

Writing Task

We want to assess your written English.

Please write as much as you can on one of these topics:

- **Your favourite television programme or book.**
- **A hobby you have.**
- **You have won the lottery! Tell us how you feel and what you will do with all your money.**

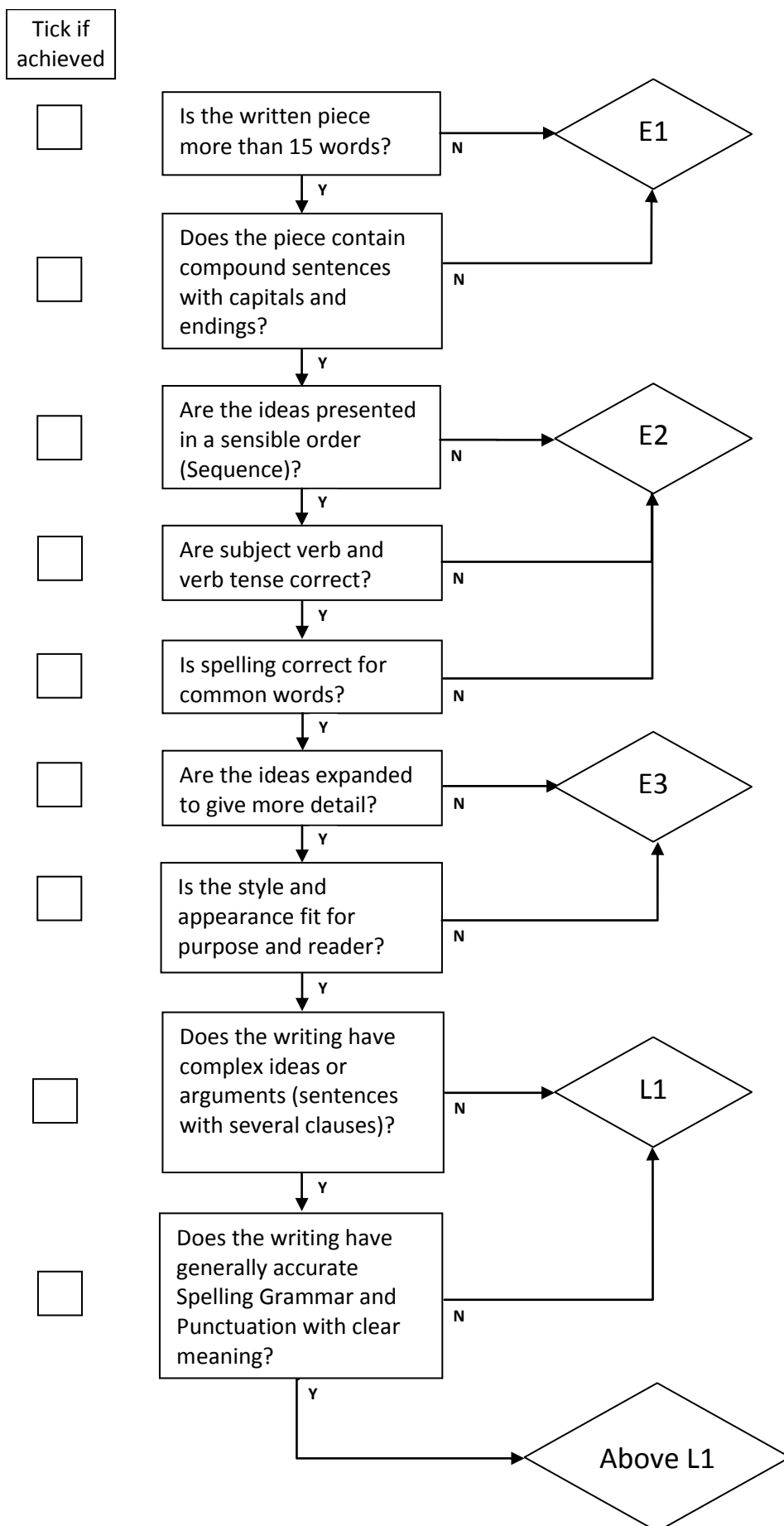
Choose the topic you think you can write about most easily and give your reader as much information as you can.

We will look at

- whether your writing makes good sense
- how well you write in sentences (*Entry level*)
- how well you structure your writing (*Level 1/2*)
- your punctuation, grammar and spelling
- how interesting your writing is to the reader

You should spend about 15 minutes doing this.

Marking Flow Chart



Guidance

The IA light writing assessment tool is intended to be a simplified initial assessment for use where staff who are not English Specialists need to gauge the writing ability of learners

The tool consists of:

1. A writing assignment (instructions for the learner).
2. A set of alternative topics that can be substituted for the topics in the writing assignment (1). In some cases there are prompts that can be used to help learners who are less imaginative when trying to think about what to write.
3. A marking flow chart for use in gauging the learners level
4. A five level grid showing the functional writing standards at all levels
5. This guidance document

You will need:

- Blank paper for planning the writing.
- Lined paper for writing
- Pencils, pens and rubbers
- Copies of the assignment
- Approximately 25 – 30 mins to complete the writing task including introducing the activity and giving the learners the opportunity to proof read and correct their work

Preparation

Make sure that the assignment (1) has suitable topics for the student(s) who are going to take the assessment. The topics should be ones where they would have something to say (write).

If you are expecting learners who may have higher levels of writing you may offer them longer than 15 mins.

Conducting the assessment

Explain to the learners

- This is not an exam and the purpose is to find out how advanced their writing is.
- Make sure that the name and date is on the work
- They can cross out errors and change them (the work doesn't have to look perfect).
- Remind them of the section "What we will look at"

We will look at

- whether your writing makes good sense
- how well you write in sentences (Entry level)
- how well you structure your writing (Level 1/2)
- your punctuation, grammar and spelling
- how interesting your writing is to the reader

You may choose to:

- Encourage them to spend 5 mins writing down some ideas and planning their writing
- At the end offer them 5 minutes to check through their work for errors.

Marking

1. Work your way down the whole flow chart ticking the achieved boxes as appropriate. There is marking criteria explanation below.
2. At the first non ticked box (not achieved) follow the no arrow to indicate the level of competence.
3. Any higher level yes ticks indicate ability at higher levels.
4. If you wish you can also consult the more detailed five level grid (this will become easier as you become more experienced).

Marking Criteria Glossary

Sentences

A simple sentence example

Some students like to study in the mornings.

A compound sentence is composed of two simple sentences joined by one of the following words (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.) example

I tried to speak Spanish, and my friend tried to speak English.

All sentences should have:

1. A capital (upper case) letter as the first letter.
2. An ending with one of the following punctuation marks (.?!).

Sequence

Sequence may be

- the order of events
- introduction, content, summary

Subject verb agreement

She likes to walk to work (correct)

She like to walk to work (incorrect)

They like to walk to work (correct)

They likes to walk to work (incorrect)

Verb tense agreement

She liked (past tense) (correct)

She likes (present) (correct)

She will like (future) (correct)

She will like to have eat the chocolate (**Incorrect**)

She will like eating the chocolate (correct)

Common Words

For a list of common words consult the Dolch list. Some of these words can be found in the Adult Literacy core curriculum. There is a list that can be found at <http://www.english-zone.com/reading/dolch.htm>.

Dyslexia

The Functional Skills Criteria for English (Ofqual/09/4559 Nov 2009) state:

As a reasonable adjustment candidates who are disabled under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and who use assistive technology as their normal way of producing written texts can demonstrate that they are able to independently meet the requirements of writing standards through the use of a computer and appropriate software.

List of alternative topics for writing assessment

1. Write about the Olympics coming to London
2. What would you do if you had won the lottery, (additional prompt;"how would you feel and what would you do") or (you can choose how much you have won, ideas of what to write about " cars, houses, bling, holidays, the perfect gardening tool, what you would give away)
3. When you finish your course what would be you ideal own business
4. If money was no object where would I go on holiday
5. Why I am a star (what I am good at, clubbing best dancer, painting/drawing, friendships, looking after brothers, parents)
6. What is the best thing that has ever happened to me as a child
7. What is the best present I have ever received
8. Write about what you got at school
9. What I did in the holidays,
- 10.How I feel today
- 11.What I hope to get from this course.
- 12.Why I want to be a hairdresser
- 13.Why do you want to become a mechanic
- 14.What I did at the weekend (where I went , who I saw, what I did, when I came home, did I get grounded, who I did, what I did with them and where,
- 15.Who is your role model and why (family member, Beyonce, Michael Jackson, Snoop dog, 50 cents, David Beckham, Jordan, Rihanna, Kelly Holmes, Sharon Osborne,)
- 16.Favourite celebrity, star, personality etc
- 17.Write about your favourite television programme, book or hobby, sport, activity, food, actor or actress
- 18.A day that changed my life

Working at E1	Working at E2	Working at E3	Working at Level 1	Working at Level 2
Writing short, simple sentences	Write short texts with some awareness of intended audience	Write texts with some adaptation to the intended audience	Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions, using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience	Write a range of texts including extended written documents, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively
Use written words and phrases to present information	Use written words and phrases to record and present information	Sequence writing logically and clearly	Present information in a logical sequence	Present information/ideas concisely, logically and persuasively
		Plan draft and organise writing	Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail	Present information on complex subjects clearly and concisely
			Use language format and structure suitable for purpose and audience	Use a range of writing styles for different purposes
Construct simple sentences using full stops	Construct compound sentences using common conjunctions			Use a range of sentence structures including complex sentences, and paragraphs to organise written communication effectively
	Punctuate correctly using upper and lower case, full stops and question marks	Use basic grammar including appropriate verb-tense and subject-verb agreement	Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense	Punctuate written text using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately
Spell correctly some personal or very familiar words	Spell correctly high frequency words and words with common spelling patterns	Check work for accuracy including spelling	Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear 40-45% for spelling grammar and punctuation	Ensure written work is fit for purpose and audience with accurate spelling and grammar that support clear meaning