



REVISION GUIDES • WORKBOOKS • PRACTICE PAPERS

KEY STAGE 1 SATS

2026 KS1 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling

Answers Explained

Sourced from SATs-Papers.co.uk • <https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk>

Answers Explained © ExamNinja.co.uk.

Questions and mark schemes © Crown copyright, reproduced under the Open Government Licence v3.0; some source texts may be third-party copyright - see the original resource.

How to beat each question type

Choosing the right joining word (conjunction) (G3)

1. Read the sentence aloud with each option in the gap, one at a time, so the child can hear which one sounds right.
 2. Ask the child what is happening in each part of the sentence - are the two ideas contrasting, or is one the reason for the other?
 3. Encourage the child to tick the word that makes the best sense and read the whole sentence once more to check.
-

Choosing the right punctuation mark (G5)

1. Ask the child to read the sentence aloud and think about whether it is asking something, telling something, or showing excitement.
 2. Talk through each punctuation option together - a question mark for questions, a full stop for statements, an exclamation mark for commands or exclamations.
 3. The child circles or identifies the correct mark; encourage them to re-read the sentence with it in place to double-check it feels right.
-

Adding or changing verb tense (G4)

1. Help the child notice whether the sentence needs a past or present tense verb by looking for time clues such as 'yesterday' or 'now'.
 2. Say the root verb aloud together and think about how it changes - for regular verbs children often just need to add '-ed'; for irregular ones (like 'ride' becoming 'rode') it may need more thought.
 3. The child writes the new verb form in the box, then reads the whole sentence back to check it sounds right in the correct tense.
-

Identifying word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) (G1)

1. Remind the child of the word class being asked about - for example, a noun is a naming word, a verb is a doing or being word, an adjective describes a noun, and an adverb tells us more about a verb.
 2. Read the sentence together slowly, pointing to each word and asking 'Is this one a doing/naming/describing word?'
 3. Once the child spots the correct word(s), they circle or tick them; count the circles to make sure the right number have been chosen.
-

Using apostrophes (possession and contraction) (G5)

1. Help the child decide whether the apostrophe is for a contraction (two words squashed into one, with letters missing) or for possession (showing something belongs to someone).
 2. For contractions, say the two words slowly and find where the missing letter(s) are; for possession, look for the owner's name and add apostrophe then 's'.
 3. The child writes the word or adds the apostrophe, then reads the sentence back to make sure it makes sense.
-

Capital letters, full stops and exclamation marks in context (G5)

1. Read the passage or sentence aloud with the child and listen for natural pauses that show where one sentence ends and another begins.
 2. Talk about the rules together: every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark; names and the word 'I' also need capitals.
 3. The child adds or circles the missing punctuation, then reads the corrected text aloud to check it sounds like proper, finished sentences.
-

Writing your own sentence with correct punctuation (G2)

1. Talk with the child about what type of sentence is needed - for example, question 16 asks for a question, so the child should think of something they genuinely want to know about frogs.
 2. Remind the child of the key features: a question starts with a capital letter and ends with a question mark; it usually begins with a question word such as 'What', 'Where', 'Why', 'How' or 'Do'.
 3. The child says their sentence aloud first, then writes it down and checks the capital letter at the start and the question mark at the end.
-

Question 1 (1 mark)

Answer: The child should tick 'but'.

Ask your child to read the sentence slowly and think about whether the two halves agree with each other or disagree. Ask: "Does the ending of the sentence surprise you, or does it match what you'd expect?"

The sentence sets up a contrast: wanting to buy an apple but not being able to because of forgotten money. Children need to recognise that **but** joins two ideas that work against each other. The word because is the most common wrong choice - it would give a reason, not a contrast - and or and if simply do not make logical sense in this sentence.

Watch out: A child might be tempted to tick 'because' as it is a familiar connective, but 'because' would explain a reason, not show a contrast between wanting something and not being able to get it.

Question 2 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should circle the question mark (?).

Before revealing the answer, ask the 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 How far did you throw the ball is a question, so it needs a **question mark** at the end. Children should recognise that sentences beginning with question words such as 'How', 'What', 'Where' or 'Why' are questions. Of the four options shown (? . , !), only the question mark is correct here. The official answer also accepts inserting a question mark directly after the word ball in the sentence itself.

Watch out: A child might be tempted to circle the exclamation mark (!) because the sentence feels dramatic, but it is asking a question, not showing strong feeling, so the exclamation mark is not correct.

Question 3 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should tick 'fold' - the letters 'un' can be added to the front to make 'unfold', which is a real word.

Encourage the child to try saying each option aloud with 'un' in front of it. Ask: "Which of these words sounds like a real word when you put 'un' at the beginning?"

Children need to test each option by placing **un** in front of it. Unfold is a common, real word; unsoft, undive, and unslow are not real English words. The prefix **un-** typically means 'not' or 'reverse the action', and attaching it to fold gives a recognised verb meaning to open something out. Children should go through each option systematically rather than guessing.

Watch out: A child might tick 'slow' thinking 'unslow' sounds possible, but 'unslow' is not a real English word - the correct opposite of slow uses a different prefix.

Question 4 (1 mark)

Answer: The answer children need to write in the box is 'helped'.

Before checking, ask your child to think about what the verb 'help' sounds like when something already happened in the past. Ask: "If it happened yesterday, how would you say it - 'we help' or something different?"

The question asks children to change the verb **help** from the present tense to the past tense. The sentence given is 'We help our teacher tidy up.' Children should recognise that the regular past tense of 'help' is formed by adding **-ed** to give helped. Correct spelling is required here; a misspelling such as 'helpt' would not score. The official answer also accepts longer past tense forms such as 'were helping' or 'had helped', but 'helped' is the most straightforward answer a Year 2 child is likely to produce.

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

Question 5 (1 mark)

Answer: The correct answer to tick is 'When'.

Before revealing anything, ask the child to read the sentence aloud with each of the four words in the gap in turn. Ask: "Which word makes the sentence sound right?"

Combining clauses with a subordinating conjunction is what this question tests. The sentence reads '___ we have finished eating, we will go outside' - the blank begins the sentence, linking a time condition to a result. **When** is the only option that introduces a time-based subordinate clause correctly here. Children should try each option in the gap: 'That we have finished eating' and 'Or we have finished eating' do not make sense; 'But we have finished eating' also fails because it implies contrast rather than sequence.

Watch out: A child might be tempted to tick 'But', as it is a familiar joining word, but 'but' shows contrast between two ideas, and this sentence is about one thing happening after another.

Question 6 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should add an exclamation mark after 'careful' and another exclamation mark after 'road', giving: Be careful! Do not play near the road!

Before revealing the answer, point to the two sentences and ask your child to count how many sentences there are. Ask: "How many sentences can you see, and what punctuation mark do you think each one needs at the end?"

Both sentences in this question are **commands**, and each needs an exclamation mark at the end to complete it correctly. Children should identify that the first sentence ends at the word careful and the second ends at road. The official answer requires both exclamation marks to be present for the single mark to be awarded. No additional punctuation should be inserted anywhere else in the sentences.

Watch out: A child might add only one exclamation mark, or place an extra mark inside the sentences. Both marks must be present, and no extra punctuation should be added elsewhere.

Question 7 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should tick the third option: 'Luka is practising his song quietly.'

Before revealing the answer, ask your child to read each sentence and think about whether any word describes how something is being done. Ask: "Can you find a word that tells you how Luka is practising?"

Children need to spot that an **adverb** describes how, when, or where an action is done. In the four options, only 'Luka is practising his song **quietly**' contains such a word - quietly tells us how Luka practises. The other sentences contain adjectives ('new'), nouns, and verbs, but no adverb. Children should scan each sentence asking 'Is there a word that describes the verb?'

Watch out: A child might tick 'Luka is practising a new song' because 'new' is a describing word - but 'new' is an adjective describing the noun 'song', not an adverb describing the verb.

Question 8 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should circle three words: 'my', 'i', and 'thursday'.

Before looking at the answer, point to the sentence and ask your child to think about what kinds of words always need a capital letter. Ask: "Can you spot which words in this sentence should start with a capital letter, and why?"

Three words in the sentence my friend and i play netball every thursday need capital letters. **My** starts the sentence, so it must be capitalised. **I** is always written as a capital letter when used as a personal pronoun. **Thursday** is a proper noun - the name of a day of the week - so it also takes a capital. Children should circle exactly these three words; circling any additional words means the point is not awarded.

Watch out: A child might circle 'friend' thinking it is a special word, but it is a common noun and does not need a capital letter here.

Question 9 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should circle 'new' and 'red' - these are the two adjectives in the sentence.

Before revealing the answer, ask the child to look at each word in the sentence and think about which words are describing a thing. Ask: "Can you find any words that describe what the crayons or the flower are like?"

Adjectives are describing words that tell us more about a noun. In the sentence 'Usma used her **new** crayons to colour in a picture of a **red** flower', both new and red describe nouns: new describes the crayons and red describes the flower. Children should be careful not to circle her, which is a pronoun, or favourite-style words not present here. Both words must be circled for the point to be awarded.

Watch out: A child might circle 'her' because it comes just before 'crayons', but 'her' is a pronoun, not an adjective describing what the crayons are like.

Question 10 (1 mark)

Answer: Children need to add a full stop after the word 'library' and change the 'w' of 'we' to a capital 'W'.

Before sharing the answer, ask your child to read the passage aloud slowly and listen for where one idea finishes and a new one begins. Ask: "Can you hear where one sentence ends and a new one starts?"

Two sentences have been run together without any punctuation to separate them. Children should spot that '**library**' is where the first sentence ends, so a full stop goes there. The second sentence then begins with '**we**', which must become a capital '**W**' to show a new sentence has started. Both changes are needed together to receive the mark.

Watch out: A child might place the full stop after 'read' at the very end instead of after 'library' - but 'we all chose a book to read' is the second sentence and needs its own capital letter at the start.

Question 11 (1 mark)

Answer: The child should write 'was' in the box.

Point to the word 'is' in the sentence and cover the answer space. Ask: "If this happened yesterday, which word would we use instead of 'is'?"

The question asks children to change the **underlined verb** 'is' to its past tense equivalent. The sentence reads 'Chris is listening to his teacher.' In the past tense, 'is' becomes 'was'. Children should recognise that only the auxiliary verb shown by the arrow needs changing, not the whole verb phrase. The official answer is **was**, and misspellings are not accepted.

Watch out: A child might write 'listened', changing the whole verb phrase rather than just the underlined word 'is'. Only the past tense form of 'is' is needed here.

Question 12 (1 mark)

Answer: The child should write Jack's - adding an apostrophe between the k and the s to show the desk belongs to Jack.

Before revealing the answer, point the child to the word 'Jacks' in the sentence and ask: "Whose desk is it, and what punctuation mark do we use to show that something belongs to someone?"

The apostrophe of possession is being tested here. The sentence reads The pencils are on Jacks desk - the desk belongs to Jack, so an apostrophe is needed before the **s**, giving **Jack's**. Children should think: who owns the desk? Jack does, so the apostrophe goes between the **k** and the **s**. The official answer notes that markers should be generous about the exact size and position of the apostrophe, as children of this age often have uneven handwriting.

Watch out: A child might place the apostrophe after the s, writing Jacks', but this would suggest the name was 'Jacks' - the apostrophe must go between the k and the s to show ownership correctly.

Question 13 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should circle 'walked' and 'fed' - these are the two verbs in the sentence.

Before revealing the answer, ask your child to read the sentence aloud and think about what the people actually did. Ask: "Can you find the words that tell us what the people did in the sentence?"

Both **walked** and **fed** are the action words (verbs) in the sentence 'We walked to the pond yesterday and fed the ducks.' Children need to identify the two words that describe what the people did. A child might be tempted to circle 'pond' or 'ducks', but those are nouns - things, not actions. The word 'yesterday' is an adverb, not a verb.

Watch out: A child might circle 'yesterday' as it relates to the action, but it is an adverb telling us when, not a verb.

Question 14 (1 mark)

Answer: Take two slices of bread = Command; Put the filling between the slices = Command; You have made a sandwich = Statement. All three rows must be correct.

Before revealing anything, have the child read each sentence aloud and decide whether it is telling someone to do something or simply saying that something is true. Ask: "Which of these sentences sounds like an instruction you would follow?"

Children need to decide whether each sentence gives an instruction (a **command**) or states a fact (a **statement**). Commands typically begin with a bossy verb telling someone to do something: 'Take two slices of bread' and 'Put the filling between the slices of bread' both start with imperative verbs, so both are commands. 'You have made a sandwich' simply tells the reader that something has happened, making it a statement. All three rows must be ticked correctly to score the mark.

Watch out: A child might tick 'You have made a sandwich' as a command because it mentions making something, but it is not telling anyone to do anything - it describes a completed fact, so it is a statement.

Question 15 (1 mark)

Answer: The comma should go after the word 'costumes', so the sentence reads: 'The girls packed swimming costumes, towels and goggles into their bags.'

Ask your child to count how many things the girls packed. Then ask: "Where do you think a comma should go to separate the first thing from the rest of the list?"

Commas in a list separate items so the reader can tell them apart. The three items being listed here are **swimming costumes, towels and goggles**. The official answer places the comma after costumes, between the first and second item. Children should also be aware that no extra punctuation should be added elsewhere in the sentence - the question asks for exactly one comma.

Watch out: A child might place the comma after 'towels' instead of after 'costumes', but the official answer requires it between the first and second item in the list.

Question 16 (2 marks)

Answer: Children should write a question about frogs. It must start with a capital letter and end with a question mark, and the sentence must be grammatically correct. For example: 'What do frogs eat?' or 'Where do frogs live?' or 'Do frogs lay eggs?'

Before your child writes anything, remind them that James wants to find something out about frogs. Ask: "What is something you would like to know about frogs - can you think of a question to ask?"

Two marks are available here: one for writing a **grammatically correct question about frogs**, and a second for **correct punctuation** - meaning a capital letter at the start and a question mark at the end. If a child writes a perfectly formed question but forgets the question mark or starts with a lower-case letter, only one mark is earned. The sentence must genuinely be a question about frogs - exclamations, statements, or grammatically muddled attempts such as 'Can frog lives in water?' do not score. Spelling mistakes do not cost marks on this question.

Watch out: A child might write a statement such as 'Frogs are green.' or an exclamation - neither scores, as the question specifically asks for a question sentence with a question mark.

Model answer: What do frogs eat?

Question 17 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should write 'didn't' in the box, with an apostrophe between the 'n' and the 't'.

Before looking at the answer, ask your child to think about where the missing letter is when you squeeze 'did not' into one short word. Ask: "If you joined 'did not' into one word and left out a letter, where would you put the apostrophe to show a letter is missing?"

This question tests whether children understand **contractions** - joining two words into one by replacing missing letters with an apostrophe. The words did not contract to didn't, where the apostrophe replaces the missing letter 'o'. Correct spelling is required here; the apostrophe must sit between the 'n' and the 't'. Children should not place the apostrophe anywhere else, such as between 'd' and 'i', as that does not score.

Watch out: A child might write 'did'nt' with the apostrophe in the wrong place - between 'd' and 'i' rather than between 'n' and 't'. Only the correctly placed apostrophe scores.

Question 18 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should circle the words 'seeds' and 'soil'.

Before revealing the answer, remind the child that nouns are naming words, then ask: "Can you point to the words in the sentence that are the names of things?"

Nouns are naming words for things, places or people. In the sentence 'We will need to plant some seeds in the soil,' children need to identify the two things being named: **seeds** (the objects being planted) and **soil** (the substance they go into). Words like 'plant' are verbs here, not nouns, so children should not circle them. Both words must be circled for the mark to be awarded.

Watch out: A child might circle 'plant' as it can be a noun in other sentences, but here it is used as a verb (an action word), so it does not score.

Question 19 (1 mark)

Answer: Children should explain that 'chairs' means more than one chair, or that adding '-s' makes the word plural.

Before sharing the answer, ask your child to look at both words carefully. Ask: "How many chairs would you have if someone said 'chair', and how many if they said 'chairs'?"

The **suffix** question asks children to explain what the -s ending does to the meaning of 'chair'. The official answer recognises two valid routes: using the words **plural** and/or **singular** (e.g. 'chair is singular and chairs is plural') or referencing the number of chairs (e.g. 'it shows there is more than one chair'). Either approach earns the mark. Children must show they understand the meaning has changed, not merely note that an 's' has been added.

Watch out: Simply writing 'it has an s at the end' or 'chairs has an extra letter' does not score, because it describes the spelling change without explaining how the meaning is different.