

Single Word Spelling Test Digital

Guidance and Information for Teachers

Digital Tests from GL Assessment

For fully comprehensive information about using digital tests from GL Assessment, please visit:

**[https://
help.testingforschools.com/
display/HOH/Getting+Started](https://help.testingforschools.com/display/HOH/Getting+Started)**

Single Word Spelling Test Digital (SWST Digital) is part of a selection of standardised tests available in both paper and digital editions from GL Assessment. The development of digital editions of major series such as the *Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT)* and *Group Reading Test (GRT)*, as well as *SWST*, is a response to the need for schools to test large numbers of pupils at regular intervals and to make that process as efficient as possible by automating the scoring, analysis and reporting. At the same time, by developing digital editions of established tests, teachers and pupils can be assured of the robustness of these tests.

SWST is often used as an end of year test and if it is used year on year can offer important evidence of pupil progress and value-added. As such it is an important test and one on which decisions about, for example, setting or remediation, may be made in conjunction with teacher assessment and an evaluation of pupil performance throughout the year.

SWST Digital must be administered in a formal test environment with pupils made aware that they are taking a test and that the usual expectations of behaviour and constraints of a test session will be in place. Pupils' experience of working at a computer may lead to the impression that taking a test using a PC is not as important as the more familiar test session in the school hall or rearranged classroom. They may expect to spend time in the computer suite on less formal activities, engaging in learning that is presented in a highly visual or even game-like way. While GL Assessment digital tests do engage pupils, they are tests and must be approached in the same familiar way as a paper test taken in the school hall at an individual desk set out in spaced rows!

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Introduction to Single Word Spelling Test Digital

The Testwise edition of the *Single Word Spelling Test* comprises all nine tests of the paper edition, available to customers under an annual Primary Licence or Secondary Licence. The digital edition was created in 2007 to provide teachers and pupils with an alternative format to the paper tests with the added benefits of automatic scoring, analysis and reporting.

SWST Digital is a standardised spelling test that uses sentence completion items.

The tests are untimed and start with a short practice section that should take no longer than 5 minutes.

SWST Digital is particularly suitable for use during the second half of the academic year. It can also be used in the Autumn term, in which case it is recommended that pupils be given the test intended for the year below, as set out here:

Year group	Autumn term	Spring/summer term
Year 1 in England & Wales Year 2 in Northern Ireland Primary 2 in Scotland	-	SWST 6
Year 2 in England & Wales Year 3 in Northern Ireland Primary 3 in Scotland	SWST 6	SWST 7
Year 3 in England & Wales Year 4 in Northern Ireland Primary 4 in Scotland	SWST 7	SWST 8
Year 4 in England & Wales Year 5 in Northern Ireland Primary 5 in Scotland	SWST 8	SWST 9
Year 5 in England & Wales Year 6 in Northern Ireland Primary 6 in Scotland	SWST 9	SWST 10
Year 6 in England & Wales Year 7 in Northern Ireland Primary 7 in Scotland	SWST 10	SWST 11
Year 7 in England & Wales Year 8 in Northern Ireland Secondary 1 in Scotland	SWST 11	SWST 12
Year 8 in England & Wales Year 9 in Northern Ireland Secondary 2 in Scotland	SWST 12	SWST 13
Year 9 in England & Wales Year 10 in Northern Ireland Secondary 3 in Scotland	SWST 13	SWST 14
Year 10 in England & Wales Year 11 in Northern Ireland Secondary 4 in Scotland	SWST 14	-

Single Word Spelling Test 6 (SWST 6)

During the development of *SWST Digital*, many pupils taking *SWST 6* took longer than anticipated to complete the test. It was expected that each test, depending on the length of the test and age and ability of the test-takers, would take between 30 and 40 minutes to complete. Some six-year-olds took more than one hour. This reflects their lack of familiarity with working on a computer rather than ability in spelling, and should be considered when deciding which six-year-old pupils should take the test.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Pupils whose spelling ability is judged to be approximately two years below their chronological age can be given the spelling test closest to their estimated spelling age.

NB: Standard age scores for *SWST* tests are based on the following age ranges

Test	Age range from	Age range to
SWST 6	5.04	7.02
SWST 7	6.04	8.02
SWST 8	7.04	9.02
SWST 9	8.04	10.02
SWST 10	9.04	11.02
SWST 11	10.04	12.02
SWST 12	11.04	13.02
SWST 13	12.04	14.02
SWST 14	13.04	15.02

If a test is used with a pupil outside these age ranges, the standard age score will be based on the highest, or in some cases lowest, age within the range. For example, the standard age score for a pupil aged 9 years 6 months who has taken *SWST 6* will be calculated as if the pupil was aged 7 years 2 months. A raw score of 10 produces a standard age score of 79. Such a pupil will be included in the group report but the standard age score result for this individual must be interpreted with caution.

The spelling age for this pupil, however, will be of most use as this is based on the raw score. A pupil aged 9 years 6 months who has taken *SWST 6* and attained a raw score of 10 can be said to have a spelling age of 7 years 1 month (confidence band 6.07 to 7.09).

Administration

Each pupil will need their own personal computer with a high quality mouse and set of headphones. You are advised to check that the headphones are working and that sound levels are appropriate.

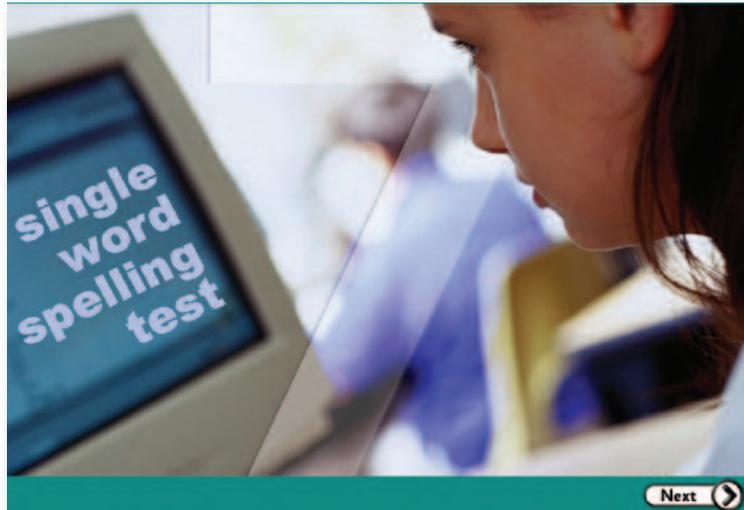
For information on Settings go to:

<https://help.testingforschools.com/display/HOH/Settings>

If children are very young, the teacher or administrator may prefer to log on for each pupil.

All administration instructions are incorporated into the test program but you should introduce the test session and check that pupils understand the instructions and the method of answering.

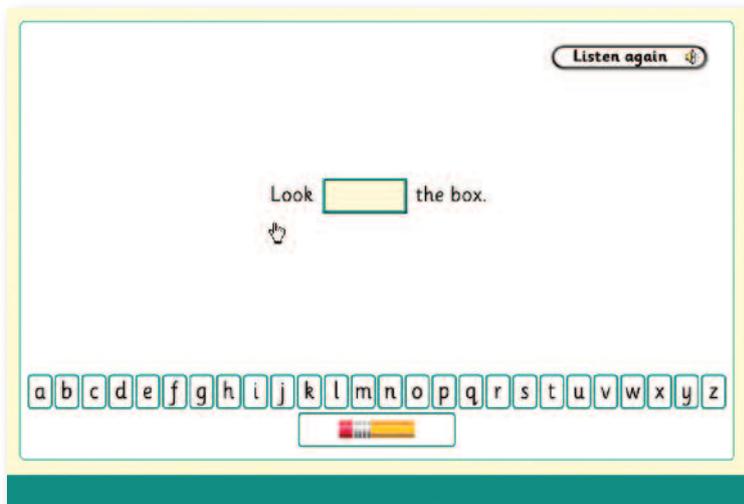
When pupils are settled, explain that they are going to take a test that will show how well they can spell. Further explain that the test starts with some practice questions to get them used to the real questions and that all instructions are on the computer – onscreen and audio for 10 to 14 year olds and audio only for 6–9 year olds – and that they should work through this section at their own pace.



Tell pupils to click on NEXT and the audio instructions will start, accompanying the following screen:



The practice section begins with the following screen for 6 to 9 year olds:



This introduces the practice questions and answers one for them correctly. Check that pupils understand what they have to do. They will then complete the subsequent two practice questions and when they are sure they understand what they are meant to do they can start the main test.

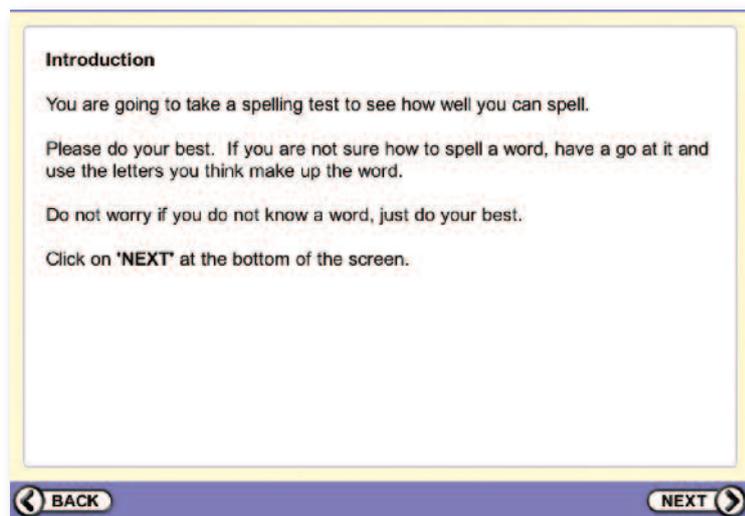
The next practice question for 6 to 9 year olds asks pupils to complete the sentence with the word "the":



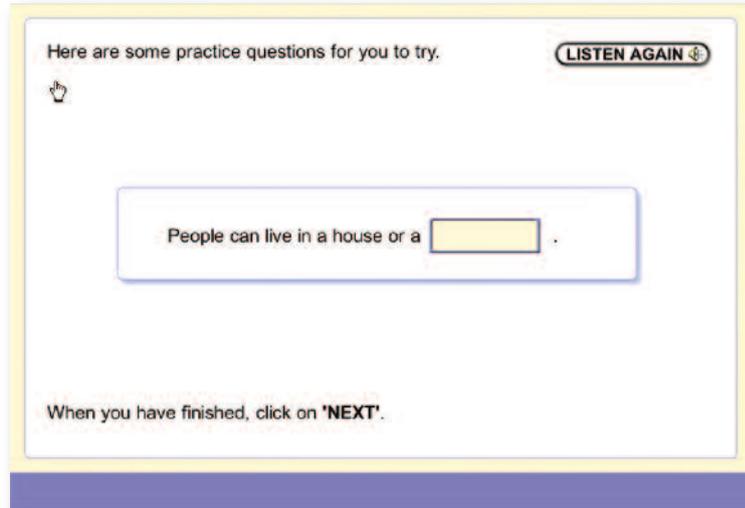
As you can see from this and the previous screen, pupils give their answer by using the mouse to click on letters from the onscreen alphabet.

The next (and final) practice question invites pupils to complete the question on their own, then gives and explains the correct answer.

For older pupils this screen will appear after the title screen:



and will be accompanied by audio. The first practice screen is the following:

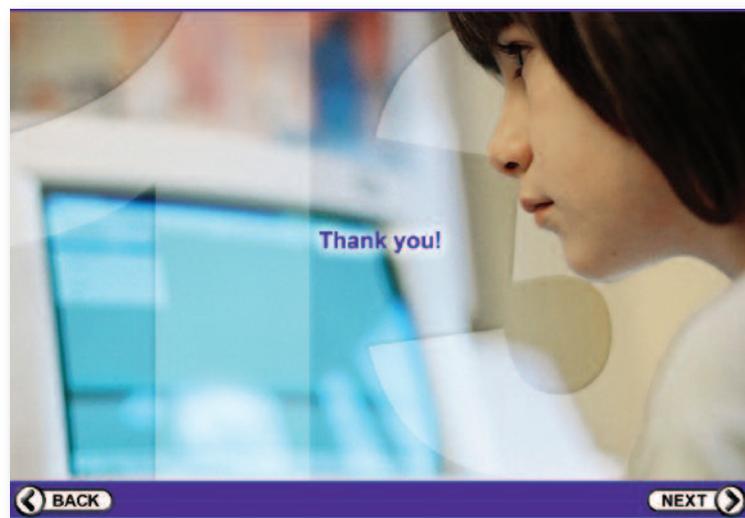


and is followed by two further practice questions where pupils will be given feedback. Older pupils use the keyboard to type their answers in the box.

During this practice section walk around the class to check that pupils understand what they are doing. Pupils should enter an answer for each practice question before they move on to the next one.

Once each pupil has completed the practice at their own pace they can move on seamlessly to the test.

At the end of the test the following screen appears and pupils will be invited to review their work:



Once they click on NEXT they will exit the test and cannot go back.

The Test Environment

SWST Digital is an untimed test. Depending on the level of the test, between 30 and 40 minutes should be allowed plus additional time for practice and to allow pupils to log onto Testwise and find the test that has been allocated to them.

Each pupil will need a computer, headphones and mouse and all equipment needs to be in good working order. Pupils should be told that they are going to take a spelling test and explained the purpose of the test: 'to find out what you can do or where you may need help' or 'to let your teacher next year know what you can do'. Pupils should be told that they must work in silence but that if they have a query they should raise their hand and wait for the teacher to approach them. Answer any questions at this stage and explain that you cannot help with any of the test questions but that they should try to do their best and at the end go back and check their work.

While pupils are taking the test the teacher should walk round the computer suite to check that they are progressing appropriately, that they are not having difficulty with the methods of answering questions and, importantly with digital tests, that they have not rushed through any part of the test without attempting to answer some questions.

Unexpected incidents during a test session

As with the paper test, should anything unexpected occur during the test session, the incident should be recorded and appended to the group report for this specific group of pupils. This will allow the incident to be taken into account when scores are being considered.

If there is a failure in your computer system while pupils are taking an exercise it will not be possible to re-enter the test at the point at which the failure occurred. In this instance, pupils will need to re-take the complete exercise. If pupils complete an exercise and results are stored (i.e. they have clicked the "end test" button) and then the system fails, it will be possible to retrieve results, and therefore reports, from the GL Assessment back-up server.

If you have any problems using Testwise, email the Testwise Technical Support Team at support@gl-assessment.co.uk.

You can view our full Testwise Support Services on our website:

<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/support/online-testing-support/>

Testwise SWST Report

A sample report may be viewed at:

www.gl-assessment.co.uk

Locate the SWST page via the search bar.

The report is in three sections:

Section A

This section summarises each student's attainment on the test as a whole, giving their age at the time of test, their raw score, standardised score, stanine, percentile rank and group rank (based on standardised score).

The standardised score is particularly useful as it shows the student's attainment in relation to a nationally representative sample of pupils of the same age. The national average standardised score is 100, and two thirds of pupils will score between 85 and 115. The student's standard score is also

shown as a vertical line with a horizontal line showing the 90% confidence band. It is recognised that any test score represents a performance on a particular day, and the score should therefore be placed within such a confidence band. If the test were taken again, nine times out of ten one would expect the score to fall within this range.

The stanine score shows the standard nine score the student achieves in comparison with the national sample, with 9 being the highest score and 1 being the lowest.

The national percentile shows the percentage of pupils in the national sample whose scores were lower than the student.

Final columns of this section give scores against curriculum categories: spelling, grammar, reading comprehension (narrative) and reading comprehension (non-narrative).

Section B

The first table in this section shows the mean score for the class/group by gender against the national average. This allows the group's attainment to be evaluated as below, at, or above the national average. The information displayed on this table is illustrated by the graph beneath the table, which as well as displaying the group and national means, shows the 90% confidence bands. Descriptive comments are also given to explain whether the average and the range of scores for the class/group are significantly different from the national average.

A second table shows the distribution of pupils across nine score bands (stanines) compared to the national distribution. This data is presented in a graph to show the distribution for the class/group separately for boys, girls, all pupils and the national sample.

There can be many reasons why the attainment of pupils might be significantly higher or lower than the national average. Factors might relate to the pupils' motivation, to levels of support at home, to the quality of their previous experience of education, etc. Whatever the reasons, the first step to improving pupils' attainment is to know accurately where they are now. This report helps by giving an overview of the current performance of the group as a whole against national standards.

Section C

There is a wealth of information available from a detailed analysis of pupils' performance on each of the questions within the tests. This data can also be compared with the difficulty of the questions as established during the national standardisation.

Question by Question Graph

This graph gives a quick overview of the success rates for each question for the class/group (bars) compared to the national average (thick dark line). The questions are sorted from left to right according to their difficulty, as indicated by the percentage of pupils answering the question correctly at the time of the national standardisation. For example, the question on the extreme left of the graph is the easiest question in the test (usually answered correctly by over 90% of the national sample), and the question on the extreme right is the most difficult question in the test.

Question by Question Listing

This data is also presented in the form of a table that includes a brief

description of each question alongside the question number. The questions are listed in the order they are presented in the Question by Question Graph, that is, from left to right across the graph.

Individual Scores

An individual's scores can be viewed by selecting '**CSV report**' in Testwise. This will produce an Excel spreadsheet with one or more pupils' spelling age, raw score, standardised score, national percentile rank and individual question scores.

Further analysis of pupils' responses

Working from pupils' results from *SWST Digital*, it is possible to carry out a detailed analysis of their spelling errors.

By generating the CSV report from Testwise, you will be able to view pupils' responses to each question. From this you may use the information contained in the following documents to carry out the analysis, help your pupils improve their spelling and use additional lists of words to test spelling at specific levels:

- Analysing spelling errors
- Improving spelling skills
- Structured lists and supplementary assessments
- Summary check sheet and pupil check sheets
- Rules introduced at each level of spelling
- Examples of analysis

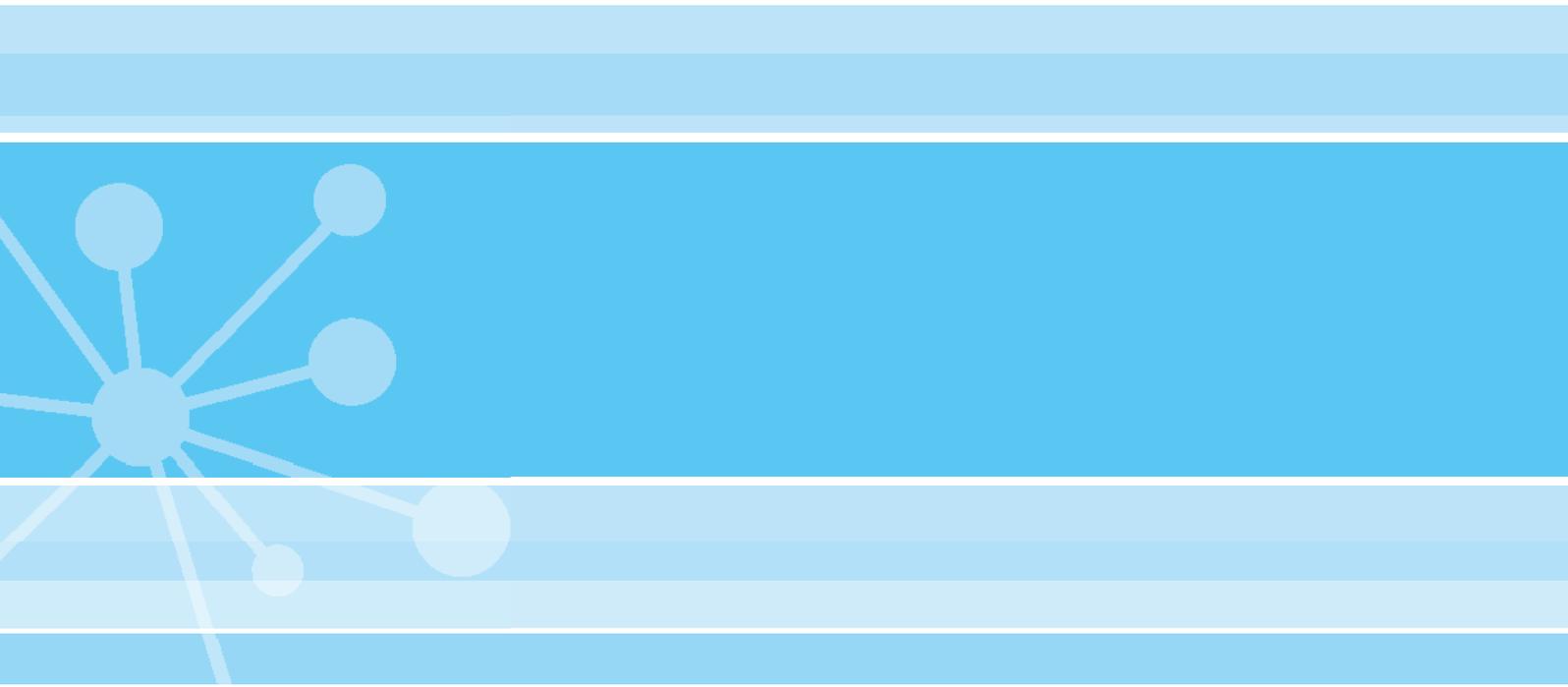
The Summary Check Sheets may be photocopied.

All the above can be found at:

<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/single-word-spelling-test-swst/swst-further-analysis-of-pupils-responses/>

Digital Equating Study

An equating study was carried out during Autumn 2006 in which pupils took both the paper and digital tests and their scores were compared. For further information please contact GL Assessment Customer Services on 0330 123 5375.



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