



2026 national curriculum tests

Key stage 2

What are the SATs?

- SATs are the Standardised Assessment Tests that are given to children at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The SATs take place over four days, starting on **Monday 11th May** ending on **Thursday 14th May**.
- The SATs papers consist of:
 - Spelling, punctuation and grammar (paper 1: Grammar/ Punctuation/ Spelling) – Monday 11th May
 - Spelling, punctuation and grammar (paper 2: Spelling test) – Monday 11th May
 - Reading – Tuesday 12th May
 - Maths (paper 1: Arithmetic) – Wednesday 13th May
 - Maths (paper 2: Reasoning) – Wednesday 13th May
 - Maths (paper 3: Reasoning) – Thursday 14th May
- Writing is assessed using evidence collected throughout Year 6. There is no Year 6 SATs writing test.

When and how the SATs are completed

- ▶ The tests take place during normal school hours, under exam conditions.
- ▶ Children are not allowed to talk to each other from the moment the assessments are handed out until they are collected at the end of the test.
- ▶ After the tests are completed, the papers are sent away to be marked externally.
- ▶ The results are then sent to the school in July.
- ▶ Each test lasts no longer than 60 minutes:
 - ▶ Spelling, punctuation and grammar (paper 1: Grammar/ Punctuation) – 45 minutes
 - ▶ Spelling, punctuation and grammar (paper 2: Spelling) – 15 minutes
 - ▶ Reading – 60 minutes
 - ▶ Maths (paper 1: Arithmetic) – 30 minutes
 - ▶ Maths (paper 2: Reasoning) – 40 minutes
 - ▶ Maths (paper 3: Reasoning) – 40 minutes

The results

Tests are marked externally. Once marked, the tests will be given the following scores:

- ▶ A raw score (total number of marks achieved for each paper);
- ▶ A scaled score (see below);
- ▶ A judgement on if the National Standard has been met.

After marking each test, the external marker will convert the raw score to a scaled score. Even though the tests are made to the same standard each year, the questions must be different. This means the difficulty of the tests may vary. Scaled scores ensures an accurate comparison of performance over time.

Scaled scores range from 80 to 120.

A scaled score of 100 or more shows the pupil is meeting the National Standard.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar: Monday 11th May

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar consists of two papers.

- ▶ Paper 1 focuses on all three elements (spelling, punctuation and grammar). The paper lasts for **45 minutes**.
- ▶ Paper 2 consists of a spelling test only. It should take approximately **15-20 minutes**, although this is not a set amount of time (pupils should be given as much time as they need to complete the test).



Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar: Paper 1

The children will have been working hard with their class teacher on developing and securing their knowledge of the technical vocabulary needed in this test.

This test focuses on:

- ▶ Grammatical terms/ word classes;
- ▶ Functions of sentences;
- ▶ Combining words, phrases and clauses;
- ▶ Verb forms, tenses and consistency;
- ▶ Punctuation;
- ▶ Vocabulary;
- ▶ Standard English and formality.

This test requires a range of answer types but does not require longer formal answers.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar: Paper 1

Example questions:

1 Tick the sentence that must end with a **question mark**.

Tick one.

The teacher asked them what they were doing

I wonder what time the next train arrives

Did she play tennis on your team last year

He asked if he could use my pen

1 mark

8 Insert a **relative pronoun** to complete the sentence below.

e.g. that, which

Everyone loved the music _____ was played last night.

1 mark

34 Explain how the **comma** changes the meaning of the second sentence.

1. I asked if Jake Thomas and Lily were coming to the barbecue.
2. I asked if Jake, Thomas and Lily were coming to the barbecue.

e.g. The first sentence is about two people and the second sentence is about three people.

1 mark

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar: Paper 2

Paper 2 is a shorter paper that focuses solely on spellings.

Example questions:

Spelling task

1. The dragon is an imaginary _____.
2. There was _____ food for everyone.
3. My little brother is in _____ class.

Reading: Tuesday 12th May

There is one reading test that lasts for 60 minutes.

The test is designed to measure if the children's comprehension of age-appropriate reading material meets the national standard. There are three different set texts for children to read. These could be any combination of non-fiction, fiction and/ or poetry.

The test covers the following areas (known as Content Domains):

- ▶ Give/ explain the meaning of words in context;
- ▶ Retrieve and record information/ identify key details from fiction and non-fiction;
- ▶ Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph;
- ▶ Make inferences from the text/ explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text;
- ▶ Predict what might happen from details stated and implied;
- ▶ Identify/ explain how information/ narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole;
- ▶ Identify/ explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases;
- ▶ Make comparisons within the text.

Reading

The reading SATs paper requires a range of answer styles.

Example questions:

Questions 1–13 are about *The Park* (pages 4–5)

1 What is Ajay doing when the post arrives?

1 mark

Ajay was just about to tuck into his tea and toast dripping in sour rhubarb jam when there was a loud clatter from the letterbox as an important-looking brown envelope landed on the mat. 'Bit early for the post isn't it?' Mum said. 'Ooh, it says Special Delivery.' Mum opened it, and unfolded the letter.

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
1	<p>What is Ajay doing when the post arrives?</p> <p>Content domain: 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction</p> <p>Award 1 mark for reference to him eating (his breakfast), e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>just about to tuck into his tea and toast</i>• <i>having his breakfast</i>• <i>drinking tea.</i>	1m

Reading

Example questions:

Based on text 2: Fact Sheet: About Bumblebees

19 In what way is *buzz pollination* more useful than other forms of pollination?

1 mark



Buzz pollination

Only bumblebees are capable of buzz pollination. This is when the bee grabs the flower and produces a high-pitched buzz. This releases pollen that would otherwise stay trapped inside. Key ingredients in our diet such as tomatoes are pollinated in this way. Many other common foods such as beans and peas would also be harder to produce and much more expensive without British bumblebees.

Qu.	Requirement	Mark
19	<p>In what way is <i>buzz pollination</i> more useful than other forms of pollination?</p> <p>Content domain: 2b – retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction</p> <p>Award 1 mark for reference to either of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">it releases pollen that would otherwise stay inside the flower, e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>because it releases trapped pollen that they wouldn't have been able to get out</i><i>it makes a buzz that gets more pollen than other bees do</i><i>it helps release more pollen.</i>key produce is more expensive / harder to get without it, e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>it makes some vegetables we eat easier to produce and sell a lot cheaper</i><i>it means we can buy more common foods cheaper</i><i>it would be harder to grow beans.</i>	1m

Reading

Example questions:

Based on text 3: Music Box

32

What impressions do you get of Piper's house?

Give **two** impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Impression	Evidence

3 marks

Qu.	Requirement	Mark																
32	<p>What impressions do you get of Piper's house?</p> <p>Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.</p> <p>Content domain: 2d – make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Acceptable points (impressions)</th> <th>Likely evidence</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. it is rickety / old</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there are widening cracks in the planks in the ceiling </td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. it is small / tiny</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> she wishes she had a bigger work space she has to eat at the same table that she works at </td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. it is warm / cosy</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is a fire / stove <i>comfortable nest</i> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. it is untidy / cluttered</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Piston rings, bolts, and cylinders littered its surface</i> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>5. it is old fashioned</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no electricity / kerosene lamps / cast-iron stove </td> </tr> <tr> <td>6. it is isolated</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is situated among fields <i>to go outside and watch the fields</i> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>7. it is safe</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the storm coming outside is dangerous </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Award 3 marks for two acceptable points, at least one with evidence.</p> <p>Award 2 marks for either two acceptable points, or one acceptable point with evidence.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for one acceptable point.</p>	Acceptable points (impressions)	Likely evidence	1. it is rickety / old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there are widening cracks in the planks in the ceiling 	2. it is small / tiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> she wishes she had a bigger work space she has to eat at the same table that she works at 	3. it is warm / cosy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is a fire / stove <i>comfortable nest</i> 	4. it is untidy / cluttered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Piston rings, bolts, and cylinders littered its surface</i> 	5. it is old fashioned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no electricity / kerosene lamps / cast-iron stove 	6. it is isolated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is situated among fields <i>to go outside and watch the fields</i> 	7. it is safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the storm coming outside is dangerous 	Up to 3m
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Reading

Since the current testing formation for the SATs began in 2016, there has been a tendency for three types of questions to be the most popular.

In the 2025 Reading SATs paper,

- ▶ 12% of marks could be gained from answering questions involving giving and explaining the meaning of words in context;
- ▶ 30% of marks could be gained from answering questions involving retrieving and recording information or identifying key details from a text;
- ▶ 48% of marks could be gained from answering questions involving making inferences from a text and justifying inferences with text evidence.

When reading with your child at home try focusing on these types of questions.

Maths: Wednesday 13th May

Thursday 14th May

The maths assessments consist of three tests.

- ▶ Paper 1: Arithmetic (30 minutes) – Wednesday 13th May
- ▶ Paper 2: Reasoning (40 minutes) – Wednesday 13th May
- ▶ Paper 3: Reasoning (40 minutes) – Thursday 14th May

Maths Paper 1 (Arithmetic)

Example questions:

6 $5.87 + 3.123 =$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5.87 \\ + 3.123 \\ \hline 8.993 \end{array}$$

1 mark

11 $= 87 - 65$

$$\begin{array}{r} 87 \\ - 65 \\ \hline 22 \end{array}$$

1 mark

15 $60 \div (30 - 24) =$

$$\begin{array}{r} 60 \div (30 - 24) \\ 60 \div 6 = 10 \end{array}$$

1 mark

18 $20\% \text{ of } 3,000 =$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10\% \text{ of } 3,000 = 300 \\ 20\% \text{ of } 3,000 = 600 \end{array}$$

1 mark

Maths Papers 2 and 3 (Reasoning)

Paper 2 will take place on Wednesday 13th May and paper 3 will take place on Thursday 14th May. These tests have a total of 35 marks each.

These papers require children to demonstrate their mathematical knowledge and skills, as well as their ability to solve problems and their mathematical reasoning. They cover a wide range of mathematical topics from key stage 2 including,

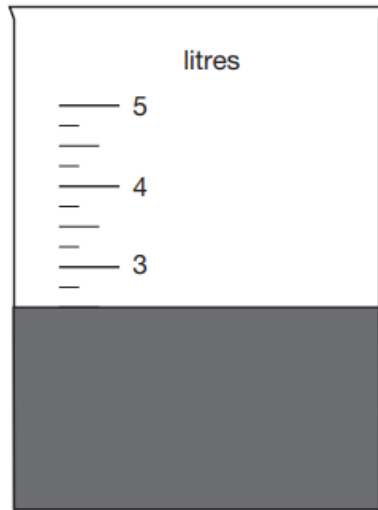
- ▶ Number and place value (including Roman numerals);
- ▶ The four operations;
- ▶ Geometry (properties of shape, position and direction);
- ▶ Statistics;
- ▶ Measurement (length, perimeter, mass, volume, time, money);
- ▶ Algebra;
- ▶ Ratio and proportion;
- ▶ Fractions, decimals and percentages.

Maths Papers 2 (Reasoning)

Example questions:

7

Jack pours some dark paint into a container.



In litres, how much paint is in the container?

litres

1 mark

8

In this sequence, the rule to get the next number is

Multiply by 2, and then add 3

Write the missing numbers.

25

53

1 mark

1 mark

Maths Papers 2 (Reasoning)

Example question:

18

Circle the **prime** number.

95

89

87

Explain how you know the other numbers are **not** prime.

1 mark

18

Award **ONE** mark for a correct explanation of why the 95 **AND** 87 are **NOT** prime, e.g.

- 87 is divisible by 3 and/or 29 **AND** 95 is divisible by 5 and/or 19
- 87 is in the 3 times table **AND** 95 is in the 5 times table
- 95 is divisible by five because every number in the five times table ends in five or zero. 87 is divisible by three because 9 is in the three times table so is ninety. Ninety minus three is 87
- $8 + 7 = 15$ and 15 is divisible by 3 **AND** 95 is divisible by 5

1m

No mark is awarded for circling '89' alone.

Both non-primes must be explained correctly for the award of the mark.

Do not accept vague or incomplete explanations, e.g.

- The other 2 numbers have more than 2 factors (vague)
- 87 is divisible by 3 (incomplete).

Do not accept explanations which include incorrect mathematics or incorrect information that is relevant to the explanation, e.g.

- $3 \times 27 = 87$
- 89 has three factors
- no numbers go into 89

Supporting your child in preparing for the SATs

Tips:

- ✓ Don't use past papers as they are used in school to prepare the children.
- ✓ Talk to your child's class teacher if you have any concerns rather than worry your child.
- ✓ Draw up a timetable from now until SATs. Little and often. Spellings. My maths. Reading. (CGP Books)
- ✓ Give your child time to go outside and reduce screen time.
- ✓ Ensure your child is eating and drinking well and getting a good amount of sleep.
- ✓ Ensure your child has the best possible attendance at school.
- ✓ Support your child with any homework tasks. Make good use of the revision guides!
- ✓ Reading, spelling and arithmetic (e.g. times tables) are always good to practise.
- ✓ Talk to your child about what they have learnt at school and what book(s) they are reading (the character, the plot, their opinion).
- ✓ Make sure your child has a good sleep and healthy breakfast every morning!

Things to remember about SATs

SATs focus on what children know about Maths and English.

They will not reflect how talented they are at science, geography, art, PE..., and they certainly won't highlight all of their amazing personal characteristics.

SATs don't tell the whole story.

Their results will say if they did or did not meet a certain standard but not necessarily by what margin. These thresholds change each year according to the overall national performance, so what was classed as 'meeting the expected standard' this year might not be the same as last year.



Any questions?