



North Tyneside Council

# Definition of Terms

*(Version 3)*

*A Reference Tool to Support Teachers  
with APP Writing Assessment Guidelines*

Working closer  
with communities

Lee Owston  
Primary Consultant  
Tel. (0191) 643 8531

[lee.owston@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:lee.owston@northtyneside.gov.uk)

# Introduction

This reference booklet provides teachers with the definitions of terms used in the writing assessment guidelines for levels 2 to 5. Its purpose is to ensure consistent interpretation of meaning in all documents and assessments.

Definitions are in line with those used in the KS2 and 3 national strategies. Terms have been included only where they may not be wholly familiar to teachers. Teachers will recognise that defining language terms for practical use necessarily means some simplification.

For ease of use as a reference tool, the content is listed in the order of the assessment focuses as they appear on the assessment guidelines sheets.

## Contents

Assessment Focuses .....	3
The Key Underpinning Ideas .....	4
Sentence Structure and Punctuation (AF 5 and 6) .....	6
Text Structure and Organisation (AF 3 and 4) .....	12
Composition and Effect (AF 1, 2 and 7) .....	17
Spelling (AF 8) .....	19
Handwriting .....	22

# Assessment Focuses

Assessment focuses (AFs) are based on the National Curriculum programmes of study and level descriptions. They cover the areas for assessment and provide the framework for National Curriculum tests. Using AFs for classroom-based assessment enables a direct link to be made to National Curriculum standards in a subject and the Primary Framework learning objectives.

The AFs sit between the National Curriculum programmes of study and the level descriptions. They provide a more detailed assessment framework against which teachers can judge the outcomes of their teaching and their pupils' learning. They are tools for assessment, **not learning objectives**. However, the AFs can easily be traced back to the relevant strands of the primary framework. It is also important to note that evidence for the AFs can come from all parts of the curriculum.

For each AF on the writing assessment guidelines, there are two or three bullet points at every level. These are level-related criteria which identify what to look for as you observe pupils' classroom work.

The Assessment Focuses for writing are:

- AF 1** Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts
  - AF 2** Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose
  - AF 3** Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events
  - AF 4** Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs
  - AF 5** Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect
  - AF 6** Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences
  - AF 7** Select appropriate and effective vocabulary
  - AF 8** Use correct spelling
- Handwriting

# The Key Underpinning Ideas

For writing, the assessment focuses identify elements of the complex skill of writing. For assessment, these focuses can be combined into three broad key areas. These are

- Sentence Structure and Punctuation (AF5 and 6)
- Text Structure and Organisation (AF3 and 4)
- Creating and Shaping Texts (AF1, 2 and 7)
- Spelling and Handwriting

## Sentence Structure and Punctuation

Assessment Focuses in this strand target pupils' ability to vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect (AF 5) and write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences (AF 6).

In this strand, pupils demonstrate progression by their increasing effectiveness and skill in:

- selecting and deploying a varied and complex range of sentence structures
- using punctuation to mark grammatical boundaries and clarify meaning accurately and consistently
- combining grammatical structure and punctuation to enhance meaning

**VARIETY** of sentence structures  
**CLARITY** of meaning  
**ACCURACY** of syntax and punctuation

## Text Structure and Organisation

Assessment Focuses in this strand target pupils' ability to organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events (AF 3) and construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs (AF 4).

In this strand, pupils demonstrate progression by their increasing effectiveness and skill in:

- selecting and using structural devices for the organisation of texts
- ordering and grouping ideas and material within sections of their texts to elaborate meaning
- maintaining cohesion in texts of increasing variety and complexity

**COHERENCE** (how the whole text hangs together)

including order, sequence and structural features such as openings and closings.

**COHESION** (how different sections of the text are organised)

including grouping of material, connecting and developing ideas within paragraphs/sections.

## Creating and Shaping Texts

Assessment Focuses in this strand target pupils' ability to write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts (AF 1) and produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose (AF 2). This includes selecting appropriate and effective vocabulary (AF 7).

In this strand, pupils demonstrate progression by their increasing effectiveness and skill in:

- selecting and adapting form and content according to purpose, viewpoint and reader
- conveying ideas and themes in appropriate styles

**ADAPTATION** to purpose and reader.

**VIEWPOINT** – establishing and maintaining the position/stance of author, narrator, characters or others.

**STYLE** and rhetorical effect, in choice of language and technical or literary devices.

# Sentence Structure and Punctuation (PFwk - Strand 11)

AF 5 – vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect

## Sentence Structure

Sentences can be classified in several ways including by sentence type:

**statement** [declarative]

*e.g. James opened the door.*

**question** [interrogative]

*e.g. How old are you? Where are you travelling to?*

**command** [imperative]

*e.g. Open the window, please. Answer the door.*

**exclamations**

*e.g. Surprise! What a lovely day!*

as well as by their grammatical structure.

### Early Sentence Variation

Children at the earliest stages of their writing development often rely on repetitive pronoun and verb constructions at the beginning of their sentences.

*e.g. I am called Alexander Splott. I am six years old. I am a boy. I am a good footballer. I like playing football with my friends. I like Maths best at school. I like to watch Dr Who.*

The first step to creating greater variety in sentence structure would be to encourage the use of different verbs.

*e.g. I had, I went, I thought, I tried, I made, I knew, I got*

After this, pronouns can be changed, phrases can be inserted and connectives can be used to give further clarity and effect.

*e.g. My name is Alexander Splott. I am a six year old boy. I enjoy playing football with my friends. My favourite lesson is Maths. I like watching Dr Who on the television.*

***I had** a great couple of weeks in the summer holidays. **I went** to the beach **and** **I swam** in the sea. **My Mam** fell asleep in the sun. **I tried** to wake her up **but** **she was** snoring. **She got** burnt **but** **I put** sun cream on **so** I didn't. **I bought** an ice cream **and** so did my brother. **He dropped** his lolly **and** cried. **I enjoyed** my summer holidays.*

## Adverbial Phrases as Openers

The next small step in progression is to move away from the **pronoun + verb sentence opener** and add further detail with an adverbial opener.

Adverbials can be single words (adverbs) or phrases. They are used to express a wide range of meanings and can be seen to answer when, where, how and 'to what extent'.

*e.g. later, soon, never, now, tomorrow, hourly [time]*

*here, there, far, near, close [place]*

*happily, lazily, angrily, slowly, truthfully [manner]*

*very, rather, slightly – varying the degree of another adverb [degree]*

They can be used in several positions in a clause or sentence and can perform several roles, for example, linking parts of a sentence as well as modifying a verb.

e.g. The girl in the red track-suit scored **in the second half of the match**. (time)

The rain eventually stopped **after three hours**. (time)

He stole a ruby from the museum **in 1871**. (time)

The family were eating breakfast, **in the kitchen**. (where)

A storm was brewing **in the distance**. (where)

Tracy skipped along the road **with a smile on her face**. (how)

James turned the corner **with his fists clenched**. (how)

A greater control and level of sophistication, in terms of sentence construction, can be achieved by moving the position of the adverbial phrase.

e.g. **In the second half of the match**, the girl in the red track-suit scored.

**After three hours**, the rain eventually stopped.

**In the kitchen**, the family were eating breakfast.

**In the distance**, a storm was brewing.

**With a smile on her face**, Tracy skipped along the road.

**With his fists clenched**, James turned the corner.

The use of an adverbial opener can signal the start of a new paragraph. (See AF3 and AF4)

Sentence variation is also achieved through the level of detail included. The more information children can include, the complex their sentences become. The following is one example of progression in relation to clause structure.

A **clause** is part of a sentence which includes a verb. A **main clause** is a clause which makes sense on its own.

*e.g. Emma went for a run.*

A **subordinate clause** amplifies the main clause but does not make complete grammatical sense on its own.

*e.g. Emma went for a run when she had finished work.*

*Emma went for a run even though it was raining.*

Either type of clause can open a sentence,

*e.g. When she had finished work, Emma went for a run.*

*Even though it was raining, Emma went for a run.*

and a main clause may be amplified by more than one subordinate clause.

*e.g. Even though it was raining, Emma went for a run when she had finished work.*

*The Smith family raised a lot of money for the hospital funds, which was used to buy new equipment to help the soldiers who were injured in the conflict.*

**simple sentence:** a sentence with only one clause [known as the main or independent clause].

*e.g. It was raining. John dropped a book on his foot.*

A simple sentence can be just a word or two *e.g. Slam!* as the sentence structure is implied (The door went slam!) but they are not always short, as parts of them may be expanded or elaborated, but they remain 'simple' grammatically as long as they have only one clause.

Remember, one clause = one verb.

**compound sentence:** a sentence which has two or more clauses of equal weight joined by and, but, or, so [co-ordinating conjunctions].

*e.g. A floorboard creaked and he started to shiver.*

*Baths use lots of water but showers are more economical.*

**N.B.** 'and' and 'or' can of course be used to connect individual words and phrases as well as clauses: arms and legs, hot or cold, a gin and tonic.

**complex sentence:** a sentence which has at least one main clause and one or more subordinating [or dependent] clauses, usually joined by a subordinating conjunction or connective [e.g. because, if, whether, until etc] or a relative pronoun [who, that, which]. Subordination allows the writer to express a greater range of relationships between events and ideas than co-ordination e.g. relating to time, place, condition, and reason.

The most common subordinating connectives are *because, when, as, if* although there are a wide range of others including:

when, while, before, after, since, until **[time]**

where, wherever **[place]**

if, unless, in case, as long as **[condition]**

whereas, while, whilst **[contrast]**

although, though, if, even if, whereas **[concession]**

except, but that **[exception]**

because, since, for as **[reason]**

in order to, to, so as to **[purpose]**

so, so that **[result]**

as, like **[similarity]**

as if, as though, like **[comparison]**

**Varying the position of main and subordinate clauses** in complex sentences is one way of varying sentence structure e.g. placing the subordinate clause at the front of the sentence can shift the emphasis.

e.g. She heard a noise *that* sounded like a dog barking. [main clause first]

*When* the doorbell rang, the dog started to bark. [subordinate clause first]

Subordinate clauses can be embedded within a main clause.

e.g. Mr Graham, *although nearly 80 years of age*, entered the Great North Run.

**embedded clauses** can also be created using relative pronouns such as who, that, which

e.g. Mrs Smith, who is our Headteacher, is retiring at the end of term.

This can be expressed even more economically by removing the pronoun.

e.g. Mrs Smith, our Headteacher, is retiring at the end of term.

# Verb Terms

**Simple past/present tense:** This refers to the single word form of the past/present tense e.g. He *walked*. She *ran*. [past] He *walks*. We *run*. [present]

**Complex Verb Forms:** English has a range of more complex verb forms, which allow different shades of meaning in relation to time of action.

These are formed by combining auxiliary verbs i.e. verbs used alongside the main verb, and are usually used to convey tense.

Present continuous:	He is walking [ <i>is</i> is auxiliary, <i>walking</i> is the main verb]
Past continuous:	She <i>was</i> running.
Present perfect:	He <i>has</i> walked.
Present perfect continuous:	He <i>has been</i> walking.
Past perfect:	She <i>had</i> run.
Past perfect continuous:	She <i>had been</i> running.

English has no specific future tense. Future tense can be expressed in a number of ways, the modal will or present tenses.

e.g. *We will certainly win tomorrow.*  
*We are going to win tomorrow.*  
*We win tomorrow, or else!*

## Modals

Modals or modal verbs express different degrees of conditionality about the likelihood of events.

The main modals are: will, shall, may, might, can, could, would

e.g. *If animals ate this litter they would die and a whole species could be wiped out.*

## Passive Constructions

These are constructions which use the passive voice. The passive voice is associated with more impersonal, formal forms of writing. Choice of voice enables the writer to place the focus on the 'doer' of the action [active voice] or on the action itself [passive voice].

e.g. *You should always turn off a dripping tap. [active voice]*

*Dripping taps should always be turned off. [passive voice]*

Passive voice can also be used to conceal information – the 'murder mystery' sentence.

e.g. *The queen ate a cream bun. [active voice]*

*The cream bun was eaten. [passive voice]*

## AF 6 – write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation

### Counting Capital Letters vs. Punctuation for Clarity and Meaning

It is important to remember when looking at punctuation that we do not just count capital letters and full stops (*i.e. looking only for a perfectly punctuated paragraph*) but are also concerned with how the punctuation makes the text clearer and more understandable to read.

The following example is poorly punctuated but the child still shows some knowledge of sentence construction and we can follow/understand the general topic of the paragraph.

*e.g. Us went on holiday. It was great fun. we had went to the owl sanctuary and it was a new owl sanctuary. and there was loads of owls and there was a. New climbing frame and a New Cafe and a new owl.*

Whereas in this example, the child has correctly punctuated the entire paragraph but due to the over-use of 'and' we have lost some of the clarity. We would wish for a greater range of punctuation to enable the reader to make greater sense of what has been written.

*e.g. People cut down trees and they don't care about the animals and they die and all they care about is money and they cut down trees and make money of it and they make bridges and build dams and tribes man live in the rainforest and they cut down rainforest and build houses but they wait for it to grow back and move on to the next part of the rainforest and do the same.*

### Comma Splice

A comma splice occurs when two main clauses have been run together, separated by a comma. A comma has been used where a full stop, semi colon or connective would be more appropriate to ensure clarity.

*e.g. It is nearly half past five, we cannot reach the town before dark.*

*It is nearly half past five. We cannot reach the town before dark. [full stop]*

*It is nearly half past five; we cannot reach the town before dark. [semi colon]*

*It is nearly half past five so we cannot reach the town before dark. [connective]*

*As it is nearly half past five, we cannot reach the town before dark. [connective]*

Sometimes a comma splice may be appropriate, especially in poetry when used for a specific purpose.

# Text Structure and Organisation

(PFwk - Strand 10)

AF 3 – organise and present whole texts effectively

AF 4 – construct paragraphs and use cohesion

## Coherence

**Are you coherent at 11.00pm on a Saturday night? Can somebody follow your conversation and understand what you are talking about?**

This term refers to the underlying logic and consistency of a text. The ideas should be relevant to one another so that the reader can follow the meaning. The relationships between sections/paragraphs give structure to the whole text e.g. by referring forwards and backwards.

### Sections vs. Paragraphing

Children at the earlier stages of writing development can often group related material into sections. They can talk/write about themselves and discuss their family, their school, their hobbies. They put the sentences together in one area/section of their work. Similarly, early recount writing often shows good sectioning since children tend to put events in broadly chronological order and expand upon each of them.

In the following text, there are four sections even though there has been no attempt to make the reader aware of this through the start of a new paragraph. There is an introduction, a section about the owl sanctuary, a section about the caravan site and a section about play land and the slides.

e.g. *Us went on holiday. It was great fun. we had went to the owl sanctuary and it was a new owl sanctuary. and there was loads of owls and there was a. New climbing frame and a New Cafe and a new owl. Then we went home to the caravan site next to us was Steve and Luke, maya and Jamie next to are caravan was a park we went to the park every day the next day we went to the pool. and after the pool we went to play land and we had a picnic then we went to the bulls pen and there was a babies play area and a children play area and slide. one wavey slide one great big slide one little slide one metal slide and another little slide and Melissa got are face painted and Maya got her face painted.*

**Section 1:** Introduction and brief comment

**Section 2:** The Owl Sanctuary

**Section 3:** The Caravan Site

**Section 4:** Playland

The next progressive step would be to start to signal a new paragraph to the reader.

## Paragraphs

We start a new paragraph for a variety of different reasons. These include

*e.g.* **Change of Time:** *Meanwhile..., In the afternoon..., A week later...*

**Change of Place:** *Upstairs..., On the other side of the road...*

**Change of Event:** *Suddenly..., At that moment..., Without warning...*

**Change of Person:** *Sandy walked in..., 'Hi,' said Tom...*

**Other:** *Silence, there was no doubt in his mind, the deed was done...*

## Sections of Developed Paragraphs

As children develop, they come to understand that sections need to be specifically organised if the reader is to be clear about their intended purpose and meaning. They become aware that a section of a text can extend across more than one paragraph, extending ideas logically and coherently.

*e.g.* **Introduction** – Why should we look after planet Earth? Brief listing of key areas (litter, transport, energy use)

### **Section 1 – Litter**

*Paragraph 1: Litter bugs – dropping litter vs. putting in a bin*

*Paragraph 2: Effects on Wildlife*

*Paragraph 3: Burning refuse/rubbish, landfill and the environmental consequences*

*Paragraph 4: recycling as a solution*

### **Section 2 – Transport**

*Paragraph 1: Cars, fumes and school runs*

*Paragraph 2: Alternatives such as public transport / walking*

### **Section 3 – Energy Saving**

*Paragraph 1: Why save energy?*

*Paragraph 2: Suggestions for use at home*

**Conclusion** – summary of key points and final comment/persuasion

## Section/Paragraph Links

Once the overall structure of a text has been determined through sectioning and paragraphing, a more advanced writer will begin to make links between and across sections

and/or paragraphs, making logical connections for the reader by bringing different aspects of the narrative or discussion together.

The first stage of this is to make a direct link between what was written in the opening/introduction and what is written in the ending/conclusion.

e.g. **Introduction**

Do you think that you are doing everything you can to save the environment? No? Then change your ways now by looking at our easy to use checklist.

- Recycling
- Litter
- Wildlife

These are the things we need to worry about but don't panic! Here are some helpful hints.

***Series of Paragraphs to address bullet points***

**Conclusion**

We all hope that the person who read this changes his/her ways and if you do think you are doing your best, you can still try harder all of the time. Never give up. Never stop trying. Together we should stand. Together we will help the environment.

The final stage in creating a coherent and logical piece of writing that is easy for the reader to comprehend is to make links between individual paragraphs.

e.g. **Introduction**

Do you ever think about what you're doing to the environment when you drop litter? What about when you make an unnecessary car journey or throw something on the floor or even in a bin? This leaflet can tell you how to look after the environment.

**Recycling**

The best way to make sure your litter does something useful is to recycle. Most plastic bottles are recyclable and so are most tin cans. If you recycle, let's say, an ordinary can, it could be melted down and for all you know it could become another can! Save the world from landfill by recycling!

**Wildlife...**

**Transport...**

**Water Wastage...**

**Litter**

Ah, now. Litter. We've come across this abomination before in the recycling section. A disgusting thing, dropping litter so if you can't recycle something, please bin it. Remember, dropping litter down drains doesn't count!

**Conclusion...**

This example also shows how an advanced writer also chooses the order of paragraphs carefully for maximum impact on the reader/intended audience. Issues easiest to deal with are placed first and last, sandwiching the other arguments.

# Cohesion

**Within a section or paragraph, do your ideas follow on from each other? Do they fit together?**

This refers to the grammatical features of a text which enable the parts to fit together. Cohesion can be created by the following devices: pronouns, adverbials, connectives, reference chains and the use of topic sentences to set the scene.

## Topic Sentences

This normally takes the form of an opening sentence to a paragraph or section, which signals to the reader a shift of subject. To be genuinely a topic sentence and not simply a new sentence, the subject established by the sentence must then be developed/elaborated throughout the rest of the paragraph. Topic sentences may be introduced by a connective which links the paragraph with the previous one in some way.

*e.g. Cars and other similar machines let out toxic gases which pollute the earth. These gases...*

*As James grew older, it was easy to see how talented he was. At the age of...*

*My favourite all round subject has to be History. In this lesson, I learnt...*

*Finally...*

## Reference Chains

Connectives help us to build up referential meaning so that the reader is guided through the text, by being shown how the different parts relate to each other within and across paragraphs, rather than having to deduce the links purely from the content. These connectives operate as a sort of 'glue' which makes the textual links between content words such as nouns, adjectives and verbs more precise.

Compare these two texts.

*e.g. Keeping fit is a contemporary obsession. People keep fit in lots of ways. Swimming, jogging and aerobics are amongst the commonest. Keeping fit is about more than vanity. Doctors stress how important it is to combine exercise with a healthy diet. There has been something of a 'health revolution' in recent years but some people remain unconvinced. There are plenty of Rab C. Nesbitts and Jim Royles around.*

*Keeping fit is a contemporary obsession. **It** takes many forms, with swimming, jogging and aerobics amongst the most common. **However**, keeping fit is about more than vanity. Doctors stress how important it is to combine exercise with a healthy diet. **Although**, there has been something of a 'health revolution' in recent years, some people remain unconvinced. **Alas**, there are plenty of Rab C. Nesbitts and Jim Royles around.*

The first paragraph is obviously about exercise and diet – the vocabulary tells us that. But in terms of cohesion it is little more than a series of separate sentences. They could be rearranged without much loss of meaning.

However, the second paragraph uses various connectives between sentences which refers the reader back or forward, unfolding a relationship of meaning through the paragraph. The same ideas are more effectively linked.

## Connectives

As well as linking parts of a sentence [see the sentence structure section], connectives can be used to link parts of a text, as described above.

Connectives with these functions include some of the same words listed in the previous section.

*e.g. also, furthermore [addition]*

*however, nevertheless, on the other hand [opposition]*

*therefore, consequently [cause]*

*first, next, immediately, as soon as, after, just then [time]*

## Pronouns

A word which stands in for a noun or noun phrase, and avoids repetition of the noun.

*e.g. When a family of four have a bath, the family of four may empty and refill the bath two or three times. Emptying and refilling the bath two or three times is a bit of a waste. To resolve emptying and refilling the bath two or three times, try only emptying the bath once, or maybe not at all!*

*When a family of four have a bath, they may empty and refill it two or three times. This is a bit of a waste. To resolve this, try only emptying it once, or maybe not at all!*

## Adverbials

Paragraphs can be linked by using words and phrases that signal the relationship between different sections of text. Adverbials can also be used within paragraphs to show a logical flow of ideas.

*e.g. Litter is one of the main causes of pollution. Although it usually occurs in and around main cities like New York and London, it can also be a hazard in the countryside. Birds can choke on something like a piece of tissue, or get stuck in a plastic beer holder. In addition, litter makes the countryside look untidy so that no one wants to visit it. So, pick it up!*

*Finally, you can help the environment by thinking about how much water you use in your house and garden. Many of us never think about...*

# Creating and Shaping Texts

(PFwk - Strand 9)

AF 1 – write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts

AF 2 – produce texts appropriate to task, reader and purpose

AF 7 – select appropriate and effective vocabulary

## Building up sentences

Any idea can be expanded and elaborated beyond its most simple, basic form. The main ways of adding extra information and/or detail are to use noun phrases and adverbial phrases.

A **phrase** is a group of two or more words, smaller than a clause.

e.g. the dog

### Noun Phrases / Expanded Noun Phrases

A noun phrase is a wider term than 'noun' and may refer to a single noun

*e.g. money,*

or a group of words that function in the same way as a noun in a sentence,

*e.g. a lot of money.*

A noun phrase may be expanded in various ways to include more information about a noun. The simplest way to expand a noun phrase is to use an adjective or adjective string

*e.g. red track-suit*

*the new girl*

*five painstakingly slow years*

*thousands of pieces of litter*

*the little bit of light shining under the door*

Noun phrases allow the writer to expand information economically, and mature writers often use a mixture of expanded noun phrases and subordination to compress information and give details.

*e.g. The **new girl in the red Liverpool track-suit**, who joined the team only last week, is expected to perform well this season.*

## Adverbials / Adverbial Phrases

Adverbials can be single words or phrases. They are used to express a wide range of meanings and can be seen to answer when, where, how and to what extent.

e.g. *later, soon, never, now, tomorrow, hourly* [**time**]

*here, there, far, near, close* [**place**]

*happily, lazily, angrily, slowly, truthfully* [**manner**]

*very, rather, slightly* – *varying the degree of another adverb* [**degree**]

They can be used in several positions in a clause or sentence and can perform several roles, for example, linking parts of a sentence as well as modifying a verb.

e.g. The girl in the red track-suit scored in the second half of the match.

The rain eventually stopped after three hours.

He stole a ruby from the museum in 1871.

Variety of sentence construction can be achieved by moving the position of adverbial phrases.

e.g. In the second half of the match, the girl in the red track-suit scored.

After three hours, the rain eventually stopped.

In 1871, he stole a ruby from the museum.

## Text Forms

The six non-fiction genres can be represented by different forms of writing, each with their own text organisation and language features. Some possible forms of writing include:

**Recount:** *letters, diaries, newspaper reports, biographies, postcards*

**Report:** *leaflets, encyclopaedia entries, travel guides*

**Instructional:** *recipes, rules, signs, directions*

**Explanation :** *flow charts, cyclical diagrams, technical manuals*

**Persuasion:** *advertisements, book blurb, movie trailers, travel brochure*

**Discussion:** *essay, debate, magazine article*

There are also many different sub-genres of narrative, each having their own distinctive features at word, sentence and whole text level. If we think about traditional tales, we can see that there are folk tales, fairy tales, fables, myths, legends and parables – each distinctive but also retaining common elements that make them ‘traditional’.

AF 8 – use correct spelling

Handwriting and presentation

## Spelling Terminology

### High Frequency Words

The words most commonly encountered, and used, in the English language. Within National Strategy documents these have been divided into the first 100 words and the next, most common 200 words. These words can be found in the appendices of 'Letters and Sounds' (DCSF, 2007)

### Grammatical Function Words

These words have little meaning on their own but instead serve to express grammatical relationships with other words within sentences. Words which are not function words (grammatical words) are called content words (lexical words).

Grammatical function words include:

**determiners:**        *a, the*

**pronouns:**         *he, him, she, her, them, that, me, you*

**prepositions:**     *in, on, under, to*

**connectives:**     *and, but, so, because, when, although*

**auxiliary verbs:**   *was, is, have, will, am*

**modal verbs:**     *can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must*

### Content / Lexical Words

These words have some meaning on their own. They would appear in a dictionary with a specific definition. They include nouns, verbs and adjectives.

Content / Lexical words include:

**nouns:**             *car, shop, dog, cat*

**verbs:**             *run, talk, dance*

**adjectives:**       *big, hot, red, brave*

## Morphemes

A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning, in terms of language. It is smaller than a word – words being broken down into separate morphemes. In simple terms, morphemes can be described as root words, prefixes and suffixes.

e.g. *unbreakable*

*un / break / able (3 morphemes)*

e.g. *houses*

*house / s (2 morphemes)*

e.g. *dissatisfied*

*dis / satisfi(y) / ed (3 morphemes)*

e.g. *happiness*

*happi(y) / ness (2 morphemes)*

## Compound Words

These words are made up of two morphemes and are made by putting two words together.

e.g. *snowdrop*

*shoelace*

*greenhouse*

*sandcastle*

## Inflected Endings

This is how we show 'number', 'tense', 'gender', 'person' and allow 'comparison', to name but a few. They are the suffixes we add to words which change their grammatical relationships.

e.g. **number:**                      *dogs (-s)*                      *churches (-es)*                      *children (-en)*

**tense:**                              *called (-ed)*                      *speaking (-ing)*

**gender:**                            *actress (-ress)*                      *usherette (-ette)*

**person:**                            *baker (-er)*                              *teacher (-er)*

**comparison:**                      *faster (-er)*                              *fastest (-est)*

## Derivational Suffixes

A derivational suffix changes a word from one word class to another.

e.g	rough (adjective) + ly	=	roughly (adverb)
	paint (verb) + er	=	painter (noun)
	modern (adjective) + ise	=	modernise (verb)
	education (noun) + al	=	educational (adjective)
	inflate (verb) + able	=	inflatable (adjective)

## Homophones

A **homophone** is a word that is pronounced the same as another word but differs in meaning and spelling. The most common homophones that children get confused are:

*to, too, two*

*know, no*

*there, their, they're*

*write, right*

*would, wood*

*where, wear*

## Unstressed Syllables / Vowels

These are similar to homophones except the words are pronounced differently depending on which syllable is stressed the most. These are also known as homographs because they have the same spelling (graphemes) but sound different.

e.g. **present** (a gift)

**present** (to introduce, show, exhibit)

**refuse** (to reject something)

**refuse** (waste or rubbish)

Unstressed vowels within words also cause children difficulty with spelling because they cannot always hear the phoneme when they say the word out loud.

e.g. *pencil, taken, supply, Wednesday*

# Handwriting

When looking closely at a child's handwriting, the key considerations are in terms of the following:

**Orientation:** *Are the letters formed correctly and facing in the correct direction?  
(usually b's and d's are confused)*

**Size:** *Are upper and lower case letters distinguishable from each other?*

*Are all lower case letters of equal size?*

*Are ascenders and descenders regular across the piece of writing?*

**Position:** *Do words sit on the line?*

**Spacing:** *Is the spacing between letters and words even and appropriate?*

Handwriting does not have to be joined for the award of higher levels. The key words are **accuracy** and **consistency**. An engaging and personal style which fits this criteria but is not joined (cursive style) can be awarded as highly as a perfectly joined script.