

KS2 (Year 6) SATs

A Guide for Parents

If you are the parent or carer of a child in primary school, you will definitely know about SATs (Statutory Assessment Tests, called national curriculum tests by the government). From the parent talk in the playground to parents' evening with teachers, the topic of SATs seems to permeate many a school conversation. SATs are standardised tests to assess the progress your child has made in key stage 2 (years 3-6) and to compare how your child achieves with the attainment expectations for their age.

The mention of SATs can instill determination and drive or fear and dread for parents and pupils (and even teachers) alike. At whichever end of the spectrum you lie, you will likely have some concerns about the upcoming SATs tests and how best to support your child throughout this process.

This guide will answer the most common and important questions about the KS2 SATs.

Who Takes SATs?

Children in English schools take SATs in year 2 and in year 6. In year 2, children are tested in maths and English (reading and spelling, punctuation and grammar). These tests are generally done in a very informal way so as not to add any undue stress or pressure on the children. There is no time limit and they are often done in small groups.

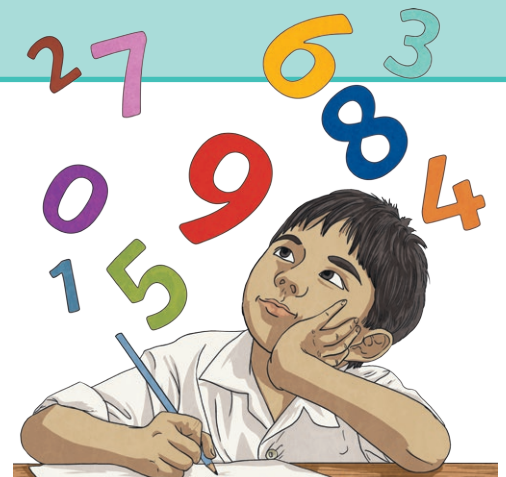
In year 6, the SATs become more formal – they are taken in a formal setting with a time limit. Children will complete tests in maths and English.

What Do the Tests Comprise?

Maths

The KS2 maths test consists of three papers – one arithmetic paper which lasts 30 minutes and two reasoning papers, each lasting 45 minutes. The arithmetic paper will test your child's understanding of number and mental and written calculation skills. Some of the questions will require your child to know a range of number facts (such as times tables facts) and others will test their knowledge of formal written methods of calculation such as short division.

The questions in the reasoning papers challenge your child to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems in context, such as purchasing things in a shop, scaling recipes or calculating area and perimeter for tiling a floor. These test papers cover a much broader range of maths, including geometry and statistics, while still using number knowledge and arithmetic.



English

There are two tests for English – a reading paper which lasts for one hour and a grammar, punctuation and spelling (SPaG) paper. The SPaG paper consists of two parts: a punctuation and grammar test and a spelling test. There is no English writing test as this is assessed by teachers in school.

During the reading test, your child will usually be given three different texts to read, which will be a mixture of fiction and non-fiction writing including poetry. There is a separate answer booklet for your child to write on. The questions will test a range of your child's reading skills such as comprehension and inference. They range from multiple choice answers to longer written responses. In school, your child will do many practice tests so that they become familiar with answering the different types of questions within the time limit.

In the grammar and punctuation test, your child will have to answer a range of questions which will test their understanding of grammatical terms, such as relative pronouns and conjunctions, their use of punctuation such as inverted commas for direct speech and their knowledge of language used in context. Like the reading tests, there is a variety of types of question, including multiple choice, matching answers, completing a sentence and writing a short explanation. Some questions may ask your child to insert punctuation correctly into a sentence (with the punctuation formed correctly) or underline part of a sentence such as a subordinate clause.

The spelling test requires children to spell twenty words in context by writing them in a sentence. In the answer booklet, your children will have all twenty sentences with a space for them to write the target spelling word. After each sentence is read aloud, your child will have time to write the word in before the next sentence is read. It is important that their writing is neat and clear for the examiners to mark.

When Do the SATs Take Place?

SATs take place toward the start of May each year. The timetable is set externally so that all schools throughout the country administer the tests at the same time. They begin on a Monday and usually finish on Thursday of the same week. Your child's school will give you more information closer to the time about how this will be organised.



For further information on revision, SATs results and exam stress, please see the following guides:

[KS2 SATs Revision Guide for Parents](#)

[KS2 SATs Results Guide for Parents](#)

[KS2 SATs: Beating Exam Stress Guide for Parents](#)