

SPaG Marks



What are SPaG marks?

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be separately assessed in externally assessed units in English Literature, Geography, History and Religious Studies in January 2013 and all subsequent exam series. In other subjects, they are embedded in the mark scheme itself.

This means that:

- ★ separate marks will be awarded where a sufficient level of extended writing is required
- ★ marks must be allocated to individual questions
- ★ at least three marks must be allocated to any single question
- ★ students must be aware which questions include marks for SPaG
- ★ marks allocated must achieve a total weighting of 5% of the total marks for the qualification.

Tips for making your writing more formal, especially for external examinations.

Do

- ★ Make your writing clear and to the point.
- ★ Try linking ideas with: In addition, Nevertheless, On the other hand, By contrast, Although, Alternatively
- ★ Include some complex sentences in your writing. Try using semi-colons if you feel confident about using them correctly.
- ★ It's good to use figurative language if you think it fits in with the purpose and audience of the task. Metaphors and similes work well in speeches.

Don't

- ★ Don't use 'Well' or 'You know' or 'Anyway' or 'Like I just said' or any phrase that sounds like you are having a friendly chat.
- ★ Avoid using: 'And', 'But', 'Because' or 'So' at the beginning of a sentence.
- ★ Keep exclamation marks to a minimum!!!
- ★ Words like 'nice' and 'a lot' have no power. Try to think of more descriptive words eg 'delicious' or 'endless'.
- ★ Clichés are colourful phrases that people use all the time in speech. So often, in fact, that they seem worn out and boring in writing. Avoid phrases such as 'pretty as a picture', 'big as a house', 'skinny as a rake'.

Generally, what do exam boards look for?

Consideration	Basic	Clear	Detailed
How good is your knowledge?	Basic	Accurate	Accurate and appropriate
How good is your understanding?	Simple	Clear	Supported with evidence and examples
How well do you organised your work?	Poor	Some structure	Coherent and logical
How well do you use specialist terms?	None used	Attempted to use	Relevant/ wide use
How well do you understand specialist terms?	Lacks understanding of their meaning	Not used accurately	Accurate
How much detail do you include in your written work?	Little or none	Some	Good
How good is your spelling, punctuation and grammar?	Very weak	Some errors	Almost faultless

