

Suggested scenarios to illustrate ‘particular weaknesses’

Working towards the expected standard

Waldemar

Waldemar can write short sentences, usually demarcated with capital letters and full-stops, and sequence these to form short narratives. He also uses co-ordination (mainly and) to join clauses; he rarely uses subordination. His phonic knowledge and skills are good: he can spell not just ‘some’ but ‘many’ words correctly, as well as some common exception words listed as examples for both years 1 and 2. His misspellings are phonically plausible: they show that he listens carefully and can segment words into their separate sounds.

Scrutiny of Waldemar’s handwriting shows that he forms lower-case letters correctly, starting and finishing in the right place. His weakness, though, is in ‘forming lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another’. He can rarely do this because his pencil control is poor. The unevenness in the height of his lower-case letters also makes it difficult to determine accurately whether he is demarcating ‘some sentences with capital letters’: where the capital letter has no separate, distinct form, it is not always possible to know what is a capital and what is a lower-case letter in Waldemar’s handwriting, except by asking him.

Were it not for the uneven quality of his handwriting, Waldemar would be judged to be working securely towards the expected standard. In this case, the unevenness in the lower-case letter forms should be judged to be a ‘particular weakness’ and he should therefore be judged to be ‘working towards the expected standard’.

At the expected standard

Esther

Esther’s teacher believes that, overall, she is ‘working at the expected standard’. With the exception of part of one statement, her writing provides evidence of all the statements at that standard, including her use of some subordination as well as coordination to join clauses. Her sentence punctuation is accurate, including end punctuation, and commas to separate items in lists. Her spelling is good and her handwriting is well-formed with evidence of some diagonal joins.

Esther virtually always chooses the correct form of a verb and, on the rare occasions when she does not, she has corrected it quickly when asked to re-read her work. Evidence from this year’s GPS test and an earlier practice test shows that she answered the 2 questions on verb forms correctly. Across longer pieces of writing, however, such as narratives, Esther does not always maintain tense consistency, particularly if she is writing in the first person.

On balance, her teacher feels that Esther’s occasional failings to maintain tense consistency in her writing should be considered a ‘particular weakness’ and should not detract from a judgement that she is now ‘working at the expected standard’.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

Geeta

Geeta is a fluent reader of fiction and information texts. This reading informs the vocabulary and grammar of her writing effectively.

All the statements related to 'working at greater depth within the expected standard' are evident in her writing, including 'simple additions and revisions' to her writing made independently. The insertions of omitted words and changes to vocabulary, sometimes more than once for an individual word, show that Geeta re-reads her work reflectively and refines it.

Her grammar, punctuation and spelling are accurate. Class tests show that she can spell 'most common exception words' listed as year 2 examples in the Spelling Appendix, and this year's GPS test showed her secure knowledge of the punctuation used at key stage 1. The only minor weakness is her occasional failure to identify and then correct spelling and punctuation errors when she is proofreading her work. Her occasional failure to make the necessary corrections should therefore be considered a 'particular weakness' and should not detract from a judgement that, overall, Geeta is 'working at greater depth within the expected standard'.