

Assessment and Moderation

Using the Assessment Templates in The Write Path Cymru

Assessment in The Write Path Cymru is designed to be flexible and purposeful, built into the writing journey rather than added on at the end. Each assessment template corresponds to the planning templates used throughout the writing journey. This ensures that planning and assessment are inexorably linked – the same key elements introduced and developed during teaching are the ones observed and recorded during assessment. Teachers are not being asked to assess something they haven't taught or that pupils haven't practised.

To make the most of the assessment mats, consider the following reflective questions:

When and How Will These Templates Be Used?

Will assessments be completed during or at the end of the writing process, or both?
How could assessment during editing days or key phases reduce end-of-unit marking?
How could low-stakes observations replace detailed marking for every piece?

Who Will Be Assessed?

Will you complete one sheet per pupil or focus on a selected group each time?
Are assessment mats used for individual, group, or whole-class assessment?
How often will assessments be carried out – per unit, per term, or another interval?

How Will Information Be Used?

How will observations inform short-term planning?
How might insights shape medium-term plans or writing provision?
How will outcomes be recorded and shared – teacher use or pupil profiles?
In what ways could this assessment contribute to end of term or year reports?

How Will This Fit with Other Subjects and Assessment Approaches?

How does this align with your school's formative assessment approach?
Could planning and assessment mats be used in other subjects?
Might consistent use support moderation conversations across year groups or schools?

How Will You Adapt the Templates?

Are the templates being used with pupils at their current stage or year group?
How do you decide whether to use, for example, a Year 2 assessment for a Year 4 pupil?

These templates are not intended to generate data for its own sake. Their core purpose is to inform planning and next steps. One central question should guide their use:

*What has this pupil learned, and what do they need next?"

For example: if a child has completed most of the 'Working Towards' statements and has begun to show evidence of 'On Track', they may be considered 'On Track'. The key is not ticking boxes, but identifying the most appropriate next step.

Final Written Outcomes

While the emphasis is on process, some schools may still choose to assess the final written outcome – particularly for tracking progress or comparing attainment across a year group. In this context, the final piece (usually produced on Writing Day) should be viewed as the result of a structured writing journey. Pupils should draw on the tools, vocabulary, and planning developed throughout the sequence. Assessment is most useful when the final piece is considered alongside the journey that led to it. Rather than judging in isolation, teachers are invited to ask whether the writing reflects what has been taught – and whether the pupil has made purposeful choices as a writer.

Marking and Feedback: Purpose Over Process

Marking is most effective when it helps a pupil move forward – not just to prove it's been done. Before marking, ask: why does this need to be marked?

Many routines (e.g. coloured pens or overwritten comments) exist mainly to show marking has happened. While they may meet policy, they often take time better spent on meaningful responses.

Not every piece needs detailed marking. Prioritise it when:

- It's a final written outcome
- A pupil is trying a new skill
- A specific target is being addressed

In these cases, targeted feedback can build confidence and guide next steps – but it should stay manageable. A short note or verbal comment is usually enough. And there's no need to write "VF" if you've spoken to the pupil – who's it for?

Whole Class Feedback

Whole class feedback is efficient and impactful. It allows teachers to address common errors, share strong examples, and set shared targets. This can be done verbally, noted on a class sheet, or embedded into the next lesson – keeping feedback focused on teaching, not admin.

Self and Peer Assessment

When used carefully, self and peer assessment can support reflection and independence. But it must match the pupil's level. If a pupil hasn't mastered semi-colons, they shouldn't assess them in someone else's writing.

Use checklists or sentence prompts based on familiar skills, and choose pieces where the success criteria are already well taught.

Cold Writes

A 'cold write' can offer an interesting comparison when viewed alongside the final outcome. However, these tasks can be distressing for some pupils, especially if they feel unprepared or judged. If the cold write doesn't directly shape the planning that follows, it may serve little purpose and could be demotivating. Cold writes should only be used if they meaningfully inform teaching, not as a standalone assessment.

Moderation: A Practical Guide to Raising Standards

Moderation supports teachers in developing a shared understanding of writing at different stages, across genres and year groups. Its purpose is to improve consistency in assessment and to support teachers in making accurate, confident judgements. It is not a competitive process or a tool for accountability – it is a professional learning opportunity that allows teachers to refine their judgements, reflect on their teaching, and ultimately raise standards in the classroom.

Gather Writing Journeys for Moderation

To prepare for moderation, schools should decide which year groups or genres to focus on and gather complete writing journeys for a selection of pupils. Each moderation set should include:

- The completed assessment template
- The final written piece and the book containing the build up
- Supporting evidence such as planning frames, vocabulary lists, sentence strips, and editing notes

Moderation should never be based on the final piece alone. For example, a pupil may have confidently used relative clauses during Sentence Day but chose not to include any in their final draft. This does not mean they cannot use them – it may be a matter of purpose, tone, or simply oversight. Looking at the full journey allows teachers to make fairer, more accurate judgements. It also allows moderators to identify how much support they received, so that pupils can be judged on what they can do independently.

Assess in the Classroom Using the Writing Journey Template

The Write Path Cymru assessment mat is your main tool during moderation. It may be completed both during and at the end of the writing journey, drawing on evidence from the entire process – not just the final piece. This means looking at planning notes, vocabulary work, sentence-building tasks, editing stages, and the final draft together to see how skills have developed and been applied. Not every statement on the mat will be relevant for every piece of work. If a statement does not apply to that specific form, cross it out so it's clear it wasn't overlooked.

When deciding which level a pupil is working at, look across the whole writing journey and use a best fit approach – pupils are unlikely to match every statement within a single column exactly. Start by considering where the majority of evidence sits. If most of the highlighted statements for a section fall within one column and the skills are shown independently at different points in the writing process, that column is likely to be the best fit. A pupil might show some Exceeding skills in one area, but if the overall pattern suggests On Track, that is the judgement to record.

Always consider the evidence from across the entire writing process. A skill demonstrated confidently during build-up activities, even if it does not appear in the final draft, still counts towards the best-fit judgement. The aim is to recognise what the pupil can do rather than to penalise what they did not happen to use in one piece of writing.

The Moderation Meeting

Before beginning, it's important to remember that moderation is about improving consistency, confidence, and teaching – not ranking pupils or judging teachers. Focus on what pupils can do and how to build on it.

Have complete writing journeys ready: a copy of the final piece for each person, build-up work, planning, vocabulary, sentence-level tasks, editing notes, and the completed assessment mat. Other participants should not see the teacher's assessment before they carry out their own assessment of the piece of work, as this may influence their decisions.

Individually, read the full journey and use the mat:

- Cross out statements not relevant to this task.
- Highlight only what is evidenced, prioritising skills shown independently.
- Consider highlighting skills demonstrated during the build-up, even if not in the final draft. Look across Features, Grammar, and Spelling & Punctuation for a best-fit judgement – pupils won't match a column exactly. Weigh independence, consistency, and appropriateness across the whole process.

After individual moderation, compare findings. Discuss differences openly, using the mat and evidence to agree on which statements to highlight and whether the pupil is Working Towards, On Track, or Exceeding. The teacher should reflect on their own assessment and whether this was in line with the other moderators.

Record the agreed judgement and key evidence on the moderation proforma found at www.thewritepath.cymru. Add one short next step for teaching.

Finally, note what the group has collectively learned – common strengths, shared challenges, and teaching ideas – and agree on ways to support each other before the next meeting.

Share Outcomes and Use Them to Strengthen Practice

Moderation outcomes can be shared within the school and across partnerships to support curriculum development and staff training. Patterns across classes or year groups can help identify areas of strength or inconsistency, and guide targeted CPD.

Cross-school moderation, when done in a spirit of openness and trust, can be especially powerful. It enables schools to develop shared benchmarks, reduces isolation for individual teachers, and raises expectations by showing what is possible in different contexts.

A Final Note

Effective moderation is about seeking clarity, not perfection. It recognises that writing is complex, progress is not always linear, and a pupil's potential is often more visible in the process than the final product. Differences in assessment can feel challenging, especially when it's your own class's work, but a positive and open mindset from all participants is essential for gaining a true picture of what pupils know, what they can do, and how best to help them progress.

Moderation Summary

Focus of moderation (Year group / Genre / Form)	
Date:	

Accuracy of judgements:

i.e where were moderators most and least confident on agreeing whether pupils met criteria. This can help identify where the group of schools need to work together to share good practice and/or improve consistency.

Collective strengths	Common areas for development

Quality and progression of writing / teaching / learning

i.e were there consistently pupils over and under achieving in what we would expect for their age across pieces of work? This can help identify where pupils and teachers need support in sharing good practice and improving these areas of the writing process.

Collective strengths	Common areas for development

Agreed Follow Up Actions

This may be implications for CPD, support between moderators or sharing good practice across schools.

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