

National Challenge Core Plus English programme

Element 4b: Improving pupils' attainment at GCSE through assessing and tracking progress

Rationale

The process of tracking pupils' progress at GCSE outlined in this element is based on, and similar to, Key Stage 3 Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP).

In some departments, the emphasis is on pupils completing units of the GCSE specification rather than building their skills and understanding across those units. Evidence shows that pupils make better progress when each teacher's approach to planning and teaching the GCSE course is informed by a clear image of progression and when each pupil's learning is tracked and assessed systematically throughout the course, with timely use of the information generated to improve attainment. Tracking pupil progress in relation to assessment objectives and grade criteria is the way to ensure that the focus is on progress rather than coverage.

Quality standards

After this six-week improvement process there is progress in the following areas and plans are established to embed the developments:

- The English subject leader (SL) has established a manageable yet robust approach to teacher assessment, which regularly tracks pupils' progress in Year 10 and Year 11 English, is linked to the whole-school system and involves all staff.
- A cyclical process of data gathering and analysis informs target setting, reviews of teaching and the use of intervention, booster and revision programmes.
- Ongoing assessment is the basis of tracking, supplemented by discrete assessment tasks and tests as appropriate. Mock exams contribute to building confidence and improving learning.
- Pupils are given curricular targets which are manageable for them and are addressed effectively in lessons. Pupils understand the criteria derived from GCSE assessment objectives, and use them to judge their own progress.
- Tracking processes are integrated with everyday teaching and learning and assessments are used to provide feedback to pupils on their performance and progress towards their curricular targets and GCSE grade targets.
- Form tutors, pupils and parents receive regular, constructive feedback on progress.

And in the longer term...

All teachers in the department:

- are skilled in analysing data to evaluate the progress of their pupils and use it to set targets for groups and individual pupils
- use their assessments to maintain the pupil tracking system
- are able to assess pupils' work accurately.

Exemplification

This exemplification will address some frequently identified problems with tracking pupils' progress as cited by English departments, such as:

A significant number of pupils do not reach their expected grade in the English examinations.

Conversion rates from Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 levels to GCSE grade C+ in English are consistently below national and local averages or significantly lower than those for mathematics.

English coursework is frequently awarded a lower grade than required for pupils' target grades or is not completed on time.

Guiding principles for development:

- The tracking process needs to be closely integrated with Wave 1 teaching and learning. It should include the tracking of behaviour and attendance as well as academic progress.
- It is important to identify and prioritise the assessment objectives that are the key indicators of an individual pupil's progress.
- The key indicators can be related to crucial level borderlines, for example between grades D and C.
- Ongoing assessment should be the basis of the tracking, with use made of specific activities or probing questions to refine judgements.
- Where appropriate, the focus can be on the pupils whose progress is at risk. This should include a deliberate consideration of the issues relating to boys' achievement in English, and to issues which might have a disproportionate impact on pupils in vulnerable groups.

Table 1 exemplifies a six-week improvement process. It should be adapted to help the department take action to address its specific issues on tracking pupils' progress and use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) in Year 10 and Year 11 in order to make measurable improvement towards the quality standards outlined above.

The process outlines six key elements of the effective tracking of pupils' progress in GCSE. While they are framed as a 'default' six-week plan, they can be used flexibly. For example, rather than being used consecutively as shown, some key features could be selected and prioritised, or worked on simultaneously. The table is followed by a review section that will help provide feedback to the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP) management group on progress and outcomes, then a more detailed case study showing how a department was able to make use of the improvement process.

Table 1

<p>Week 1 Judgements on the progress of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils take account of evidence of prior attainment and expected grades.</p>	
<p>Actions for the English department</p>	<p>Impact on pupils</p>
<p>SL, senior leadership team (SLT) and local authority (LA) consultant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the previous attainment of pupils and confirm expected grades. Any pupil who gained level 5+ in Year 9 should be on track for C+ at GCSE. Review the school target for English, ensuring it is based on FFT (D) as a minimum and on the assumption of two levels of progress for each key stage. Identify the names of all pupils in each class who will need to attain grade C+ in order to meet the target. <p>English teachers with SL and consultant coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm the pattern of expected grades for their classes and discuss pupils' existing strengths in terms of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Investigate and address the barriers to the progress of any pupil who gained level 5+ in Year 9 and is not on track for C+ at GCSE (see also Element 3b). <p>English teacher follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange a learning conversation with each pupil at risk of underperformance in relation to prior attainment – particularly those aiming for grade C+. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils know what their grades should be as a minimum. All pupils who gained level 5+ in Year 9 and are not on track for C+ at GCSE have an individual learning conversation with an English specialist to identify and address perceived barriers to progress.
<p>Week 2 Teacher assessments are moderated regularly in relation to GCSE board criteria.</p>	
<p>Actions for the English department</p>	<p>Impact on pupils</p>
<p>SLT, English line manager and SL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and calendar departmental time for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and moderation to ensure that all staff, especially temporary staff or those new to GCSE teaching, are familiar with the detail of assessment objectives. <p>English consultant and SL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide coaching for English teachers so that all know exactly what is required for grade C and above. Undertake regular scrutiny of marking and teacher assessment grades and the quality of feedback to pupils. <p>English teacher follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display examples of work at different grades, with commentaries that show how they could have been improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils understand the grade criteria derived from GCSE assessment objectives, and use them to judge their own progress. Because feedback to pupils uses the terminology of GCSE grade criteria, they are clear on their progress, distance to target and what to do to improve.

<p>Week 3 Progress is recorded and reported to form tutors, parents, SL and SLT on a regular basis.</p>	
Actions for the English department	Impact on pupils
<p>SL and department with consultant coaching The department discuss and agree a time line for frequent reporting on progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A time-effective and informative Red Amber Green (RAG) rating process for signalling pupil progress in relation to expected grades is introduced. <p>SL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL reports regularly to SLT and National Challenge adviser (NCA) on rates of progress and barriers for pupils not on track to meet targets. <p>English teacher follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers record individual pupil progress monthly via RAG ratings and share these with pupils, form tutors, year heads and SL. • LA consultant to support the above where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are supported and encouraged by staff, including form tutors and parents who receive regular, constructive feedback on the progress in English of individual pupils.

<p>Week 4 The diagnostic use of evidence, including mock English exams, informs planning and teaching.</p>	
Actions for the English department	Impact on pupils
<p>SLT, English line manager and SL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher time is provided for marking and individual pupil feedback on exam performance. <p>English consultant and SL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse evidence from tests and APP teacher assessment at Key Stage 3 and agree implications for Year 10 planning and teaching. • Brief the department, clarifying the links between APP AFs and GCSE AOs and progression in learning as outlined in the English Framework. • Review mock English exams for Year 11 in autumn term, with an emphasis on what pupils can do as well as on what they need to do. <p>English teacher follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take account of the patterns of progress and problems revealed by evidence from Key Stage 3 when planning lessons for the autumn term. • Plan and organise individual feedback to pupils on mock exams to ensure Year 11 pupils know how to reach their grade targets. • Use guided group work and arrange additional booster or intervention support to help address the needs of individual pupils and of groups of pupils who have the same curricular targets (see also Elements 3b and 5b). • Consider whether particular teaching approaches are needed to maximise the progress of boys or of girls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils can see the links between what they have learnt in Key Stage 3 and what they will need to learn in Key Stage 4. • Mock exams contribute to building confidence and improving learning for Year 11 pupils. • Pupils benefit from personalised guidance on how to improve.

Week 5 Pupil self-assessment and peer assessment contribute to the tracking of individual progress.	
Actions for the English department	Impact on pupils
SL and LA consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief department on how to link recording procedures for classes, groups and individuals by basing all on English assessment objectives and grade criteria, using or adapting the resource given below. English teacher follow-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning partners are introduced for all target pupils (and others) so that self-assessment is linked with peer assessment via pupil target sheets (see Case study below). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils have curricular targets which are manageable for them, known by their learning partners and are addressed by teachers through modelling, shared and guided teaching and in marking and feedback.

Week 6 SLT and NCA, SL and LA consultant review overall progress, attendance and behaviour for learning of the target group monthly, and respond accordingly.	
Actions for the English department	Impact on pupils
NCA, SLT English line manager, AL and LA consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLT, NCA, SL and LA consultant agree a schedule for regular progress review meetings School procedures incorporate feedback from parents/carers on how pupils are progressing. SL and LA consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief department on expectations for regular feedback from pupil progress tracking that involves attendance and behaviour for learning as well as academic progress. Establish tactics for responding and supporting teachers and pupils where progress is slow, behaviour unproductive or attendance erratic (see also Element 5b). English teacher follow-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide regular feedback, as agreed with SL (i.e. at least monthly) on the progress of target pupils in an agreed format that is common across the department. Adjust teaching, intervention and mentoring for groups and individuals in the light of emerging evidence on progress and remaining problems, seeking English and Behaviour and Attendance (B&A) consultant, peer and SL coaching for problems that prove hard to make impact on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils and their learning partners know the progress they have made and are encouraged to celebrate small steps of progress. No pupil goes unnoticed, and if performance is not improving, parents are involved and action taken.

Review

In reviewing the impact of the improvement activity, the SL and department should aim to make a judgement about **how far, and in what ways**:

A robust approach to teacher assessment, which regularly tracks pupils' progress in Year 10 and Year 11 English, is linked to the whole-school system and involves all staff.

Pupils are given, understand and use curricular targets derived from GCSE assessment objectives, and they are helped to address them.

Ongoing assessment, supplemented by discrete assessment tasks, tests and mock exams contribute to building GCSE pupils' confidence and improving their learning and independence in English.

In reviewing the impact of the improvement activity, the SL and line manager should aim to make a judgement about **how far, and in what ways**:

Tracking processes are integrated with everyday teaching and learning and assessments are used to provide feedback to pupils on their performance and progress towards their curricular targets and GCSE grade targets.

In reviewing the impact of the improvement activity, the SL, line manager and English consultant should aim to make a judgement about **how far, and in what ways**:

The department has capacity to sustain the strategy to improve pupils' standards in future exam-based preparation and coursework tasks.

Any staff members are in need of further support to incorporate the improvement strategy more consistently into their practice.

Case study

Contents:

- 1 Key Stage 4 English progress profiles
- 2 Tracking progress at GCSE support grids
- 3 Pupil target sheets
- 4 Using mock examinations diagnostically: Year 10 mocks
- 5 What needs to be taught for C+ grades

1 Key Stage 4 English progress profiles

Possible uses for progress profiles include:

- strengthening AfL in teachers' planning
- providing curricular targets for classes and groups of pupils
- indicating areas that need attention in shared work
- pinpointing aspects that would be best dealt with through guided work supporting the monitoring of individual progress
- giving a precise focus for marking

- identifying individual targets.

Class/group progress profiles can be filled in over time to give a diagnostic picture of the strengths and comparative weaknesses of a group or class of pupils. Profiles can be used to inform future planning because, although they may not change what is taught, they may change the way it is taught or the groupings in which it is taught.

1a GCSE class/group writing profile

(For completion by the teacher)

Coding: R(ed) = needs developing A(mber) = emerging G(reen) = secure								
PUPILS	a	b	c	D	e	f	g	h
AO3i communicate clearly and imaginatively, using and adapting forms for different readers and purposes								
• content								
• originality								
• awareness of reader								
• sense of purpose								
• relevance to task								
AO3ii organise ideas into sentences, paragraphs and whole texts								
• planning and shaping a text								
• paragraph sequencing								
• organisation within paragraphs								
• openings								
• conclusions								
• presentation								
AO3iii use a range of sentence structures effectively with accurate punctuation and spelling								
• sentence variety and impact								
• punctuation for meaning								
• range								
• spelling accuracy								
• direct speech								
• critical terminology								
• choice of vocabulary								
Personal writing targets								

1b GCSE class/group reading profile

Coding: R(ed) = needs developing A(mber) = emerging G(reen) = secure								
PUPILS	a	b	c	D	e	f	g	h
AO2i read with insight and engagement, making appropriate references and developing interpretations								
• reads non-literary texts with understanding								
• reads fiction and poetry with engagement and insight								
• can refer to textual evidence								
• offers a personal interpretation								
AO2ii distinguish between fact and opinion and evaluate how information is presented								
• knows fact from opinion								
• recognises and evaluates how well information is presented								
AO2iii follow an argument, identifying implications and recognising inconsistencies								
• reads with literal understanding								
• sees implications								
• can track a line of argument and recognise inconsistencies								
AO2iv select material appropriate to purpose, collate material from different sources and make cross-references								
• selects appropriate material								
• can collate material from different sources								
• can make cross-references								
AO2v understand and evaluate linguistic, structural and presentational devices and comment on language variety and change								
• recognises and evaluates linguistic devices								
• recognises and evaluates structural devices								
• recognises and evaluates presentational devices								
• recognises and can comment on language variety								
• recognises and can comment on language change								
Personal/group/class reading targets								

1c GCSE class/group speaking and listening profile

Coding: R(ed) = needs developing A(mber) = emerging G(reen) = secure								
PUPILS	a	b	c	D	e	f	g	h
AO1i communicate clearly and imaginatively, sustaining and adapting talk and using standard English appropriately								
• talks clearly to familiar listeners								
• uses imaginative vocabulary and phrasing								
• sustains talk fluently in formal situations								
• adapts talk to match audience								
• uses standard English appropriately and effectively								
AO1ii participate in discussion, judging the roles and contributions of others								
• takes part readily in discussion								
• recognises and builds on the contributions of others								
• can summarise and synthesise discussion								
AO1iii adopt roles and communicate with audiences using a range of techniques								
• uses a range of drama techniques								
• chooses techniques appropriately								
• adopts a variety of roles								
• sustains roles successfully								
• communicates effectively with an audience								
Personal/group/class targets for speaking and listening								

2 Tracking progress at GCSE support grids

2a GCSE – tracking progress in reading

AO2	AO2i read, with insight and engagement, making appropriate references to texts and developing and sustaining interpretations of them	AO2ii distinguish between fact and opinion and evaluate how information is presented	AO2iii follow an argument, identifying implications and recognising inconsistencies	AO2iv select material appropriate to their purpose, collate material from different sources and make cross-references	AO2v understand and evaluate how writers use linguistic, structural and presentational devices to achieve their effects, and comment on ways language varies and changes
GRADE A sustained and sensitive response to task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows sustained and sensitive response to task, showing independent insight • independent discovery and interpretation of significant details • synthesis of relevant evidence into a coherent analysis • appreciation and exploration how effects are achieved, supporting with apt textual reference and quotation • subtle and imaginative use of inference and deduction citing significant textual evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • material is fully absorbed and shaped into a comprehensive and balanced response • clear reasoning supports a critical evaluation based on full understanding • detailed comparison draws effectively on textual evidence to analyse the impact of uses of fact and opinion in relation to the writer's intention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete response to the task • balanced comparison based on aptly selected evidence • material has been fully absorbed and shaped in relation to purpose • full understanding substantiated with reasoned evaluation and textual evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sophisticated engagement with the task • well-structured response, reflecting full understanding • logical analysis and explanation of how meaning is conveyed in different texts • convincingly mature use of appropriate critical terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sophisticated engagement with the task, reflecting appreciation of how language varies and changes • complete answer, well-structured and reflecting full understanding • logical analysis and evaluation of authorial techniques • references integrated with argument and based on judicious cross-referencing • convincingly mature use of appropriate critical terminology • exploration of and empathy with writers' viewpoint, ideas and attitudes • able to analyse and interpret the impact of language choices.

<p>GRADE B</p> <p>sustained and developed response to task</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows sustained and developed response to task demonstrating some independent exploration and insight • relevant points clearly identified and explained • selects points from different places in the text in structured response • appreciates and explains how effects are achieved, supporting with relevant textual reference or quotation • use of inference and deduction from textual evidence shown in comments • effective use of details when explaining textual evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • material is absorbed and shaped into a response • evidence of an evaluative engagement with the text with judicious analysis of the impact of uses of fact and opinion • significant features relating to organisation at text level, including form, are clearly explained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • material has been absorbed and shaped in relation to purpose • competent response to the task, based on textual evidence • identification of similarities and differences as a basis for comparison. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • competent attempt to engage with and respond to the task • clear explanation of how meaning is conveyed • effective use of appropriate critical terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • competent attempt to engage with and respond to the task • clear understanding and some analysis of the impact of language choices • effective use of appropriate critical terminology • able to cross-reference effectively • appreciation of writers' viewpoint, feelings, attitudes and ideas • shows analytical skills when discussing the impact of language.
<p>GRADE C</p> <p>Structured response to task</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structured response to task • most relevant points clearly identified • selects points from different places in the text in structured response • some explanations of how effects are achieved • effective use of details when explaining textual evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and competent attempt to follow the argument and engage with the task and analyse the impact of uses of fact and opinion • comments on structural choices show some general awareness of writer's craft, • various features relating to organisation at text level, including form, are clearly identified, with some explanation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structured response to questions, but some reliance on paraphrase • comments on a range of texts show inferences based on evidence • use of inference and deduction from textual evidence shown in comments • clear attempt to compare information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear attempt to engage with and respond to the task • structured response, which addresses the task • selects and comments on aspects of different texts • some appropriate use of terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear attempt to engage with the task • structured response, which addresses the task • some reliance on the wording of the original • effective use of supporting textual detail • awareness of authorial techniques, viewpoint and purpose • understanding of feelings, attitudes and ideas • some cross-referencing evident.

<p>GRADE D</p> <p>some focus on the task</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some focus on the task • awareness of feelings and attitudes • identifies some relevant points • range of comments on specific details • some explanation of response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-presents material from a text with limited explanation of fact and opinion • clear understanding of how fact and opinion differ • simple comment on structural choices • some basic features of organisation at text level identified in a range of texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some response to the task, but unstructured arguments are represented or paraphrased • some attempt to compare information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some attempt to engage with and respond to the task, • largely descriptive but unstructured • some attempt to paraphrase and explain • some identification of the way meaning is conveyed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unstructured attempt to engage with and respond to the task, • includes some textual detail, but over-reliance on the wording of the original • simple comments on writer's choices and a tendency to paraphrase • personal response in relation to feelings and attitudes • some basic features of writers' use of language identified • shows understanding when writing about language.
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2b GCSE – tracking progress in writing

AO3	AO3i communicate clearly and imaginatively, using and adapting forms for different readers and purposes	AO3ii organise ideas into sentences, paragraphs and whole texts	AO3iii use a range of sentence structures effectively with accurate punctuation and spelling
GRADE A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing is shaped and consciously crafted form, content and style are assuredly matched to purpose and audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing is shaped and consciously crafted effective and extensive range of vocabulary choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses full range of sentence structures to manipulate meaning effectively high level of technical accuracy effective use of rhetorical devices.
GRADE B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing is coherent and controlled form, content and style are generally matched to purpose and audience uses paragraphing to enhance meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing is coherent and controlled use of paragraphing to enhance meaning vocabulary choice shows increasing sophistication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of rhetorical devices uses sentence forms for effect accurate spelling effective use of punctuation, which is used to clarify meaning and purpose.
GRADE C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear identification with purpose and audience evidence of structure: coherently linked paragraphing features of selected form clearly established with some adaptation to purpose relevant ideas and material developed with some imaginative detail sustains reader's interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence of structure through coherently linked paragraphing relevant ideas and material developed with some imaginative detail vocabulary selected for effect sustains reader's response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses sentence forms for effect generally secure spelling generally secure use of punctuation, which is used to clarify meaning and purpose.
GRADE D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conscious attempt to match style and form to purpose and audience attempts to engage reader's response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conscious attempt to match style and form to purpose and audience attempts to engage reader's response clear if mechanical paragraphing some use of vocabulary for effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a range of securely demarcated sentences some complex words spelt correctly use of a range of punctuation.

3 Pupil target sheets

3a GCSE pupil target sheet – writing

<p><i>Pupil:</i></p> <p><i>Teacher:</i></p> <p><i>Target grade:</i></p>	<p>Traffic light the box(es) to signal your target areas as shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green = a strength ○ Orange = OK ○ Red = a target for improvement 	<p>What can I do to improve?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirm your identified targets with the teacher. 2. Work with a partner to review the questions below, using your recent work as the evidence. 3. Confirm with your teacher when you think your new writing shows that you have reached your target grade.
<p>AO3i communicate clearly and imaginatively, using and adapting forms for different readers and purposes</p>		
<p>I write what has been asked for in a title or question</p>	<p>G O R</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you have ways of making sure that you understood the question (<i>e.g. read the question twice, underline or highlight the key words or re-phrase the question in your own words</i>)? ▪ Did you keep referring back to the key words in the task or question?
<p>My writing does show imagination</p>	<p>G O R</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you think what the obvious way to respond is, and do something different from that? ▪ Have you included some words, images or ideas that will surprise the reader? ▪ What's unique about your writing (<i>e.g. tone, original ideas, humour</i>)?
<p>I write in different ways for different readers and purposes</p>	<p>G O R</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are you always clear about TAPs – Task, Audience, Purpose? ▪ What is the evidence that you have thought who is supposed to read what you are writing? ▪ Do you note down what your reader might expect from a particular type of writing (<i>e.g. If writing persuasively, do you jot down the features of persuasive writing</i>)? ▪ What shows that you knew what you were trying to achieve in this piece of writing? ▪ Did you decide how formal and/or impersonal it needed to be? Did you remember not to use the language of ordinary speech when writing formally? (<i>e.g. We say, 'Thanks a lot'. In a formal letter we write, I am most grateful.</i>)

AO3ii organise ideas into sentences, paragraphs and whole texts		
I plan before I start writing to make sure I do what is asked	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you look again at the task and check what you were asked to do? ▪ Have you used the information given to help you think of ideas? ▪ Did you remember that <i>Who? What? Where? When? Why?</i> and <i>How?</i> are questions that can sometimes help to generate ideas? ▪ How did thinking about who would read the piece change how you wrote it? ▪ Did you choose the best planning model for this piece of writing (e.g. <i>comparison boxes, fishbone diagram, pattern notes</i>)? ▪ Did you number your ideas in an order that makes your line of argument clear through linked paragraphs? ▪ How well did your plan cover TAPs – Task, Audience, Purpose?
I organise ideas into five or six paragraphs which follow on from each other	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you decide on the key words for your introduction and your ending at planning stage? ▪ Did you have at least two paragraphs on each page? ▪ Did you write down the connectives to join each paragraph to the next? ▪ Have you remembered to start a new paragraph for a change of time, change of topic, change of speaker? ▪ Do your connectives link your paragraphs effectively (i.e. <i>make your line of argument clear</i> – first, second, however, moreover)?
I try to link up the sentences within my paragraphs	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you used connectives that help to develop your ideas (e.g. <i>consequently...refers back to an idea earlier</i>)? ▪ Can a reader track your line of argument? How have you signalled your line of thought to a reader?
AO3iii use a range of sentence structures effectively with accurate punctuation and spelling		
I use long and shorter sentences as appropriate	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you varied the length of your sentences (e.g. <i>using short, simple sentences among longer sentences</i>)? ▪ Have you started your sentences in different ways (e.g. <i>with adverbs like alarmingly...or verbs such as run</i>)?

The punctuation within my sentences helps to make the meaning clear	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Are your sentences too long? Does your reader get lost because you have not separated out your ideas into shorter sentences? (More than three ideas loses most readers, so try to keep three ideas as your limit!)▪ Have you used commas where you should have used a full stop?▪ Have you used colons and semi-colons to extend and to clarify your ideas?
I spell most words accurately	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Did you know which words could cause you difficulty, and make sure that you got them right (<i>e.g. character, tragedy, favourite, enough</i>)?▪ Did you use your personal ways of remembering tricky spelling?▪ Have you avoided using an excellent word because you are unsure of the spelling?▪ Have you made sure that you don't make mistakes in simple, common words that you could be expected to know?

My personal targets in writing are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3b GCSE Pupil target sheet – reading

<p>READING Teacher: Pupil: Target grade:</p>	<p>Traffic light the box(es) to signal your target areas as shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green = a strength ○ Orange = OK ○ Red = a target for improvement 	<p>What can I do to improve?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirm your identified targets with the teacher. 2. Work with a partner to review the questions below, using your recent work on reading as the evidence. 3. Confirm with your teacher when you think what you have written or said about your reading shows that you have reached your target grade.
<p>AO2i read with insight and engagement, making appropriate references and developing interpretations</p>		
<p>I generally understand what the writer is trying to say</p>	<p>G O R</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When you read a text, do you ask yourself: Why was this written? What is this text for? Who is it for? What is its purpose (<i>i.e. TAPs for reading as well as for writing</i>)? ▪ Have you used clues in and around the text (<i>e.g. headings, sub-headings, pictures, date, author's name</i>)? ▪ Did you think whether you need to read closely, skim read or scan the text for specific information? ▪ Did you have ways of guessing the meaning of words you didn't know (<i>e.g. by thinking what would make sense, breaking the word into syllables or trying the word in a different context</i>)? ▪ Did you go back to the topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph if you had lost track of the meaning?
<p>I usually realise how writers want the reader to react</p>	<p>G O R</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do you think the writer wanted you to feel when reading this? ▪ How did you know what the writer wanted? ▪ Have you explained the way you responded, and said whether this was what the writer would have anticipated?
<p>I make my points by using references to and quotations from the text</p>	<p>G O R</p>	<p>Where it fitted the question, did you use the PEEE formula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is my point • Here is an example • Here is a comment to explain and explore the example? <p>If you needed to quote, did you make it as short as possible (<i>i.e. just to refer to a line, sentence or paragraph</i>) and embed this in your answer?</p>

I know how to say what I think about a text	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you have the right words to analyse the text succinctly (<i>e.g. presentational devices, metaphor, emotive language, explicit, implicit, viewpoint</i>)? ▪ Was your response a convincingly personal one? (<i>e.g. I thought that...</i>) ▪ Was your response to the text(s) made clear by the way you used connectives to develop your argument?
AO2ii distinguish between fact and opinion and evaluate how information is presented		
I know the difference between a fact and an opinion	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you make it clear with evidence from the text that you know what facts are, and how the writer has used them to influence the reader (<i>e.g. are there numerical or chronological facts</i>)? ▪ Did you make it clear with evidence from the text that you know what opinions are, and explain how the writer has used them to influence the reader (<i>e.g. does emotive language reveal the writer's attitudes</i>)?
I can comment on the impact of the structure of a text	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you explained how the argument develops (<i>e.g. how the order in which ideas are presented conveys a particular point of view</i>)? ▪ Have you commented on how the order in which ideas are presented might affect a reader's response? ▪ Have you picked out and commented on the writer's changes in tone as indicators of her/his attitudes?
AO2iii follow an argument, identifying implications and recognising inconsistencies		
I can understand what a writer is driving at	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How have you made it clear that you can pick out the main ideas in the text? ▪ Did you base your response on relevant evidence from the text?
I realise when a text means more than it actually says	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How have you shown in your response that you understand the difference between what the text states clearly and what is only hinted at?
I can spot weaknesses in a writer's argument	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you shown that you noticed where the ideas were not based on convincing evidence? ▪ Did you base your response on relevant evidence from the text?
AO2iv select material appropriate to purpose, collate material from different sources and make cross-references		
I can select what I need from a text to answer a question	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you use the best reading strategy to find appropriate information quickly? Did you think whether you need to read closely, skim read or scan the text for specific information? ▪ Did you use the PEEE formula of Point + Example + Explain and Explore?

I can bring together material from different sources	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you draw evidence from different sources to support your answer?
I make cross-references when necessary	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did you use evidence from other texts for comparison or contrast when writing about a particular text?
AO2v understand and evaluate linguistic, structural and presentational devices and comment on language variety and change		
I can comment on a writer's choice of words, and on their impact	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you made sure your comment is about the effect of the author's special use of words (<i>i.e. their impact on the reader</i>)? ▪ Have you commented on the choice and impact of the range of nouns, the types of verbs, the use of adjectives, adverbs and connectives? ▪ Have you commented on words that stood out for you (<i>e.g. emotive language, specialist terminology</i>)?
I comment on the effectiveness of how a piece is put together	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you explained how the argument develops? ▪ Have you commented on how the order in which ideas are presented might affect a reader's response?
I understand and judge the impact of what a piece looks like	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you noticed and written about the full range of presentational features (<i>e.g. headings, fonts, colour, illustrations, diagrams</i>)? ▪ Have you commented on why and how these presentational features might affect a reader (<i>e.g. to signpost an important piece of information</i>)?
I recognise when non-standard English is used and comment on its effect	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you identified examples of non-standard English (<i>e.g. slang, colloquial terms, dialect</i>)? ▪ Have you commented on why the writer has used them and how they might affect a reader?
I can comment on how language has changed over time	G O R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you identified examples of archaic (old-fashioned) language if there are any? ▪ Have you commented on how they might affect a modern reader?

My personal targets in reading are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4 Using mock examinations diagnostically: Year 10 mocks

April	May	Exam	July
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' skills are developed rather than just practised, through explicit teaching of the key AO skills. • Skills-led learning objectives are used to lead lessons. • Pupils will know the success criteria within the GCSE skills strands. • Peer/self-assessment and target setting are regularly used focusing on the progress being made within the specific skills that will be tested in the mocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are provided with models of how to respond successfully to different types of question. • Pupils know and understand the structure of the papers, including mark allowances and the implications for time management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers mark the mock exam responses using the official mark scheme. • Moderation of marking within the team boosts teacher knowledge of standards. • A diagnostic analysis of areas of strength and weaknesses is run by each teacher and this information is fed back to the Key Stage 4 coordinator so that any necessary re-grouping and intervention can be organised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers use the mock assessment to inform decisions about what/how to teach next. • The skill areas highlighted in the mock are referred to and followed up on a frequent basis so that pupils can see the links between what they are learning in lessons and what they will have to do in the final exams.

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5 What needs to be taught for C+ grades

Writing

Overall tips:

- Teach **Purpose–Audience–Form (P–A–F)** to all pupils and ensure that they use this as the basis of any decisions that they make at text, sentence or word level.
- **Insist that the pupils plan their writing** and explicitly **teach them a number of different ways to plan**, from which they can select: mind-mapping; planning using tables; flow-charting; thought-showing and then organising points. The most successful plans are those which show thinking about *style* as well as content: what kind of language will I use in this piece? What type of sentences should I open the piece with? Pupils need to have these thought-processes clearly modelled for them.
- **Teach pupils to draft and redraft the first couple of sentences** of a piece of writing, altering vocabulary, until they are happy that their choice of language matches the audience and purpose of the piece. This should then provide them with a 'voice' for the rest of the piece.

- Provide frequent and explicitly-led **exposure to the text types** the pupils will have to write in the exam: argue/persuade/advise and comment/analyse/review.
- Explicitly teach the **grammatical features** of argue/persuade/advise and comment/analyse/review texts.

Skill	What pupils need to demonstrate	So how/what should we teach?
AO3i communicate clearly and imaginatively, using and adapting forms for different readers and purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear identification with purpose and audience • evidence of structure: coherently linked paragraphing • features of selected form clearly established with some adaptation to purpose • relevant ideas and material developed with some imaginative detail • sustains reader's interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model aloud the thought processes involved during planning to ensure that the piece will be appropriate to audience/purpose and form. • As a class, investigate models of writing which are successfully tailored to audience/purpose/form and identify the features that make them successful in this way. • Ensure through regular modelling that the pupils understand what it means to 'develop' ideas with the reader and the purpose of the text in mind. • Teach the connectives that enable us to develop ideas: <i>moreover, furthermore, in addition, interestingly</i> and so on. • Set up peer and self-assessment where pupils hold their own and each other's writing to account: does this piece hold the reader's interest? At which points does this text lose the reader's interest and why?
AO3ii organise ideas into sentences, paragraphs and whole texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of structure through coherently linked paragraphing • relevant ideas and material developed with some imaginative detail • vocabulary selected for effect • sustains reader's response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insist that pupils plan how they will organise their writing into paragraphs. Model and practise planning how each paragraph of a piece will begin: for example, topic sentences signposting the content of the paragraph in an information text; topic sentences referring back in a narrative; topic sentences signalling the direction of an argument in argue/persuade texts. • Use short starters to play 'cloze exercise' games in pairs – which of these words would be most fitting for this 'gap' and why? Pupils need to select vocabulary with the audience and the purpose of the text in mind. • Use living graphs to chart the reader's interest. • Give pupils muddled-up texts which they need to reorganise into something that a reader can easily follow. Pupils should explain their decisions by making reference to audience/purpose and form. • Explicitly teach the connectives and linking phrases that help to hold a whole text and paragraphs together. • Play games: turning a bullet-pointed list into free-flowing paragraphed prose using linking phrases.

AO3iii use a range of sentence structures effectively with accurate punctuation and spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses sentence forms for effect• generally secure spelling• generally secure use of punctuation, which is used to clarify meaning and purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that pupils know and understand the difference between simple, compound and complex sentences.• Investigate the balance between simple/compound and complex sentences in different texts and at different places in the same text; for example, Do review texts tend to begin with simple, compound or complex sentences and why?• Teach pupils to begin sentences with 'ing' or 'ed' clauses.• Teach weaker students to write on every other line and leave time to redraft. Use the spaces between the lines to convert simple sentences to complex, if appropriate.
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What needs to be taught for C+ grades © Devon County Council 2008. Used with kind permission.

Overall tips:

- It is essential that pupils have an understanding of the relationship between the writer/producer of a text, the text itself and the reader/audience. It is worth discussing this at length, perhaps referring to a helpful visual representation of these relationships.
- It is essential that students are taught to **go beyond feature spotting**. To achieve a C+ grade, pupils must **analyse the impact** of the features they have identified. Teach pupils useful stems to help prompt them into this: *the effect of this is... this is important because... this makes the reader...*
- Over the GCSE course, expose pupils to a range of point of view/argument texts, explicitly focusing on the way that they are structured, the ways that language is used to develop argument and the tone of the pieces. Ensure that the pupils are regularly introduced to two texts focusing on the same topic but with different points of view/arguments.
- For all reading questions, get hold of examination board exemplars and share them with the pupils, scrutinising them as a class, so that they regularly see models for successful practice and can emulate these.

Skill	What pupils need to demonstrate	So how/what should we teach?
AO2i read, with insight and engagement, making appropriate references to texts and developing and sustaining interpretations of them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structured response to task • most relevant points clearly identified • selects points from different places in the text in structured response • some explanations of how effects are achieved • effective use of details when explaining textual evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind pupils to ‘read beneath the surface’ of the text they have been presented with. • After reading a text and thinking about the possible answers to a question, teach pupils to quickly bullet point the overall direction their response will take so that they answer in an organised way. • Model aloud the process of selecting appropriate points from a text. Ask: is this ‘relevant’ to the question I’m answering? Give pupils a range of points taken from a text in answer to a question and ask them to select the most appropriate and explain their decision. • Model good-quality explanation of evidence. Pupils need to go beyond paraphrasing the evidence they pull from a text. They must explain and analyse in detail how the evidence is relevant to the question they are answering. Provide students with a range of good/satisfactory/poor explanation of textual detail and allow them to evaluate it, choosing the most successful and explaining their reasoning. • Teach pupils to incorporate quotations/reference to a text at the planning stage, so that they not only think, ‘What point shall I make about this?’ but ‘What evidence shall I include to prove the point I make?’ A paragraph plan with two columns showing content and quotation can be helpful.

<p>AO2ii distinguish between fact and opinion and evaluate how information is presented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and competent attempt to follow the argument and engage with the task and analyse the impact of uses of fact and opinion • comments on structural choices show some general awareness of writer's craft, • various features relating to organisation at text level, including form, are clearly identified, with some explanation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that pupils understand and can recognise the difference between facts and opinions. However it is essential that you go beyond spotting the facts and opinions: they must analyse the impact of their use. You could build the pupils' analytical stance by creating a set of prompt cards with analyse stems on for use during class/small group discussion of a text. • Investigate where in different texts facts and opinions might be used and draw out some conclusions: why? What effect? for example, in a tabloid newspaper report • Explain to students that opinions can be presented as facts and investigate examples of this in advertising, reportage, articles and so on. Discuss the motivation behind this and the effects on the reader. • Pupils need to have a clear understanding of what is meant by the 'structure' of a text. They must be able to 'identify – describe – evaluate' the impact of ways that a text has been organised.
<p>AO2iii follow an argument, identifying implications and recognising inconsistencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structured response to questions, but some reliance on paraphrase • comments on a range of texts show inferences based on evidence • use of inference and deduction from textual evidence shown in comments • clear attempt to compare information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide plenty of opportunities for students to chart/map/plot point of view/ argument texts, identifying points in the text where the argument changes direction, increases in intensity and so on. This can be done visually, as a map or a flow chart so that the pupils are explicitly aware of the argument underpinning the text as a process. • Use the image of an iceberg to show that words, phrases and sentences from a text can be read literally (above) and beneath the surface. Ensure that when they pull evidence from a text they read it both above and below the surface asking, 'What does this suggest about the writer's point of view?' • Explicitly teach the connectives required to compare texts. • As a class, and then later more independently, scrutinise written arguments (e.g. verbal advertisements, speeches made by politicians) for inconsistencies. You could 'dragons den' an argument, placing the writer under the spotlight in a hot-seating situation.

<p>AO2iv select material appropriate to their purpose, collate material from different sources and make cross-references</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear attempt to engage with and respond to the task • structured response, which addresses the task • selects and comments on aspects of different texts • some appropriate use of terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model the process of tackling a question, taking it apart so that it is clear what is being asked. Insist that the students annotate the questions they are asked. Impress upon them that the exam paper belongs to them and that they should make it theirs by annotating the questions with questions and ideas. • Pupils must be explicitly taught ways of making links between the information of different texts, for example by colour-coding, using a table in which to record extracted information.
<p>AO2v understand and evaluate how writers use linguistic, structural and presentational devices to achieve their effects, and comment on ways language varies and changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear attempt to engage with the task • structured response, which addresses the task • some reliance on the wording of the original • effective use of supporting textual detail • awareness of authorial techniques, viewpoint and purpose • understanding of feelings, attitudes and ideas • some cross-referencing evident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time investigating the relationship between text and image by playing with the effects of placing different texts and images together. • Spend time investigating the effects of the layout of a text on the reader. Chop up a persuasive text into its parts and ask the students to rebuild it in different ways, investigating which layout is most persuasive and why. • Teach pupils to use stems which focus them on the role of the writer: 'The writer has used...' 'The writer is trying to...' 'The writer is aiming to....' • Make understanding 'tone' an explicit learning objective. Play with texts by removing the language that carries the 'tone' of a piece and asking students to experiment with different choices. Focus on the impact that the changes/decisions have on the reader. • Explicitly teach the connectives required to compare texts and aspects of texts. • Interfere with two texts by embedding the words from one text in the other text. Ask pupils to identify the verbal interlopers and to explain how they knew that particular words did not 'belong'. • Take a range of points of view texts on the same topic (e.g. from the BBC Radio 4 blog or from a football website) and place the responses on different spectrums, for example calm-angry or satisfied-unsatisfied. As a class, identify the words and phrases that enable us to understand a writer's feelings and comment on what those words suggest: 'How is this writer feeling? How can I tell? Why might they be feeling this way?' • Build a wall display of intriguing examples of linguistic devices drawn from the complete range of text-types and refer to it when analysing examples from other texts; for example, 'Is this use of language like anything we have come across before in our reading?'

Resources

Improving the planning and teaching of English at KS4. Consultants' CD-ROM 2007

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES-03870-2006&>

Departmental self-evaluation grid for Key Stage 4 English (In *Improving the planning and teaching of English at KS4*, DCSF ref: 03870-2006DOC-EN-01)

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES-03870-2006&>

Digest of GCSE Examiners' reports which identifies priority areas for attention. (Contained within *Improving the planning and teaching of English at KS4*, DCSF ref: 03870-2006DOC-EN-01)

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES-03870-2006&>

Key Stage 4 subject network follow-up pack: spring 2005 – English (DCSF ref: 0117-2005)

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DfES%2F0120%2F2005&>

Successful use of the six-week improvement process for **Element 4b, Improving pupils' attainment at GCSE through assessing and tracking progress** could lead a department to the following sections within the Core Plus programme:

Element 2a: Planning for Progression in English: using the Framework for English and reviewing the planning cycle

Element 3b: Improving subject pedagogy and the climate for learning for Year 10 and Year 11

Element 4a: Tackling pupils' progress using Assessing Pupils' Progress and the underpinning principles of Assessment for Learning

Element 5a: Intervention and personalisation

Element 5b: Implementing Study Plus in Key Stage 4.

Acknowledgements

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