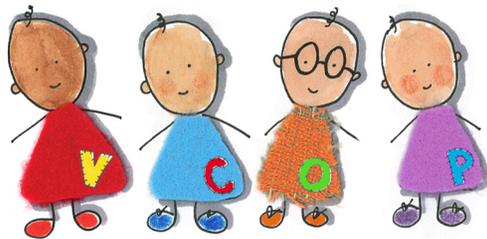




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Raising Standards in Education

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# The Criterion Scale



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# The Criterion Scale

This Criterion Scale has been adapted through the expertise and subject knowledge of Joan Stark (Cumbria) to show the correlation between these scales and the national Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) materials currently under trial. The criteria which are not referenced are associated with handwriting, which is not included in the APP grid.

**The following is a summary of the number of criteria associated with each Assessment Focus (AF) of the APP:**

- AF1: Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts
- AF2: Produce texts which are appropriate to task, audience and purpose
- AF3: Organise & present whole texts effectively, sequencing & structuring information, ideas & events
- AF4: Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs
- AF5: Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect
- AF6: Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses & sentences
- AF7: Select appropriate & effective vocabulary
- AF8: Use correct spelling

**Level W is not yet produced for APP but it has been referenced on our scale as 'working towards' these AFs.**

N.B. The Scales have now been numbered to enable quick identification and reference. The numbers in the Level columns correlate to the number of the criteria on the Scale. The bracket denotes how many criteria are referenced at that Level. Users will note that the weighting towards skills shifts as a pupil moves through the Levels, as one might expect.

**The following grid might be used as a summary tool to assess achievement as a best fit model and to identify gaps in teaching and achievement.**

Level	AF1 Composition & Effect  Voice/Style	AF2 Composition & Effect  Audience & Purpose	AF3 Structure & Organisation  Sequence & Organisation	AF4 Structure & Organisation  Organising & Paragraphing	AF5 Sentence Structure & Punctuation  Varying Sentence Structure	AF6 Sentence Structure & Punctuation  Grammar/ Technical accuracy	AF7 Composition & Effect  Appropriate Vocabulary/ Ambitious Vocabulary	AF8 Spelling  Phonics & Sight Vocabulary
W and 1	W14	W14 15,16,23,24,26,(6)	Not appropriate	Not appropriate	Not appropriate	Not appropriate	Not appropriate	W8,10 19,21,22, (5 criteria)
L1	1,(1)	6,9 (2)	Not appropriate	Not appropriate	Not appropriate	3,7,(2)	9,(1)	2,4,5,(3)
L2	1,7,17,19,(4)	1,9,12,19,(4)	2,8,12,18,(4)	6,18,(2)	10	13,16,20,(3)	3,11,(2)	4,14,15,(3)
L3	1,13,15,17,19,(5)	2,3,15,17,19,(5)	5,9,10,16,(4)	5,6,16,18,(4)	6,7,(2)	6,7,8,11,(4)	4,13,18,(3)	14,(1)
L4	1,9,16,17,18,(5)	1,2,4,9,16,17,(6)	2,4,(2)	1,7,8,15,(4)	7,10,(2)	5,12,13,(3)	3,7,14,(3)	11,(1)
L5	1,15,16,18,20,(5)	1,2,3,8,14,15,16, 18,19,20,(10)	2,5,8,19,22,(5)	5,7,21,(3)	6,9,14,17,(4)	6,10,11,22,(4)	4,20,(2)	4,(1)



## Structure:

Each level has been broken down into specific criteria against which work can be assessed. The criteria from Level 2 to Level 5 have been sub-divided into three sections which give an indication of common performance at the sub-levels, C (low), B (secure) and A (high). Many children will, however, be demonstrating skills at all three sub-levels at one time, whilst not having skills at sub-levels below their main level of attainment. It is for this reason that a 'best fit' judgement must be made, and the point score system in the 'Assessment' box gives an indicator of the sub-level demonstrated. It should be regarded as an indicator to within a point each side, as ephemeral factors such as voice, style and confidence will significantly affect the judgement. These factors are often as important or more important than any specific skill, but cannot be described in specific criteria. They can usually only be identified in applying assessment to a specific piece of writing.

The Criterion Scale ends at Level 5 because by that level the writer has acquired all the skills and competencies needed to be an effective adult writer. Progress through the remaining three levels is associated with selecting and applying those skills and competencies for increasingly sophisticated purposes, with increasing confidence and to communicate increasingly sophisticated knowledge in increasingly complex and challenging contexts. For assessment of this progress, the national criteria for Key Stage 3 and for GCSE and Advanced Level examinations are more appropriate.

On each page from Level 2 to Level 5 there is an 'essentials' box. Up to Level 3 these are criteria that must be included in the scale, if not already evidenced, as they are not present at that level. For each criterion added, an additional point must be added into the scale. For Level 4 and 5 the 'essentials' become pre-entry requirements to protect standards and quality.

This version of the criteria for assessing writing in English has been standardised in the assessment of over 20,000 pieces of children's writing spanning the Levels 'W' to 5 and has been successfully applied in the assessment and moderation of 1,000 samples by over 200 teachers across the Reception Year and Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. A simpler, early version of the criteria was published in the publication 'Formative and Summative Assessment of Progress in Writing Skills', (Kirklees 1998).

This criterion scale has been adapted through the expertise and knowledge of Joan Stark, Cumbria to show the relationship between these scales and the national APP materials.



# WORKING TOWARDS LEVEL 1 (W1)

## Sources:

Early Learning Journey  
 Performance Criteria (P Scales) for children with SEN  
 Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage  
 NC Level Descriptions

## Listed in an approximate hierarchy:

1. Will tolerate hand manipulation		
2. Will work with another to allow mark making using body parts or an implement		
3. Will attempt to mark make independently		
4. Can recognise mark making materials		
5. Can use and enjoys mark making materials		
6. Can show some control in mark making		
7. Can produce some recognisable letters		
8. Can write initial letter of own name	AF8	
9. Will attempt to 'write' things, including own name using random letters		
10. Can differentiate between different letters and symbols	AF8	
11. Shows some awareness of sequencing of letters		
12. Will write own name but often with wrong letter formations or mixed lower/upper case		
13. Can copy over/under a model		
14. Can imitate adults' writing and understands the purpose of writing	AF1 AF2	
15. Is aware of different purposes of writing	AF2	
16. Can ascribe meaning to own mark making, ('reads' what has been 'written')	AF2	
17. Knows print has meaning and that, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom		
18. Can use a pencil and hold it effectively		
19. Can write own name with appropriate upper and lower case letters	AF8	
20. Can form most letters correctly		
21. Writes simple regular words	AF8	
22. Begins to make phonic attempts at words	AF8	
23. Writes captions, labels and attempts other simple forms of writing, (lists, stories etc)	AF2	
24. Can write single letters or groups of letters which represent meaning	AF2	
25. Can show some control over size, shape, orientation, in writing		
26. Can say what writing says and means	AF2	

## Assessment:

0 – 19 = W

20 – 26 = W+

W+ = consider L1

23 – 26 = assess for L1



## LEVEL 1

**Sources:** Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage  
 NC Optional Test Criteria and Guidance  
 QCA Exemplification of Standards Materials  
 NC Level Descriptions

### Listed in an approximate hierarchy:

1. Can produce own ideas for writing	AF1	
2. Can write own name	AF8	
3. Can show some control over word order producing logical statements	AF6	
4. Can spell some common monosyllabic words correctly	AF8	
5. Can make recognisable attempts at spelling words not known, (most decodable without child's help)	AF8	
6. Can write simple text such as lists, stories, explanations	AF2	
7. Begin to show awareness of how full stops are used, in reading or in writing	AF6	
8. Can usually give letters a clear shape and orientation		
9. Can use simple words and phrases to communicate meaning (9) (majority of work can be read/decoded by an adult without assistance from the child, must be more than one simple statement)	AF2 AF7	

### NB: FINAL NC CRITERIA, (9) IS ESSENTIAL TO ATTAIN 1C OR ABOVE

GUIDANCE: AT MINIMUM THERE SHOULD USUALLY BE THREE OR MORE SIMPLE STATEMENTS OF THREE WORDS OR MORE EACH STATEMENT. A SIMPLE LIST OF STATEMENTS ALL STARTING WITH THE SAME KEY WORDS (E.G. 'I CAN...' OR 'I LIKE...') CANNOT BE ASSESSED ABOVE 1C AND THE ASSESSOR MUST BE CLEAR THAT THE CHILD HAS SELECTED THIS STRATEGY FOR A PURPOSE, AND THAT IT IS NOT THE ONLY LIST THE CHILD IS ABLE TO PRODUCE, I.E. A ROTE LEARNED STRATEGY.

<b>Assessment:</b>	MUST EVIDENCE CRITERIA '9', (THE 9TH BULLET) TO ATTAIN LEVEL 1		
	'9' + ANY 4	OTHERS	(total 5) = 1C (low 1)
	'9' + ANY 5 OR 6	OTHERS	(total 6 / 7) = 1B (secure 1)
	'9' + 7 OR 8	OTHERS	(total 8 / 9) = 1A (high 1)



## LEVEL 2

**Sources:** NC Level Descriptions  
Year 2 Task Criteria  
Year 4 Optional Test Criteria  
KS2 Mark Schemes

### Essential L1 criteria to be achieved prior to moving to Level 2:

- Can spell some common monosyllabic words correctly (Level 1)

### Listed in an approximate hierarchy:

1. Can write with meaning in a series of simple sentences, (may not be correct in punctuation and structure at 2C)	AF1 AF2	
2. Can produce short sections of developed ideas (2C may be more like spoken than written language)	AF3	
3. Can use appropriate vocabulary, (should be coherent and mainly sensible)	AF7	
4. Can use simple phonic strategies (CVC words accurately, others mainly accurately) when trying to spell unknown words, (If ALL spelling is correct – tick the criteria)	AF8	
5. Can control use of ascenders/descenders and upper/lower case letters in handwriting, although shape and size may not always be consistent		
6. Can use ANY connective, (may only ever be 'and') to join 2 simple sentences, thoughts, ideas etc	AF4	
7. Can communicate ideas and meaning confidently in a series of sentences (may not be accurate, but mainly 'flows')	AF1	
8. Can usually sustain narrative and non-narrative forms (can write at length, staying on task-close to a side of wide lined A4 at least.)	AF3	
9. Can provide enough detail to interest the reader, (e.g. is beginning to provide additional information or description, beyond a simple list)	AF2	
10. Can vary the structure of sentences to interest the reader, (manipulated sentences e.g., questions, direct speech or opening with a subordinate clause)	AF5	
11. Can use interesting and ambitious words sometimes, (should be words not usually used by a child of that age, and not a technical word used in a taught context only e.g. 'volcano' or 'evaporate')	AF7	
12. Can match organisation to purpose, (e.g. showing awareness of structure of a letter, openings and endings, importance of reader, organisational devices)	AF2 AF3	
13. Can usually use basic sentence punctuation (full stops followed by capital letters. May not be accurate for 2C)	AF6	
14. Can spell common monosyllabic words accurately	AF8	
15. Can use phonetically plausible strategies to spell or attempt to spell unknown polysyllabic words, (if all spelling is correct in a long enough piece to be secure evidence – tick the criteria)	AF8	
16. Can use connectives other than 'and' to join 2 or more simple sentences, thoughts, ideas etc (e.g. but, so, then.)	AF6	
17. Can make writing lively and interesting (e.g. consciously varies sentence length/uses punctuation to create effect etc.)	AF1	
18. Can link ideas and events, using strategies to create 'flow' (e.g. Last time, also, after, then, soon, at last, and another thing....)	AF3 AF4	
19. Can use adjectives and descriptive phrases for detail and emphasis (consciously selects the adjective for purpose, rather than using a familiar one e.g. a title – 'Big Billy Goat Gruff')	AF1 AF2	
20. Can usually structure basic sentences correctly, including capitals and full stops in a longer piece	AF6	
21. Can use accurate and consistent handwriting, (in print at minimum, can show consistent use of upper/lower case, ascenders/descenders, size and form)		
22. Begins to show evidence of joining handwriting		

**Assessment:** 8 – 12 = 2C (low 2)                      13 – 17 = 2B (secure 2)  
18 – 22 = 2A (high 2)                                      assess for Level 3 if 2A



## LEVEL 3

**Sources:** NC Level Descriptions  
Year 4 Optional Test Criteria  
Exemplification Materials  
KS Mark Schemes 2000

### Essential basic skills are now ‘past their sell-by date’ at Level 3:

- basic sight vocabulary/common monosyllabic words
  - range of phonic structures/strategies
  - neat and accurate cursive writing
- These are now urgent targets.

### Listed in an approximate hierarchy:

1. Can produce work which is organised, imaginative and clear (e.g. simple opening and ending)	AF1	
2. Can use a range of chosen forms appropriately and consistently	AF2	
3. Can adapt chosen form to the audience, (e.g. provide information about characters or setting, make a series of points)	AF2	
4. Can use interesting and varied word choices, (MUST pick up on ‘ambitious’ from 2B)	AF7	
5. Can develop and extend ideas logically in sequenced sentences, (may still be overly detailed or brief)	AF3 AF4	
6. Can extend sentences using a wider range of connectives to clarify relationships between points and ideas, (e.g. when, because, if, after, while, also, as well)	AF4 AF5 AF6	
7. Can usually use correct grammatical structures in sentences, (nouns and verbs agree generally)	AF5 AF6	
8. Can use sentence punctuation accurately; full stops, capitals and question marks	AF6	
9. Can structure and organise work clearly, (e.g. beginning, middle, end; letter structure; dialogue structure)	AF3	
10. Can adapt form and style for purpose, (e.g. clear difference between formal and informal letters; abbreviated sentences in notes and diaries)	AF3	
11. Is experimenting with a wide range of punctuation, although use may not be accurate, (e.g. commas; inverted commas; exclamation marks; apostrophes)	AF6	
12. Can use cursive script accurately and neatly, although may be slow, (may not be accurate for Level 3C)		
13. Can use adjectives and adverbs for description	AF1 AF7	
14. Can spell phonetically regular, or familiar common polysyllabic words accurately, (sometimes for Level 3C e.g. ‘forward’ ‘bonfire’)	AF8	
15. Can develop characters and describe settings, feelings and emotions, etcetera	AF1 AF2	
16. Can link and relate events, including past, present and future, sensibly, (afterwards, before, also, after a while, eventually...)	AF3 AF4	
17. Can attempt to give opinion, interest or humour through detail	AF1 AF2	
18. Can use generalising words for style, (e.g. sometimes; never; always; often; in addition....)	AF4 AF7	
19. Is beginning to develop a sense of pace (lively and interesting)	AF1 AF2	

Sectioned in approximate hierarchy of C,B,A, For assessment, however, the ‘best fit’ can span the three sections.

<b>Assessment:</b>	7 – 10 = 3C (low 3)	11 – 15 = 3B (secure 3)
	16 – 19 = 3A (high 3)	assess for Level 4 if 3A



## LEVEL 4

**Sources:** NC Level Descriptions  
Year 4 Optional Test Criteria  
Exemplification Materials  
KS Mark Schemes 2000

### Essential basic skills are now 'past their sell-by date' at Level 3:

- Can almost always use correct grammatical structures
- Can almost always structure and punctuate sentences correctly, (?.,)
- Can use a range of connectives
- Can spell monosyllabic and common polysyllabic words correctly (Level3)

### Listed in an approximate hierarchy:

1. Can write in a lively and coherent style	AF1 AF2 AF4	
2. Can use a range of styles confidently and independently *	AF2 AF3	
3. Can use interesting language to sustain and develop ideas, (MUST pick up on 'ambitious from 2B, may be using very adventurous language – sometimes inaccurately)	AF7	
4. Can organise ideas appropriately for both purpose and reader, (e.g. captions; headings; fonts; chapters; letter formats; paragraphs; logically sequenced events; contextual and background information etcetera)	AF2 AF3	
5. Can use full stops, question marks and commas accurately	AF6	
6. Can write in a clear, neat and accurate cursive style		

7. Can use more sophisticated connectives, (e.g. although, however, nevertheless)	AF4 AF5 AF7	
8. Can use, or attempt to use, paragraphs	AF4	
9. Can produce thoughtful and considered writing, (uses simple explanation, opinion, justification and deduction)	AF1 AF2	
10. Can use or attempt grammatically complex structures, (e.g. expansion before and after the noun – 'The little, old man who lived on the hill...'; '... by the lady who taught me the guitar,...'; subordinate clauses – 'I felt better when...')	AF5	
11. Can spell unfamiliar regular polysyllabic words accurately	AF8	
12. Can use nouns, pronouns and tenses accurately and consistently throughout	AF6	
13. Can use apostrophes and inverted commas, usually accurately	AF6	
14. Can select from a range of known adventurous vocabulary for a purpose, some words are particularly well chosen	AF7	

15. Can use connectives to give order or emphasis, (e.g. 'If...then...'; 'We...so as to ...')	AF4	
16. Can select interesting strategies to move a story forward, (e.g. characterisation, dialogue with the audience, dialogue and negotiation within contexts etcetera)	AF1 AF2	
17. Can advise assertively, although not confrontationally, in factual writing, (e.g. 'An important thing to think about before deciding...'; 'We always need to think about...')	AF1 AF2	
18. Can develop ideas in creative and interesting ways	AF1	

Sectioned in approximate hierarchy of C, B, A. For assessment, however, the 'best fit' can span the three sections. \*If piece is narrative or a report this criteria cannot be assessed. Put a line through the criteria and reduce the threshold/bullet count by one. If piece is a letter, dialogue, information, explanation etc and the structure is accurate; you know they will be able to write a narrative and a report, so you can tick the criteria.

**Assessment:** 6 – 9 = 4C (low 4)                      10 – 13 = 4B (secure 4)  
14 – 18 = 4A (high 4)                              assess for Level 5 if 4A



## LEVEL 5

**Sources:** NC Level Descriptions  
Exemplification Materials  
Key Stage 2 Mark Schemes 2000

### Essential L4 criteria to be achieved prior to moving to Level 5:

- Can use nouns, pronouns and tenses accurately
- Can use a range of sentence punctuation accurately, (, . ? x's "")
- Can use ambitious vocabulary (Level 4)

### Listed in an approximate hierarchy:

1. Can produce writing which is varied, interesting, and thoughtful	AF1 AF2	
2. Can produce well structured and organised writing using a range of conventions in lay-out	AF2 AF3	
3. Can use appropriate informal and formal styles with confidence, (e.g. conversational, colloquial, dialectic, standard English)	AF2	
4. Can select from a wide range of known imaginative and ambitious vocabulary, and use precisely (All spelling including of complex words, is almost always correct.)	AF7 AF8	
5. Can use paragraphs consistently and appropriately	AF3 AF4	
6. Can group subjects appropriately before or after a main verb, (e.g. The books, the pens and the pencils were all ready on the table.)	AF5 AF6	
7. Can use pronouns appropriately to avoid repetition when referring back or forward, (e.g. that, these, those, it)	AF4	
8. Can use different techniques to conclude work appropriately, (e.g. opinion, summary, justification, comment)	AF2 AF3	
9. Can use complex sentence structures appropriately	AF5	
10. Can use a range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately to clarify structure	AF6	
11. Can use punctuation appropriately to create effect, (e.g. exclamation marks, dashes, ellipses)	AF6	
12. Can write fluently in clear, joined script		
13. Can adapt handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes, including for effect		
14. Can use the passive voice for variety and to shift focus, (e.g. the cake was eaten by the child)	AF2 AF5	
15. Can show confident and established 'voice'	AF1 AF2	
16. Can use a range of narrative techniques with confidence, interweaving elements when appropriate, (e.g. action, dialogue, quotation)	AF1 AF2	
17. Can vary sentence length and word order confidently to sustain interest, (e.g. 'Having achieved your goals at such an early age, what motivates you to continue? Why fight on?')	AF5	
18. Can use a range of strategies and techniques confidently and appropriately to engage and involve the reader, (e.g. asides, comment, observation, anticipation, suspense, tension)	AF1 AF2	
19. Can use a range of devices to adapt writing to the needs of the reader, (e.g. parenthesis, introduction providing context, footnote, contents, bibliography)	AF2 AF3	
20. Can use literary features to create effect, (e.g. alliteration, onomatopoeia, figurative language, dialect)	AF1 AF2 AF7	
21. Can interweave implicit and explicit links between sections	AF4	
22. Can use punctuation to show division between clauses, to indicate, to vary pace, to create atmosphere or to sub-divide, (e.g. commas, colons, semicolons, dashes, ellipses)	AF3 AF6	

Sectioned in approximate hierarchy of C, B, A. For assessment, however, the 'best fit' can span the three sections.

#### Assessment:

9 – 12 = 5C (low 5)

18 – 22 = 5A (high 5)

13 – 17 = 5B (secure 5)

assess for Level 6 if 5A

