

NAPLAN Narrative Writing Marking Guide

Quick Reference Companion

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to support markers learning to use the ACARA NAPLAN Writing Marking Guide. Please note that the ACARA NAPLAN Writing Marking Guide is always the first point of reference when scoring a student script. The Quick Reference Companion must never be used in isolation of the Marking Guide.

This Quick Reference Companion will help to clarify the use and interpretation of the 10 criteria. It is recommended to first read pages 4-15 of the marking guide, which explain the writing task, how to use the writing marking guide and include the 10 criteria. Refer to the applicable criteria pages in the marking guide as you read this document.

As part of the application process to mark in the 2023 NAPLAN Writing Marking Operation, Other Eligible Applicants, who did not mark in the 2022 NAPLAN writing marking operation, are required to submit the scores for 5 compliance scripts via the interactive marking sheet link included in the 'OEA Compliance Scripts for 2023 Marker Application' email.

Practice Scripts

To consolidate understanding of the marking criteria, applicants may choose to use the NAPLAN Writing Marking Guide to mark the practice scripts prior to attempting the compulsory compliance scripts. After submitting your interactive marking sheet, you will receive feedback on how your scores compare to the ACARA recommended scores for each script.

Please record your scores for the practice scripts in the interactive marking sheet.

Practice scripts interactive marking sheet: <https://forms.office.com/r/Yt1JAFrM4E>

Compliance scripts

The resource pack contains the following five compliance scripts: 'His shivering rocked the table', 'Friend from Hawaii', 'jelly fish', 'zombie epocilpce' and 'I am a mum of 4'.

Please record your scores for the compliance scripts in the interactive marking sheet.

Compliance scripts interactive marking sheet: <https://forms.office.com/r/j7EQ25q7E5>

How to use the NAPLAN Narrative Writing Marking Guide

Marking Guide

Below are the ten criteria and scores included in the NAPLAN Narrative Writing Marking Guide (p. 6-15).

Audience	Text structure	Ideas	Character and setting	Vocab.	Cohesion	Paragraphing	Sentence structure	Punctuation	Spelling
0-6	0-4	0-5	0-4	0-5	0-4	0-2	0-6	0-5	0-6

Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are all scored using the same criteria. The zero included in the range for each criterion counts as a score. E.g. Audience has a range of 0-6, which means there are seven possible scores for Audience.

Layout of the criteria pages

The image below shows the different sections to be aware of in the criteria pages.

5. Vocabulary

Skill focus: The range and precision of contextually appropriate language choices.

Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0 • symbols or drawings		Pterri DalSal (18)
1 • very short script • mostly simple words • may include two or three precise words or word groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • few content words • single nouns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - water, award, house, reason, news, people, world • simple noun groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a very helpful man, a tin cage, television programs • single verbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - like, run, look, need, think, played • simple verb groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - did it the proper way, looked around the room • adjectives and adverbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cold, always, really, very, friendly, rich • simple comparisons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - as much as she can, the best teacher I ever had, one of the fastest 	Some animals can't die (20) animals getting cewd (22) it cruel to keep animals (24) animals will feel sad (28) any other animal (30) They won't face danger (32) they try to break out (36) I agree and don't agree (38) Some toys and games are educational (40)
2 • four or more precise words or word groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • single precise words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - citizen, urge, budget, consider, solution, protect, supportive, research • modal adjectives and adverbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ultimate, certain, extreme, possibly, definitely, rarely • precise word groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - duty of care, quick-minded person, a positive impact on society • modal groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it would seem that, it is unlikely that 	My idea of a perfect zoo (42) All animals started off (46) The lion's glorious hair (62) Cages and Zoos (50) Under Certain Circumstances (54) Food, water and other necessary supplies (58) If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66) zoos can have useful purposes (70) things should be regulated (74)
3 • sustained and consistent use of precise words and word groups that enhance the meaning (may be some inappropriate or inaccurate word choices)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of precise and effective words and word groups is used in a fluent and articulate manner • language choice is well matched to style of argument 	
4 • a range of precise and effective words and word groups is used in a fluent and articulate manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - habitat, life expectancy, politician, global warming, financial crisis • nominalisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - probability, likelihood, shortsightedness • figurative language, e.g. alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification 	
5 • a range of precise and effective words and word groups is used in a fluent and articulate manner		

NOTES

- Words are generally classified into two classes:
 - **Content words** (or lexical items) describe objects and concepts. This class of words consists of nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, noun groups, phrasal verbs and verb groups.
 - **Grammatical word classes** (or structural words) consist of prepositions, articles, conjunctions, pronouns and interjections.
- About a page of writing is needed to consider sustained use.

Category descriptors are most important, but not enough by themselves.

Examples are given in italic font.

Notes are important when present.

The sample script range is hierarchical:

- the first script in each category is the lowest scoring example
- the last script is the highest scoring example

All the information on the criterion page is required to locate the score that matches the script being marked.

Marking Process

1. Read the whole script to get a holistic impression

- Never assume the contents or quality of the whole script just by reading a part.

2. Rank the script roughly

- While reading, think about the script's strengths and weaknesses. For example, the script may be strong in ideas, but weak in spelling. This helps to speed up marking and eliminate *Category descriptors* that clearly will not match the script.
- Assign a tentative score for each criterion in the given order, and then re-read the script in its entirety before confirming scores for each criterion.

3. Choose the highest score level that matches the evidence in the script

- Concentrate on the most likely *Category descriptors* to find specific evidence required to decide on a score.
- All statements in the *Category descriptor* column must be evidenced for the script to be allocated that score. Use the *Additional information* column to guide this decision.

4. Confirm your tentative score judgement by referring to the sample scripts

- Which sample script would you say your script most resembles?
- What actual words from the *Category descriptors* would you use to explain your choice?
- If the script sits between two score categories, check the sample script on either side of the score line.

5. Record your chosen score

- Familiarisation with the marking guide and sample scripts will increase with experience marking scripts.
- Do not spend too much time deliberating a mark.

N.B. All markers (regardless of experience) must refer to the marking guide when marking.

Blank scripts should automatically be removed from the marking queue. A score of zero may still apply to some scripts that are not completely blank.

Criterion 1: Audience

Refer to the *Category descriptors, Audience information and Sample scripts on page 6 of the Marking guide when reading the following.*

Skill focus for Audience: The writer's capacity to **orient**, **engage** and **affect** the reader.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Orient:** features of the text that
 - o help the reader understand the text and
 - o raise reader expectations about the type of text they are reading.
- **Engage and affect:** features of the text intended to create reader interest and enjoyment.

Audience score of 0

A script is awarded an Audience score of 0 if the student only 'plays the role' of being a writer with symbols, letter shapes or drawings. No meaning can be accessed.

Audience score of 1

When reading the score 1 *Category descriptors*, 'limited response' and 'simple written content' both mean hardly anything has been written. Note in the *Additional information* column the words 'meaning is difficult to access' – this means that *some* meaning can be accessed. If *any* meaning can be understood, the script can be awarded a score 1.

Audience score of 2

When reading the score 2 *Category descriptors*, 'some information' and 'attempt to orient the reader' indicate a script which might contain simplistic, childlike story phrases and plot events.

Audience score of 3

When reading the score 3 *Category descriptors*, 'orients the reader' means the reader can recognise the text type and follow the meaning fairly easily. 'A shared understanding of context' means there are some explanatory details that would not be seen in score 2 scripts. 'Internally consistent' means that events, characters, actions and settings are clearly understood as related parts of a single story, however implausible it may be. Score 3 scripts 'attempt to support the reader' by including some signals about how to feel (e.g. exclamation marks or capitalisation of words) without actually being 'engaging'.

Score 3 scripts must adhere to prompt instructions to write either a narrative (story) or persuasive text. 'Off-genre' scripts, even those of high quality, cannot score above 2 in Audience.

Audience score of 4

At score 4, a script 'begins to engage the reader' by including language for the purpose of making the story enjoyable for the reader. This contrasts with score 3 scripts, which simply tell the story.

Audience score of 5

In order to be awarded a score 5 or 6, scripts must contain deliberate language choices and narrative devices for the purpose of supporting and engaging the reader. See *Additional information* for examples of narrative devices and explanation of potential language choices.

Audience score of 6

Score 6 scripts contain precise and sustained language choices and use of narrative devices, meaning that these have been selected with purpose and have been used consistently throughout the script. Score 6 scripts must also demonstrate an understanding of the anticipated values and expectations of the reader (e.g. by including a twist or surprise ending).

Criterion 2: Text Structure

Refer to the *Category descriptors*, *Additional information* and *Sample script for Text structure* on page 7 of the *Marking guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Text Structure: The **organisation** of **narrative features** including **orientation**, **complication**, and **resolution** into an appropriate and effective text structure.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Organisation:** how the different parts of a text are developed and relate to each other.
- **Narrative features:** in this criterion, consider only the structural features of a narrative, as described in the Skill focus and *Category descriptors*.
- **Orientation:** the setup of the initial conditions from which this specific story will progress.
- **Complication:** the focus or the principle driving the selection of events, character traits and reactions relevant to the story.
- **Resolution:** could be a literal solving of a literal problem or, in more sophisticated stories, a general sense of an ending that leaves the reader adequately satisfied. High quality scripts may include a phase following the climax in which the character/s reflect or move on.

Text structure score of 0

A script is awarded a Text structure score of 0 if the script has 'no structural component of a time sequenced text'. This includes rudimentary scripts as well as scripts written in another genre. Even a well-constructed informative report or persuasive text would be awarded a score 0.

Text structure score of 1

When reading the score 1 *Category descriptors*, 'minimal evidence of narrative structure' means that there is evidence of time-sequenced content or, at least, some descriptive detail that plausibly might belong in a recount or story. To be awarded a score of 1, there should only be one narrative structural component evident in the script.

Text structure score of 2

When reading the score 2 *Category descriptor*, note that the word 'beginning' is used rather than the word 'orientation', as used in scores 3 and 4. A 'beginning' may be a simple narrative marker that indicates the start of a sequence of events, without providing enough detail or elaboration to help orient the reader in the story.

A score 2 script may contain all the defined narrative structural components (beginning/orientation, complication and resolution) if all parts are weak or minimal.

Text structure score of 3

When reading the score 3 *Category descriptors*, 'contains an orientation, complication and resolution' means that the beginning contains enough elaboration to be judged to orient the story, the complication presents tension and a problem to be solved, and the resolution resolves or concludes the complication. A script may be awarded a score of 3 without a complete resolution, if a secondary complication is presented instead. The script may give the sense of ending a single episode in a longer story.

Text structure score of 4

When reading the score 4 *Category descriptors*, 'effective plot devices' are evident in writing that goes beyond a simple structure and might result in stories with unexpected forms. The *Additional information* column gives examples of some of the sophisticated structures or plot devices that may be included.

Criterion 3: Ideas

Refer to the *Category descriptors, Additional information and Sample scripts Ideas* on page 8 of the *Marking guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Ideas: The **creation, selection** and **crafting** of ideas for a narrative.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Creation:** refers to original thinking and creativity.
- **Selection:** the deliberate inclusion or omission of ideas.
- **Crafting:** the skilful construction and development of ideas.

Note: A student may retell, in their own words, a pre-existing story. They are marked on the quality of the selection and crafting of ideas as if it is an original story. If a story or text is retold verbatim, further investigation is needed. See page 78 of the *Marking guide* for more information.

Ideas score of 0

A script is awarded an Ideas score of 0 if there is 'no evidence' of ideas. This includes scripts containing only words copied from the stimulus material.

Ideas score of 1

When reading the score 1 *Category descriptors*, a script can be awarded a score of 1 if it includes even a single sentence containing a meaningful thought.

A script is also awarded a score of 1 if it contains ideas that are not at all related to the prompt; page 82 of the *Marking guide* explains this in detail. Note the distinction between off-genre and off-prompt; off-genre scripts are penalised in the Audience, Text Structure and Character and Setting criteria.

Ideas score of 2

When reading the score 2 *Category descriptors*, 'few', 'elaborated' and 'related' are important. Whereas score 1 scripts have 'very few' ideas which may 'appear unrelated to each other', a score 2 script requires either one idea that is elaborated, or ideas which are 'few and related'. 'Few ideas' means 'at least two'. If there is more than one idea present in the script, these ideas must be clearly connected to be awarded a score of 2.

Ideas score of 3

There is a **shift in quality** for scripts that score 3 and 4 in the Ideas criterion, where judgements of quality are required, rather than counting instances and occurrences of features. The stories can be judged to make a point.

To be awarded a score of 3, all the ideas contained within a script must be coherently related and display some development or elaboration, some of which may be unnecessary. To achieve a score of 3, some elaboration is essential. The *Additional information* column refers to 'unnecessary elaboration' which is often seen in scripts at this level.

Ideas score of 4

When reading the score 4 *Category descriptors*, 'substantial' and 'contributes effectively' mean the script goes beyond simply relating and elaborating its ideas to add force and engagement to the story. To be awarded a score 4, a script must contain a suggestion of a theme, meaning it should relate to one of the "big issues" of life, but does not contribute anything particularly startling or new.

Ideas score of 5

When reading the score 5 *Category descriptors*, the terms 'skilfully used' and 'explore a theme' are important. The script will raise and dramatise issues that have real substance, and the marker will be thinking about how the theme is treated. All the ideas present in the script have been selected carefully and add meaning to the central storyline.

Criterion 4: Character and Setting

Refer to the *Category descriptors, Additional information and Sample scripts for Character and setting* on page 9 of the *Marking guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Character and setting: Character: the portrayal and development of character. Setting: the development of a sense of place, time and atmosphere.

Notes:

- The *Marking guide* instructs markers to look for character AND/OR setting, viewing them as separate features, as some scripts may focus on only one aspect while still being high quality.
- Dialogue may or may not contribute to characterisation depending on its purpose. Many scripts merely use dialogue to advance the plot.

Character and setting score of 0

A script is awarded a Character and setting score of 0 if there is 'no evidence' of people functioning as characters, or times or places functioning as setting in a story.

Scripts that fail to write in the specified genre (narrative) are also awarded a score of 0.

Character and setting score of 1

A script is awarded a score of 1 if it only gives the name of a character and/or setting. This may be as vague as using personal or collective pronouns for character (e.g. *I, she, us*), and common nouns or prepositions that indicate the time and/or place in which the story is taking place (e.g. *yesterday, the shop, school*).

Character and setting score of 2

In scripts where score 2 *Category descriptors* for Character and setting apply, there are typically a few adjectives for the places or people. There may be dialogue that functions more to advance the plot rather than develop characterisation.

Character and setting score of 3

When reading the score 3 *Category descriptors*, 'attribution of thoughts and feelings' AND/OR 'descriptions of place, time, atmosphere' indicate a significant shift in quality from score 2 scripts. The characters and settings may be simplistic but are described in some level of detail. Note that the second *Category descriptor* requires 'description of place, time AND atmosphere'.

Character and setting score of 4

In Character and setting, at score 4, there is a sustained higher quality of characterisation and setting and greater depth of characterisation expected.

To be awarded a score of 4, scripts must contain a higher quality of characterisation. There is an expectation of 'some introspection' to be displayed, which indicates a necessity for characters with more depth and complexity. The sense of setting should be maintained across the entire script; there should be no points where the setting is unclear.

Criterion 5: Vocabulary

Refer to the *Category descriptors*, *Additional information*, and *Sample scripts for Vocabulary* on page 10 of the *Marking guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Vocabulary: The **range** and **precision** of language choices.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Range:** the different types of vocabulary used. High scoring scripts contain high quality vocabulary across multiple word classes (or parts of speech) and different kinds of word usage. See the *Glossary of terms* on page 83 of the *Marking guide* for more information.
- **Precision:** selecting the right word to suit the required meaning or connotation. This can include selecting words that match the speaker and context, such as slang or jargon. Precision can also be achieved through the use of figurative language (e.g. imagery, metaphor, simile).

Vocabulary score of 0

A script is awarded a Vocabulary score of 0 if there is no true writing, a title only or a script entirely copied from the stimulus page.

Vocabulary score of 1

When reading the score 1 *Category descriptor* and *Additional information*, note the distinction between 'very short script' and 'few content words'. 'Very short script' means approximately 20 words or fewer, whereas 'content words' refers to words that are more substantial than the shortest, most common words (e.g. *a*, *the*, *it*). A script may not be a 'very short script' due to the number of words, but may still only score 1 due to the lack of 'content words'.

Vocabulary score of 2

When reading the score 2 *Category descriptors*, 'simple' means every day, child-like spoken language words and 'precise' means words and word groups used correctly and/or appropriately within context. There are a greater number of words to base a score on than for level 1.

Vocabulary score of 3

There is a shift in quality for scripts that score 3 to 5 in the Vocabulary criterion, where the focus moves to judging the quality of the word choices, their contribution to the story and their effectiveness in context. At these levels, 'precise' can be taken more literally to mean words and word groups that convey meaning more exactly than the everyday, simple alternatives.

Vocabulary score of 4

When reading the score 4 *Category descriptor*, 'consistent' means that the precise language is evident throughout the script, where 'sustained' means the script is of a reasonable length to allow an accurate judgement about this consistency – around 200 words long (about one page). To better distinguish between scores 3 and 4, consider whether the selected words 'enhance' the story – to score 4, words should be included because they make the story better.

Vocabulary score of 5

When reading the score 5 *Category descriptor*, 'effective' means word choice is a major reason why the script is engaging. This contrasts with words that only 'enhance' in a score 4 script. 'Natural and articulate' means the script is free of awkward phrasing or signs of misunderstanding the nuance of mature expressions. 'Matched to genre' means the script uses specific terms and phrases associated with its sub-genre and/or the expected language of mature fiction.

Criterion 6: Cohesion

Refer to the *Category descriptors, Additional information and Sample scripts for Cohesion* on page 11 of the *Marking Guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Cohesion: The control of multiple threads and relationships across the whole text, achieved using **referring words (pronouns)**, **substitutions**, **word associations** and **text connectives**.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Referring words (pronouns):** words, including pronouns, used to connect and refer to previous or future characters, places, objects or ideas in a text.
- **Substitutions:** points of ellipsis and substitution of words which prevent the writer repeating words that have just been used (e.g. *The **puppies** were all cute. I chose the spotted **one**.*)
- **Word associations:** the use of purposeful repetition, synonyms and nominalisation to build, extend and link ideas from one part of a text to another.
- **Text connectives:** signpost phrases indicating to the reader where they are in the text. Types of connectives vary with purpose and genre, but include temporal connectives to indicate time (e.g. *then, the next day*) and ordinal numbers to indicate sequence (e.g. *first, second, third*).

Note: See the *Glossary of terms* on page 84 of the *Marking guide* for further detail and examples.

Cohesion score of 0

A script is awarded a Cohesion score of 0 if there are no true words. It may be a title only.

Cohesion score of 1

A script can be awarded a score of 1 if there is even a single understandable word. A score 1 script may contain multiple sentences, but linking words are missing or incorrectly used.

Cohesion score of 2

When reading the score 2 *Category descriptors*, 'some correct links' means at least two correctly linked sentences. 'Most referring words are accurate' means at least 80% of referring words, including pronouns, are correctly used. Incorrect punctuation can be disregarded at this level.

Cohesion score of 3

When reading the score 3 *Category descriptors*, 'sustained piece of writing' means at least 200 words (about one page). 'Cohesive devices' includes referring words, substitutions, text connectives, word associations and tense control. This score level allows for occasional lapses.

Cohesion score of 4

When reading the score 4 *Category descriptors* and *Additional information*, consider the following explanations of key phrases:

- 'used deliberately' means in contrast with simple connectives used in natural speech (e.g. *and so, the next thing that happened*).
- 'to enhance reading' means that the cohesive devices improve the reading experience.
- 'extended text' means that the writing is longer than 'sustained' (longer than one page) and is long enough to provide ample evidence of cohesive devices.
- 'sections of text' implies that the script is 'extended' enough to contain a number of sections, scenes or ideas, and is cohesive despite the complexity of events and plot.
- 'continuity of ideas' means word choices support understanding as the text progresses, showing evidence of planning. The reader is told what they need to know at the right moment in the story.

Criterion 7: Paragraphing

Refer to the *Category descriptors, Additional information and Sample scripts for Paragraphing* on page 12 of the *Marking Guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Paragraphing: The **segmenting** of text into paragraphs that assist a reader to **negotiate** the narrative.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Segmenting:** implies that the story has distinct parts with paragraph breaks made between those parts.
- **Negotiate:** comprehend the meaning of. The word 'digest' is also used in the *Category descriptor* for score 1 with a similar meaning.

Note: It is a convention that direct speech by a character begins on a new line. For the purposes of this marking guide, this is considered a Punctuation convention rather than Paragraphing.

Paragraphing score of 0

A script is awarded a Paragraphing score of 0 if it contains either no breaks or no true paragraph breaks. See the score 0 *Additional information* for examples of line breaks are not categorised as true paragraphing breaks.

Paragraphing score of 1

A script is awarded a Paragraphing score of 1 if it contains even a single true paragraph break, meaning a break for the purpose of segmenting the text.

Paragraphing score of 2

When reading the score 2 *Category descriptor*, 'all paragraphs' means that there should be no clear errors. There should be no blocks of text that would have been better segmented into two parts, and no paragraph breaks where it would have been better to keep the material in a single paragraph. Refer to the score 2 *Additional information* for explanation of how paragraphs can 'enhance the narrative'.

Criterion 8: Sentence structure

Refer to the *Category descriptors*, *Additional information* and *Sample scripts for Sentence structure* on page 13 of the *Marking guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Sentence structure: The production of **grammatically correct**, **structurally sound** and **meaningful** sentences.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Grammatically correct:** the sentences are in Standard Australian English (except where slang or other incorrect speech is intentionally depicted to develop meaning). Refer to Section 3 of the *Glossary of terms* in the *Marking guide*.
- **Structurally sound:** although 'structurally sound' sentences are 'grammatically correct', the marker should consider the different types of sentence structures and whether the script contains a variety of these types.
- **Meaningful:** Meaningful sentences are those which convey the intended meaning; sentences may be grammatically correct and yet fail to convey the intended meaning.

Note: see the *Glossary of terms* on page 85 of the *Marking guide* for explanation, definition and examples of sentence types and structures referred to in the *Category descriptors* and *Additional information*.

Sentence structure score of 0

A script is awarded a Sentence structure score of 0 if it contains no linked words.

Sentence structure score of 1

When reading the score 1 *Category descriptor*, the word 'some' can be interpreted as 'any'. A script can be awarded a score of 1 if there is even one correct sentence.

Sentence structure score of 2

The *Category descriptor* for score 2 refers to correct sentences being 'simple or compound'. A score 2 script may contain two or more correct complex sentences where only one basic structure is used. When reading the score 2 and 3 *Additional information*, 'projected clause' means a clause using the word 'that' in a simplistic way (e.g. "I think that I will go to the shop").

Sentence structure score of 3

When reading the score 3 *Additional information* indicates a need for two or more different structures of complex sentences – this is the biggest distinction between scores 2 and 3.

Sentence structure score of 4

When reading the score 4 *Additional information*, 'sustained piece of writing' means at least 200 words (about one page). 'Elaborating clauses and phrases' can be understood by looking at the examples in *Sample scripts*.

Sentence structure scores 5 and 6

The key differences between scores 5 and 6 are the requirements for correctness and quality.

When reading the score 5 and 6 *Category descriptors*, 'error' means a mistake that the student does not realise is wrong; 'slip' is a mistake the student probably knows is wrong but did not correct, such as a missing word. When judging whether a mistake is an 'error' or a 'slip', consider the overall quality of the sentence structures used within the script and if the mistake is repeated. The descriptor 'express precise meaning and are consistently effective' can be understood by looking at the examples in *Sample scripts*.

Criterion 9: Punctuation

Refer to the *Category descriptors, Additional information and Sample scripts for Punctuation on page 14 of the Marking guide when reading the following.*

Skill focus for Punctuation: The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid reading of the text.

Note: The word 'correct' in this skill focus is important. In very skilled writing, there is scope for choice and personal style with punctuation use. However, this marking guide strongly emphasises punctuation that is conventionally correct, even at the higher score levels. At the lower score levels, markers mainly need to look for correct sentence boundary punctuation.

Punctuation score of 0

A script is awarded a Punctuation score of 0 if it contains no evidence of sentence punctuation.

Punctuation score of 1

A script is awarded a score of 1 if it contains at least one correct sentence marker, even if the words enclosed by the boundary punctuation do not make a correct sentence. It may contain one correctly punctuated sentence, but no correct use of other punctuation.

Punctuation score of 2

A script is awarded a Punctuation of score of 2 if it contains at least two accurately punctuated sentences OR one correctly punctuated sentence with some other punctuation where it is required.

When reading the *Category descriptor* for score level 2, 'where it is required' can be understood by looking at the examples in Sample scripts. At this score level, incorrect punctuation does not balance against correct punctuation as in score levels 3 and above. Refer to the Additional information column on page 14 for a list of other punctuation.

Punctuation score of 3

When reading the *Category descriptor* for score level 3, 'minimum of 80% of five sentences punctuated correctly' means the script must contain at least five sentences, of which at least 80% must display correct sentence boundary punctuation. Scripts can be awarded a score level of 3 with a minimum of four sentences, providing all sentence boundary punctuation is correct.

Punctuation score of 4

Note that, while the score 4 *Category descriptor* states that all sentence punctuation must be correct, the *Notes* state that allowances can be made for very occasional omissions of sentence boundary punctuation.

Punctuation score of 5

A script can only be awarded a Punctuation score of 5 if it contains correct and accurate use of all applicable punctuation, allowing only for very occasional omissions if a script has otherwise provided ample creditable punctuation evidence for this score level.

Criterion 10: Spelling

Refer to the *Category descriptors*, *Additional information* and *Sample scripts for Spelling* on page 15 of the *Marking guide* when reading the following.

Skill focus for Spelling: The **accuracy** of spelling and the **difficulty** of the words used.

The marker should interpret the bolded words in this skill focus as:

- **Accuracy:** use of the correct letters in the correct order.
- **Difficulty:** referring to the four different classifications shown in the *Marking guide*: simple, common, difficult and challenging.

Notes:

- US spelling of words (e.g. *color*, *realize*, *center*) can be counted as correct.
- If a difficult or challenging word is displayed on the writing stimulus material, it can only be counted as a common word.

Spelling score of 0

A script is awarded a Spelling score of 0 if it contains no evidence of conventional spelling, or only words that have been copied from the writing stimulus material.

Spelling score of 1

If a script contains fewer than 20 words in total, it cannot score higher than 1.

Spelling score of 2

For Spelling score levels 2 and above, word difficulty classifications must be considered. Refer to the *Additional information* column for more information about the types of words that fall into each category, and the *Spelling reference list* on page 90 of the *Marking guide* for examples of words in each category. When reading the *Category descriptors* for Spelling scores 2 and above, 'most' means approximately 80%.

Spelling score of 3

To be awarded a Spelling score of 3, a script must contain correct spelling of 'most common words (at least 20)'. This means that approximately 80% of common words should be correct, and there must be a minimum of 20 correct common words.

Spelling score of 4

For Spelling score levels 4 and 5, a script must contain correct spelling of an indicated number of difficult words; however, correct difficult words must outnumber incorrect difficult words. Where incorrect difficult words outnumber or equal the number of correct difficult words, even if the script contains the number of correct difficult words required by the *Category descriptor*, it cannot be awarded a score higher than 3.

Spelling score of 5


The biggest distinction between Spelling score levels 4 and 5 is the required number of correct difficult words, as noted in the *Category descriptors*. The requirement for correct difficult words to outnumber incorrect difficult words remains.

Spelling score of 6

When reading the *Category descriptor* for Spelling score level 6, 'slip' means a mistake that a student probably knows is wrong but has failed to correct, and 'some challenging words' means at least two.

More information

If you would like more information, please contact the NAPLAN Unit by phoning 1300 239 227 or emailing naplan@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

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