

NAPLAN — Year 3 Literacy

Set 4 — Sample Language conventions test answers

About the sample Language conventions test

The formats and response types in these practice items for spelling, grammar and punctuation are similar to those used in the real tests. To prepare students for the test, be sure they understand that:

- spelling questions are in three proofreading formats and in each case the target word is presented with a misspelling
- the grammar and punctuation questions are about formal, written Australian English, not oral speech habits. When they are told to “correctly complete” a sentence, students must think about conventional grammar, vocabulary and punctuation.

Teachers in all subject areas should note the types of spelling skills that are involved in the NAPLAN spelling questions and use standard teaching and assessing practices to target these. In particular, they should use dictation exercises rather than NAPLAN format involving correction of intentionally misspelled words and they should use writing tasks in which the vocabulary and spelling demands are highlighted and assessed. Similarly for grammar and punctuation, teachers should take note of the skills involved in this sample test then derive more holistic lessons in which grammar and punctuation are taught and assessed as part of authentic tasks of written communication and formal oral expression.

Teachers can administer the words on the spelling component of this test as dictation. The common errors students make in the dictated format can be compared with the errors students make when the words are administered in the test format. The error patterns can guide the teaching of relevant spelling strategies including:

- looking for common patterns in words
- identifying the meaning components in words such as base word and tense or plural endings
- forming generalisations for adding tense and plural endings (see page 8, *Queensland’s literacy test: a framework for describing spelling items*)
- forming generalisations, e.g. students’ understanding of final /k/ needs constant refining from the introduction of the sounds in words with short vowels
- short vowels end in /ck/ as in the target word in item 9 *cracked* and the distracter for item 14 *tricked*
- long vowel +/ke/ as in the distracter in item 10 *like*
- long vowel doublet +/k/ such as words like *beak* and *book*
- /r/ controlled vowels + /k/ as in the distracter in item 15 *homework*
- vc+/k/ such as words like *ask* and *drink*
- multisyllable words ending in /c/ as in target word in item 6 *magic*
- multisyllable words ending in /que/ such as words like *antique* and *unique*.

Answers

Spelling	1B; 2D; 3C; 4C; 5 amaze; 6 magic; 7 whole; 8 rotten; 9 cracked; 10 decide; 11 fairies; 12 paid; 13 stirring; 14 evil; 15 Every; 16 crushes; 17 thirsty; 18 carrots; 19 grey; 20 fourth; 21 purple
Grammar and Punctuation	22A; 23C; 24A; 25B; 26C; 27B; 28A; 29B; 30B; 31B; 32A; 33C; 34A; 35B; 36D; 37B; 38B; 39D; 40B; 41D

References

Bear, DR, Invernizzi, M, Templeton, S & Johnston, F 2008, *Words their way: Word Study for phonics, Vocabulary and spelling instruction* (4th edn), Pearson, Upper Saddle River.

Ganske, K, 2008, *Mindful of words: Spelling and vocabulary explorations 4–8*, The Guilford Press, New York.

Resources

Resources on the QSA website that may be useful include:

- *Spelling Yrs 1–9: scope and sequence guide* — www.qsa.qld.edu.au/7284.html
- *A framework for describing spelling items* — www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1443.html
- *Grammar Yrs 1–9: scope and sequence guide* — www.qsa.qld.edu.au/7284.html
- *Teachers' notes: Notes on grammar* — www.qsa.qld.edu.au/1443.html.