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KEY STAGE 1 SATS

# 2023 KS1 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling

Answers Explained

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# How to beat each question type

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## Choosing the right joining word (G3)

1. Read the sentence aloud slowly, pausing at the gap, and try each word in turn to see which one sounds right and makes sense.
  2. Think about what the sentence is doing: is it giving a choice, showing a reason, adding a contrast, or giving a time? Help the child connect that idea to the correct joining word.
  3. Read the whole sentence back with the chosen word to check it flows naturally before ticking the box.
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## Identifying word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) (G1)

1. Remind the child what the word class does: a noun names a person, place or thing; a verb shows action or being; an adjective describes a noun; an adverb tells us more about a verb, often how something is done.
  2. Point to each word in the sentence in turn and ask a simple question such as 'Is this a doing word?' or 'Does this word describe how something is done?'
  3. Once the child has chosen a word, read the sentence again together and confirm the choice makes sense before circling or ticking.
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## Identifying sentence types (statement, question, command, exclamation) (G2)

1. Read the sentence aloud together and ask the child what it is doing: is it telling us something, asking something, telling someone to do something, or showing strong feeling?
  2. Look at clue words at the start: question words like 'Where' or 'How did' suggest a question; 'What a' or 'How excited' followed by a noun or adjective can signal an exclamation; a verb at the start often signals a command.
  3. Check the punctuation mark that would go at the end to confirm the sentence type, then tick or write the answer.
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## Adding or placing punctuation marks (full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, apostrophes) (G5)

1. Read the sentence or phrase aloud together and think about what the sentence is doing or where a natural pause falls, so the child can decide which punctuation mark is needed and roughly where it belongs.
2. For apostrophes, help the child decide whether it shows a missing letter (contraction) or belonging (possession), then place it in the correct spot between or after the relevant letters.

3. Write or insert the punctuation mark clearly, then read the sentence aloud once more to check it sounds right with the new mark in place.
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### **Verb tenses (past and present) (G4)**

1. Ask the child whether the sentence is happening now or whether it already happened, using a simple prompt such as 'Is it happening today or did it happen yesterday?'
  2. For writing a tense form, say the root verb aloud and then model changing it: for past tense, try adding '-ed' or think of the irregular form (e.g. 'ride' becomes 'rode'); for present tense, think about what form fits 'right now'.
  3. Read the completed sentence aloud to check the verb matches the time of the sentence before writing the final answer.
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### **Apostrophes for possession and contraction (G5)**

1. Help the child decide whether the apostrophe is showing that something belongs to someone (possession, e.g. Dom's football) or that two words have been squished together with a letter missing (contraction, e.g. wasn't = was not).
  2. For possession, write the owner's name first with a capital letter, then add an apostrophe followed by 's'. For a contraction, find the missing letter(s) and place the apostrophe exactly where those letters were removed.
  3. Read the word back in the sentence to check it makes sense and that the apostrophe is clearly written in the right position.
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### **Plural endings (-s and -es) (G6)**

1. Say the word aloud and try adding '-s' first; if it sounds awkward or creates a cluster of consonants that is hard to say (e.g. 'dishes'), then '-es' is likely needed instead.
  2. Remind the child that words ending in certain sounds such as -sh, -ch, -x, -s or -z usually need '-es' to make them easy to say aloud, while most other words simply add '-s'.
  3. Say the plural aloud once more to check it sounds natural, then tick the correct column in the table.
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### Question 1 (1 mark)

**Answer:** The word to tick is 'or'.

Cover the four options and read the sentence aloud with the gap. Ask: "Which word would you use if you wanted to say someone could choose between two things?"

Children need to select a **co-ordinating conjunction** that offers a choice between two options. The sentence 'You can join the red team \_\_\_ the green team' requires a word that links two alternatives. Only **'or'** does this correctly. 'Because' introduces a reason, 'but' introduces a contrast, and 'when' introduces a time clause - none of these make the sentence mean that joining either team is a possibility.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'but' because it is a common joining word, but 'but' introduces a contrast, not a choice between two alternatives.

### Question 2 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should write a question mark (?) in the box at the end of the sentence.

Ask your child to read the sentence aloud and think about what kind of sentence it is. Ask: "Is this sentence telling us something, or is it asking something?"

The sentence 'Are we going to the shops now' begins with the word **Are**, which signals a question asking for a yes or no response. Children need to recognise that a sentence which asks something must end with a question mark, not a full stop or exclamation mark. The question mark can be written inside or just outside the box and will still count as correct.

**Watch out:** A child might write a full stop instead, as full stops are the most familiar sentence-ending punctuation, but a full stop is used to end a statement, not a question.

### Question 3 (1 mark)

**Answer:** The child should tick the box under the word 'heavy', as that is the adjective in the sentence.

Before revealing anything, ask the child to think about what kind of word describes what something looks or feels like. Ask: "Can you find a word in the sentence that describes the door?"

Children need to identify which word in 'Anna shut the heavy door in a hurry' is an adjective. An adjective is a describing word that tells us more about a noun. Here, **heavy** describes the door,

making it the adjective. A child might be drawn to other words, but only **heavy** is doing the job of describing a noun.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'hurry' because it feels important, but 'hurry' is a noun here, not a describing word for another noun.

#### Question 4 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children need to add a full stop after the word 'sister' and another full stop after the word 'it', giving: 'Amir gave a picture to his sister. Zara really liked it.'

Before showing the answer, ask the child to read the sentence aloud and spot where one idea ends and a new one begins. Ask: "Can you find the place where one sentence stops and a completely new sentence starts?"

Two separate sentences are run together without any punctuation. The first sentence ends after **sister** - 'Amir gave a picture to his sister' is a complete thought. The second sentence begins with 'Zara' and ends after **it**. Children should recognise that each complete sentence needs a full stop at its end. Both full stops must be present for the single mark; adding any extra punctuation beyond the two full stops is not accepted.

**Watch out:** A child might add only one full stop, perhaps just at the very end after 'it', but both full stops are needed to score. Also, adding a comma or any other extra punctuation mark is not accepted.

#### Question 5 (1 mark)

**Answer:** The comma should go after the word 'balls' - in the second tick box, between 'balls' and 'bats'.

Ask your child to read the sentence aloud and think about how many things are listed. Ask: "Where would you pause if you were saying this list out loud?"

Commas in a list separate the items. The sentence lists three things: **balls**, **bats**, and **hoops**. The word 'or' already separates 'bats' and 'hoops', so children should place the comma between 'balls' and 'bats'. The second tick box, positioned after 'balls', is the official answer. Children need to recognise that a comma in a list goes between each item before the final joining word.

**Watch out:** A child might tick the box after 'bats' instead, but 'or' already does the separating work there - the comma belongs earlier, after 'balls'.

### Question 6 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'a statement'.

Before revealing the answer, ask your child to read the sentence aloud and think about what kind of job it is doing. Ask: "Is this sentence asking something, telling someone to do something, or just telling us a fact?"

The sentence '**A wild forest surrounded the castle.**' is being tested here as a type of sentence. Children need to recognise that it simply tells us a fact - it does not ask anything, give a command, or express strong feeling. A **statement** is a sentence that states or reports something. It ends with a full stop and has a subject doing something, which fits perfectly here.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'an exclamation' because the sentence contains a dramatic image (a wild forest), but an exclamation must follow the pattern 'What a...' or 'How...' - this sentence does not.

### Question 7 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should circle the word 'When' in the sentence.

Ask your child to read the sentence aloud and then try replacing each word one at a time with the word 'if' to see which swap still makes sense. Ask: "Which word could you swap for 'if' so the sentence still makes sense?"

The sentence reads 'When it is cold, I wear a warm coat and a hat.' Children need to recognise that **When** introduces a conditional idea - something that happens only under a certain circumstance - which is exactly the job the word if does. Swapping **When** for if keeps the meaning intact: 'If it is cold, I wear a warm coat and a hat.' The other words in the sentence cannot be replaced by if without breaking the grammar.

**Watch out:** A child might circle 'cold' or 'and', but neither word can be replaced by 'if' without making the sentence grammatically nonsensical.

### Question 8 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should write that 'This' starts with a capital letter because it is the first word of the sentence.

Before looking at the answer, point the child to the underlined word and its position in the sentence. Ask: "Where is the word 'This' in the sentence, and what do we always do at the very beginning of a sentence?"

**Question 8 tests whether children understand that sentences begin with a capital letter.** The underlined word is This, which opens the sentence. Children need to explain that every sentence starts with a capital letter, or refer to its position as the first word. Answers such as 'sentences begin with capital letters' or 'it is the start of the sentence' both count. There are no spelling or punctuation requirements for this written answer.

**Watch out:** A child might say it is a capital letter because 'This' is a special or important word, but the reason is simply that it is the opening word of the sentence.

### Question 9 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'Where did I put my bag' and 'How did you guess where I was hiding' - these are the two questions.

Before revealing the answer, point the child at each sentence in turn and ask: "Does this sentence ask for information, or is it saying something with feeling?"

Children need to distinguish genuine questions from exclamations and commands. **Questions ask something and need a question mark;** exclamations express strong feeling and need an exclamation mark. 'Where did I put my bag' asks a genuine question, as does 'How did you guess where I was hiding' - both seek information. The other three sentences beginning with 'What' and 'How' are exclamations or commands, not questions. Both correct boxes must be ticked to score the mark.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'What a hot day it is today' because it begins with 'What', but this is an exclamation expressing feeling, not a genuine question seeking information.

### Question 10 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should circle the word 'stars'.

Before looking at the answer, ask your child to think about what a noun is. Ask: "Can you find the word in the sentence that is the name of a thing?"

The sentence contains four possible word classes: beautiful is an adjective, stars is a noun (the thing being described), shining is a verb form, and brightly is an adverb. Children need to identify the **noun** - the naming word for a thing or person. Here, stars names the thing in the sentence. A common confusion is between stars and beautiful, but beautiful describes rather than names, making it an adjective, not a noun.

**Watch out:** A child might circle 'beautiful' because it stands out as a describing word, but 'beautiful' is an adjective, not a noun. The noun is the naming word - 'stars'.

### Question 11 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'What a great goal he scored' as the sentence that should end with an exclamation mark.

Before revealing the answer, encourage the child to read each sentence aloud with lots of expression. Ask: "Which of these sounds like someone is really excited or amazed, rather than asking for information?"

Exclamation sentences at Key Stage 1 must start with **What** or **How** and contain a subject and verb, expressing strong feeling rather than asking a genuine question. What a great goal he scored fits this pattern perfectly - it expresses excitement and is a statement of feeling, not a question. The other two sentences beginning with What and How (What time does the match start and How did he score and How are you getting there) are all genuine questions, so they need question marks, not exclamation marks.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'How did he score from there' because it starts with 'How', but it is asking a question and so needs a question mark, not an exclamation mark.

### Question 12 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should write Dom's in the gap, with a capital D and an apostrophe before the s.

Before showing the answer, point to the gap in the sentence and ask: "How would we write the word that shows something belongs to Dom?"

The apostrophe for possession is being tested here. Children need to write **Dom's** - the name Dom followed by an apostrophe and then s - to show the football belongs to Dom. The official answer requires a capital D; the remaining letters can be upper or lower case. The apostrophe must sit between the m and the s. A comma or any other mark placed instead of an apostrophe will not score.

**Watch out:** Writing 'doms' without an apostrophe does not score, as the apostrophe showing ownership is the whole point of the question. The name must also begin with a capital letter.

### Question 13 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should write 'borrowed' on the line.

Before revealing anything, point the child to the sentence and ask them to think about when the borrowing happened. Ask: "If something happened yesterday, how would you change the word 'borrow' to show it is in the past?"

The question tests whether children can form the simple past tense of a regular verb. The root word given is **borrow**, and children need to add the suffix **-ed** to make borrowed. The official answer requires correct spelling - misspellings such as 'borowed' or 'borrowd' do not score. The sentence 'I \_\_\_\_ three books from the library' is clearly set in the past, which is the key clue children should notice.

**Watch out:** Misspellings of the correct verb - such as 'borowed' or 'borrowd' - do not score, as correct spelling is required for verb form questions.

### Question 14 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children need to add an apostrophe between the 'n' and the 't' in 'wasnt' to make 'wasn't'.

Before looking at the answer together, point to the word 'wasnt' in the sentence and ask the child which two words it is squashing together. Ask: "Where do you think a letter has been left out in this word?"

The sentence **Ria wasn't late today** contains a contraction: wasn't is a shortened form of was not, where the apostrophe replaces the missing letter 'o'. Children need to place the apostrophe precisely between the 'n' and the 't'. The official answer requires correct placement; spelling of the surrounding words does not matter, but the apostrophe position must be unambiguous.

**Watch out:** A child might place the apostrophe after the 't' (wasn't becoming wasn't) or between the 'a' and 's', but the apostrophe must sit between 'n' and 't' to show where the 'o' from 'not' has been removed.

### Question 15 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'an adverb'. The word 'neatly' is an adverb because it describes how the pens should be put away.

Ask the child to read the sentence aloud, then ask: "What does the word 'neatly' tell us - does it describe a thing, or does it tell us how something is done?"

The underlined word in the sentence is **neatly**. Children need to identify what type of word it is by thinking about what job it does: it tells us how the pens should be put away, which is the job of an adverb. A child might be tempted by 'an adjective', since adjectives also describe things, but adjectives describe nouns, whereas **neatly** modifies the verb 'put', making it an adverb.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'an adjective' because adjectives describe things, but 'neatly' describes the action (how the pens are put away), not a noun - so it is an adverb.

### Question 16 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should circle both 'read' and 'laughed' in the sentence.

Before revealing the answer, ask the child to think about what actions are happening in the sentence - who is doing something and what are they doing. Ask: "Can you find the words that tell us what Anna did and what everyone else did?"

The sentence Anna read a funny poem and everyone laughed contains two verbs - the doing/action words. Children need to identify both **read** and **laughed** as the words that describe what Anna and everyone did. Both must be circled to score the mark. A common difficulty is confusing the adjective funny or the noun poem for a verb - the test of a verb is whether it names an action or state that someone is doing.

**Watch out:** A child might circle 'funny' because it stands out, but 'funny' is an adjective describing the poem, not an action word, so it does not count as a verb.

### Question 17 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'Past tense' for the first two rows (Alex was planting some seeds; Alex planted some seeds) and 'Present tense' for the last two rows (Alex is planting some seeds; Alex plants some seeds). All four must be correct to score the point.

Before revealing the answers, point to each sentence one at a time and ask: "Is Alex doing this right now, or did Alex do it in the past?"

All four sentences use the name Alex doing the same action, so children must focus on the **verb** in each one to spot the tense. Was planting and planted both refer to something that has already happened, so those are past tense. Is planting and plants both describe something happening now, so those are present tense. A common confusion is was planting versus is planting - the word **was** signals the past, while **is** signals the present. All four rows must be ticked correctly to earn the point.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'Past tense' for 'Alex is planting some seeds' because it sounds like an ongoing, unfinished action - but 'is planting' is present tense, happening now.

### Question 18 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'es' for dish, 's' for ribbon, and 's' for parcel.

Before checking, ask your child to say each underlined word aloud with an 's' on the end, then try it with 'es'. Ask: "Which ending sounds right when you say the word out loud?"

All three plural endings must be correct to score the mark. The key rule children need to apply is that words ending in **-sh** (like dish) need **-es** added to make them pronounceable as plurals (dishes). Words ending in a consonant-vowel pattern like ribbon and parcel simply take **-s** (ribbons, parcels). A child might sound each word aloud with both endings to hear which works naturally.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'es' for ribbon or parcel, thinking all three need the same ending, but only dish ends in a sound that requires 'es' to make it pronounceable.

### Question 19 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should tick 'He wore a red jumper.' because it contains a noun phrase.

Before looking at the options, remind the child that a noun phrase is a naming word with a describing word attached to it. Ask: "Can you find a sentence where a describing word and a naming word are together as a group?"

A **noun phrase** is a noun with extra words that describe it. Children need to spot that a red jumper is a noun (jumper) with a describing word in front of it (red), making a noun phrase. The other options contain adjectives or adverbs but no noun with a modifier attached to it in this way. Only 'He wore a **red jumper**' has this structure.

**Watch out:** A child might tick 'He was sleepy and tired' because it contains describing words, but those are adjectives describing 'he' after a verb, not a noun phrase built around a noun.

### Question 20 (1 mark)

**Answer:** Children should add a capital letter to 'the' at the start and a capital letter to 'fridays', then add a full stop at the end, giving: 'The pool is shut on Fridays.'

Before looking at the answer, ask your child to read the sentence aloud and spot what is missing or wrong with it. Ask: "Can you find two words that need a capital letter, and what punctuation is missing at the end?"

Two separate punctuation rules are being tested here. First, every sentence must begin with a capital letter, so **the** needs to become **The**. Second, days of the week are always proper nouns and must start with a capital letter, so **fridays** becomes **Fridays**. Finally, a full stop is needed at the end to close the sentence. All three corrections must be present for the point to be awarded.

**Watch out:** Children must not add any extra punctuation such as a comma or exclamation mark - the official answer states that additional punctuation is not accepted.

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