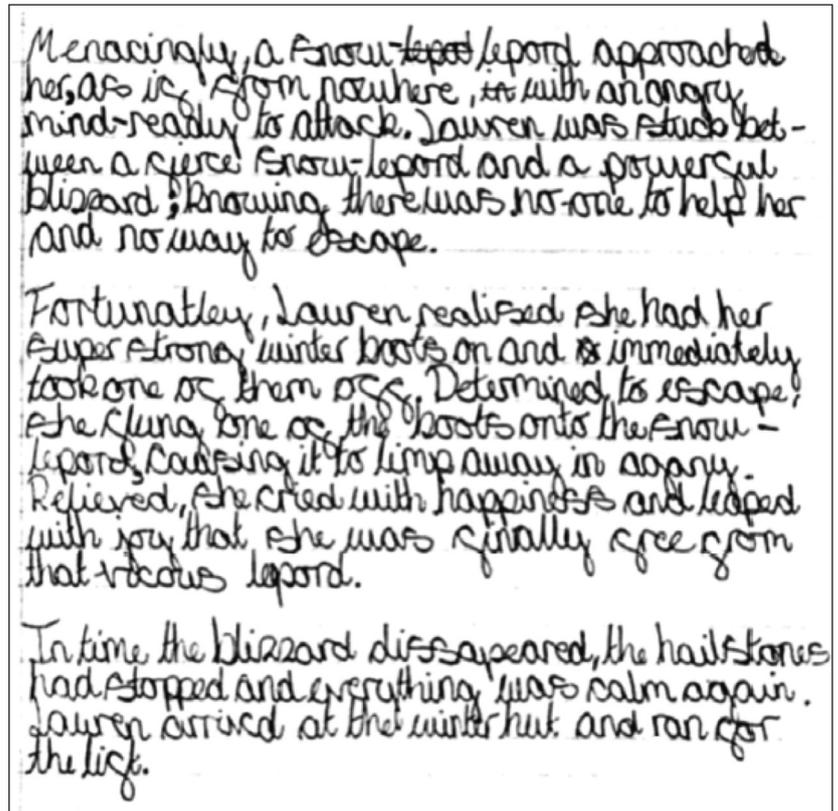
- 1) Read through the range of writing. Remember, there are no number of pieces set nationally because the exemplification materials are non-statutory, so make sure there is writing for a range of purposes (e.g. to persuade, to entertain, to instruct, to explain, to recount etc.). The collection should demonstrate every 'pupil can' statement.
- 2) Use the interim framework and review each 'pupil can' statement from across the range of writing. Use your ongoing assessments to inform your judgement so that this is not too onerous at the end of term.



Taken from Leigh (Expected Standard, Short Story, Piece A), STA exemplification material, March 2016

Points to note

- In the example, Leigh does not use a separate line for dialogue (e.g. new line, new speaker) but is still at the expected standard for creating atmosphere and integrating dialogue.
- The example shows evidence for expanded noun phrases, passive voice, adverbs, fronted adverbials and a range of multi-clause sentences.
- Spelling is mostly correct. There is some inconsistency when adding the -ly suffix to words ending in 'e' (immediatly/immediately; extremely; fortunatley).



Taken from Leigh (Expected Standard, Short Story, Piece A), STA exemplification material, March 2016

TOP TIPS AND INFORMATION FOR MODERATING WRITING

- Pupils do not need to meet the handwriting 'pupil can' statements for working towards or the expected standard, but they do need it for greater depth.
- Semi-colon and colon for two independent clauses is only needed for greater depth but pupils may demonstrate these at the expected standard. Semi-colon for lists and colon to introduce lists is appropriate for the expected standard.
- Use the interim framework to make judgements and not your gut feeling. For example, 'It just feels like greater depth.' It's a secure fit so pupils need to meet all the statements at greater depth and all the preceding standards.
- Look at the exemplification materials. Although these are non-statutory, they are a great guide for making decisions about what 'some' and 'most' mean in practice.



@ShareenMayers

Primary teacher and Independent English Consultant

Shareen is assessment adviser to Rising Stars and has several roles within education, including as a teacher, presenter, trainer and educational author. She is currently teaching in year 6, is a certified KS2 writing moderator and is also the KS1 moderation and KS2 writing moderation manager for a London LA. Most recently, Shareen was senior adviser to the Standards and Testing Agency for national KS2 writing moderator training. She supported with the implementation of the national STA KS2 writing moderator training for LAs across the whole of England.