English Paper 1: quick guide

Warm-up level · 16 questions · 20 minutes · + optional 15-minute writing task

Give 1 mark for each correct answer (no half marks). This page is all you need to mark the paper. The full guide from page 2 works through every question and explains what each wrong answer usually means. The writing task is marked separately, out of 6, using the mark scheme at the end of this guide.

Answer key

1 D	**5 B**	**9 B** Kind	**13 A** said
2 C	**6 B**	**10 A** A happy ending	**14 C**
3 A A carrot	**7 D**	**11 D** friend	**15 C** Where is my coat
4 C	**8 D** To make Lily happy	**12 A** because	**16 B** but

Scores by section

Add up the marks in each section and copy them into the PrimaryTools 7+ English tracker. A low section shows what to practise.

Section	Questions	In this paper	Score
Finding information	1–3	Finding information	/ 3
Words in context	4–5	Words in context	/ 2
Inference	6–8	Inference	/ 3
The whole text	9–10	The whole text	/ 2
Spelling	11–13	Spelling	/ 3
Punctuation and grammar	14–16	Punctuation and grammar	/ 3
Total			/ 16

What the score means

Score	What it suggests
14–16	Secure at warm-up level. Move on to the standard papers (4–8).
11–13	A good start. Read the notes for the questions missed, then try the next paper.
8–10	Getting there. Look at the scores by section and practise the weakest one together before the next paper.
0–7	Some foundations need work. Try the weakest section's questions together, out loud and without a timer, then return to timed papers.

This is a warm-up paper, so scores will usually be higher than on later papers. Scores on practice papers are a guide only – they don't predict a pass mark, which varies by school and year.

Full answer guide

For each question: how to work it out, what each wrong answer usually means, and a tip for next time. Go through the questions your child got wrong – and any they guessed. At this age, talking it through together is worth more than the score.

Finding information · Questions 1–3

Question 1 · Answer D: Everything was white with snow.

Finding information

What did Zac see when he pulled back the curtain?

How to work it out

1. After he pulls back the curtain: ‘Everything was white.’
2. Evidence from the text: ‘Everything was white.’

If you chose…

A His sister was building a snowman.	That happens later, outside.
B Rain was pouring down.	There is no rain in the story.
C The sun was shining brightly.	The light was bright, but it came from the snow, not the sun.

Next time: Find the sentence straight after Zac pulls back the curtain.

Question 2 · Answer C: His little sister, Lily

Finding information

Who wanted to come outside with Zac?

How to work it out

1. ‘His little sister, Lily, wanted to come too.’
2. Evidence from the text: ‘His little sister, Lily, wanted to come too’

If you chose…

A His friend from school	School was closed – no friends are mentioned.
B His mum	Mum was holding the phone and told him school was closed.
D His grandad	Grandad is not in this story.

Next time: Look for the word ‘too’ – it tells you someone else joined in.

Question 3 · Answer A: A carrot

Finding information

What did they use for the snowman's nose?

How to work it out

1. 'Lily gave him a carrot from the kitchen for a nose.'
2. Evidence from the text: 'a carrot from the kitchen for a nose'

If you chose…

B A stick	A stick is not mentioned.
C A scarf	The scarf went round the snowman's neck.
D A pebble	The pebbles were for the eyes.

Next time: Several things were used. Check which one was for the nose.

Words in context · Questions 4–5

Question 4 · Answer C: It covered everything, like a blanket on a bed.

Words in context

The snow was 'a thick, soft blanket'. What does this tell us about the snow?

How to work it out

1. A blanket covers a whole bed, just as the snow covered the cars, hedges and shed.
2. Evidence from the text: 'a thick, soft blanket of snow'

If you chose…

A It was very thin.	The writer says it was thick.
B It was warm, like a blanket.	Snow is cold – the blanket is about how it covered things, not how it felt.
D It was made of wool.	The snow is only being compared to a blanket.

Next time: When a writer compares two things, ask what they have in common.

Question 5 · Answer B: the sound the snow made.

Words in context

The snow 'crunched' under their boots. 'Crunched' tells us about…

How to work it out

1. Say 'crunch' aloud – it is a sound word.
2. Evidence from the text: 'the snow crunched under their boots'

If you chose…

A how fast they walked.	Crunched is about the noise, not speed.
C how cold the snow was.	Crunched doesn't tell us how cold it was.
D the colour of the snow.	Crunched is not a colour word.

Next time: Some words sound like the noise they describe. Say the word aloud.

Inference · Questions 6–8

Question 6 · Answer B: She knew Zac would be pleased.

Inference

Why was Mum smiling when she said, “And school is closed”?

How to work it out

1. A snow day means no school and time to play – Mum guesses Zac will be happy.
2. Evidence from the text: ‘“And school is closed.”’

If you chose…

A She wanted Zac to go back to bed.	Nothing in the story says this.
C She didn’t like school.	The smile is about Zac’s good news, not her own feelings about school.
D She was cross about the snow.	She is smiling, so she isn’t cross.

Next time: Think about how Zac would feel when he heard the news.

Question 7 · Answer D: It made Zac’s nose tingle.

Inference

How do you know the air outside was very cold?

How to work it out

1. ‘The air was so cold it made Zac’s nose tingle.’
2. Evidence from the text: ‘The air was so cold it made Zac’s nose tingle.’

If you chose…

A The snow was white.	Snow is always white – that doesn’t tell us about the air.
B Lily’s zip got stuck.	Her zip always got stuck – it wasn’t because of the cold.
C Zac wore his wellies.	Wellies are for the snow, but the question is about the air.

Next time: Look for a clue about how Zac’s body felt.

Question 8 · Answer D: To make Lily happy

Inference

Why did Zac give the snowman his own scarf?

How to work it out

1. Lily says the snowman won't be cold, and Zac doesn't mind his chilly neck 'when he saw Lily's happy face'.
2. Evidence from the text: 'when he saw Lily's happy face, he didn't mind at all'

If you chose…

A Because Mum told him to	Mum doesn't say anything about the scarf.
B Because his scarf was old	The story doesn't say his scarf was old.
C Because he was too hot	His neck felt chilly afterwards, so he wasn't too hot.

Next time: Read the last sentence – it explains why he didn't mind.

The whole text · Questions 9–10

Question 9 · Answer B: Kind

The whole text

Which word best describes Zac in this story?

How to work it out

1. He helps Lily with her zip and gives the snowman his scarf to please her.
2. Evidence from the text: 'he helped her with her zip'

If you chose…

A Lazy	He rushes outside and builds a snowman.
C Grumpy	Nothing in the story shows him being grumpy.
D Selfish	He gives away his own scarf, which isn't selfish.

Next time: Think about what the character DOES, not just what he says.

Question 10 · Answer A: A happy ending

The whole text

What is the best title for the last paragraph?

How to work it out

1. Zac is chilly but doesn't mind, because Lily is happy.
2. Evidence from the text: 'he didn't mind at all'

If you chose…

B Getting dressed	That happens earlier in the story.
C School is closed	That is near the start.
D A scary moment	Nothing is scary in the last paragraph.

Next time: Read the paragraph again and ask: how does it make you feel?

Spelling · Questions 11–13

Question 11 · Answer D: friend

Spelling

Which word is spelt correctly to finish the sentence?
My _____ came to play after school.

How to work it out

The correct spelling is ‘friend’: My friend came to play after school.

If you chose…

A freind	The i comes before the e: f-r-i-e-n-d.
B frend	‘Friend’ has a tricky ‘ie’ in the middle.
C frende	There is no e at the end.

Next time: ‘Friend’ is a common exception word: remember ‘fri-end – a friend to the end’.

Question 12 · Answer A: because

Spelling

Which word is spelt correctly to finish the sentence?
We went to the park _____ it was sunny.

How to work it out

The correct spelling is ‘because’: We went to the park because it was sunny.

If you chose…

B becos	‘Because’ ends in -ause.
C becaus	There is an e on the end.
D becuase	The u and a are the wrong way round.

Next time: Say it in parts: be-cause. ‘Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants.’

Question 13 · Answer A: said

Spelling

Which word is spelt correctly to finish the sentence?
Mum _____ it was time for bed.

How to work it out

The correct spelling is ‘said’: Mum said it was time for bed.

If you chose…

B sed	‘Said’ is spelt with ai, even though it sounds like ‘sed’.
C siad	The a comes before the i.
D sayed	This adds -ed to ‘say’, but ‘said’ is an exception.

Next time: ‘Said’ is a tricky word – learn it by heart: s-a-i-d.

Punctuation and grammar · Questions 14–16

Question 14 · Answer C: The cat sat on the mat.

Punctuation and grammar

Which sentence is written correctly?

How to work it out

The answer is ‘The cat sat on the mat.’. Every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

If you chose…

A The cat sat on the mat	A sentence needs a full stop at the end.
B the cat sat on the mat.	A sentence must start with a capital letter.
D The Cat sat on the mat.	‘Cat’ doesn’t need a capital letter here.

Next time: Every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

Question 15 · Answer C: Where is my coat

Punctuation and grammar

Which sentence needs a question mark at the end?

How to work it out

The answer is ‘Where is my coat’. A question asks something and needs an answer. It often starts with a question word like where, what or who.

If you chose…

A Put on your coat	This is a command.
B My coat is red	This is a statement.
D I like my coat	This is a statement.

Next time: A question asks something and needs an answer. It often starts with a question word like where, what or who.

Question 16 · Answer B: but

Punctuation and grammar

Which word best finishes the sentence? ‘I wanted to play outside ___ it was raining.’

How to work it out

The answer is ‘but’. ‘But’ joins two ideas that don’t match or go against each other.

If you chose…

A because	The rain isn’t the reason for wanting to play.
C so	‘So’ shows a result, which doesn’t fit here.
D and	‘And’ joins two ideas that go together. Here the rain stops the playing.

Next time: ‘But’ joins two ideas that don’t match or go against each other.

Marking the optional writing task

Prompt: *Write about a time you played in the snow, or imagine a snowy day. Write four or five sentences.*

Give marks for each part below, for a total out of 6. Judge spelling and handwriting kindly – this is Year 2. Don't add this mark to the score out of 16.

What to look for	Marks	Details
Ideas	2	Writes about the task with sensible ideas. 2 marks if the ideas are clear, interesting and stay on the task.
Sentences and punctuation	2	Mostly correct capital letters and full stops (1). Joins ideas with words such as 'and', 'but', 'because' or 'when' (1).
Word choice	1	At least one well-chosen describing word, comparison or verb.
Spelling and handwriting	1	Most common words spelt correctly; writing is clear to read.
Total	6	

Model answer

When I woke up, the garden was sparkling white. I put on my boots and ran outside because I wanted to be the first to make footprints. The snow was cold and crunchy under my feet. My brother threw a snowball, but it missed me and hit the cat! We laughed so much that our cheeks hurt.

Why it works

- Clear sentences with capital letters and full stops.
- Joining words: 'because', 'but'.
- Describing words: 'sparkling white', 'cold and crunchy'.

Next time: Start with when or where it happened. Add a funny or surprising moment to make it interesting.

Ready for more? The PrimaryTools 7+ English pack has Papers 2–14 in the same format, building from warm-up to elite level, with a guide like this one for every paper and a progress tracker. Find it at **primarytools.co.uk/7-plus-practice-papers**.

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