

Your Guide to Using Fluent in Five

Weekly overview, how to use,
and progression documents

Teacher Guide

The resource in a nutshell

Fluent in Five provides a daily set of arithmetic practice, designed to help children develop and maintain fluency in both written and mental calculations. The structure of Fluent in Five is also designed to help children distinguish between written and mental calculations.

What is included?

- **For Years 3 and 4**, a weekly powerpoint featuring 4 to 5 daily questions and answers.
- **For Years 5 and 6**, a weekly pack of 5 to 7 daily questions and answers set out in the style of the KS2 SATs arithmetic test.
- **A progression document for each year group** to give an overview of the national curriculum objectives that will be covered on each day.

The approach behind Fluent in Five

Regular practice of mental and written arithmetic skills is important in order to keep calculation skills fresh. This is especially important given the vast majority of schools are choosing to structure their curriculum with longer blocks spent on each topic area, but without each topic area being revisited.

Children and schools also repeatedly report that there are significant time pressures with the KS2 arithmetic tests; many children are not able to complete the full test in the 30 minutes given.

This is often because children are attempting questions which have been designed to be answered mentally using an informal or formal written method, which takes up valuable time. This may be because children are not confident with mental approaches to calculations, or that they are simply 'tricked' by the appearance of a gridded working area after each question.

Fluent in Five has been designed to provide this regular practice and help children distinguish between when to use a written method and when a mental method would be more efficient. In turn, this should develop their ability to complete all the questions in an arithmetic test in the time given.

Ensuring pupils identify mental questions

In Years 3 and 4, symbols are used initially to help train children to identify questions which require a written method and those which are designed for a mental approach. Throughout the year, these symbols will gradually be reduced so that children are making their own choices about whether a question should be approached mentally or using a written method. By the summer term, there will be no symbols with the questions.

In Years 5 and 6, it is suggested that children spend the first 30 seconds of their Fluent in Five challenge time identifying the mental questions, and marking these with an 'M' or other symbol.

In a 30 minute arithmetic test, children should aim to spend the first minute and a half to two minutes on this identification task, before answering the mental questions. Pupils who take this approach are often left with 15 minutes in which to answer between 7 to 10 written questions.

How long should I spend on Fluent in Five a day?

Ideally children should complete the Fluent in Five challenge each day. The resource can be delivered using between 10 and 15 minutes of class time.

- **5 minutes:** Children complete the Fluent in Five challenge. The teacher and any support staff use this time to look at how children are approaching the questions, and begin to identify any misconceptions or common errors.
- **3 minutes:** Children self-assess using the answer slide in Years 3 and 4 or answer sheet in Years 5 and 6. The teacher takes feedback about the range of answers and identifies any common misconceptions.
- **2 - 5 minutes:** The teacher completes necessary teaching focusing on any common misconceptions.

How can I differentiate the resource?

You may want to increase the level of challenge for pupils who might complete the daily challenge within the allocated time.

There are a number of ways you could extend these learners. For example, you could reduce the time limit in which they must complete the questions, helping them build up

their speed.

Alternatively, you could extend these pupils by asking them to identify the method they used for a certain question and then create an easier and harder question which could be solved using that same approach.

How is it structured? Years 3 and 4

The Fluent in Five Progression in Objectives document provides a quick overview of the objectives that can be tested using the arithmetic test. This document is adapted from the KS2 Test Frameworks, which test developers use to set the tests.

The resource itself is made up of a series of daily challenges which are presented in a powerpoint presentation for each week, which is intended to be displayed on your interactive whiteboard.

Each day, children should be given exactly 5 minutes to complete the daily challenge, recording their answers in a maths journal or on a mini-whiteboard. The number of questions provided in each challenge increase as the year progresses, so that children develop their speed and fluency. The number of questions which should be completed using a written method also increases throughout the year.

Year 3

Weeks 1 – 6	4 questions – 3 mental, 1 written.
Weeks 7 – 18	4 questions – 2 mental, 2 written.
Weeks 19 – 24	5 questions – up to 3 written (number varies each day for variation and to ensure the skill of identification has is being developed).

Year 4

Weeks 1 – 9	4 questions – 3 mental, 2 written.
Weeks 9 – 19	5 questions – 3 mental, 2 written.
Weeks 20 – 24	5 questions, up to 3 written (number varies each day for variation and to ensure the skill of identification has is being developed).

How is it structured? Years 5 and 6

The Fluent in Five Progression in Objectives document provides a quick overview of the objectives that can be tested using the arithmetic test. This document is adapted from the KS2 Test Frameworks, which test developers use to set the tests.

The resource itself is made up of a series of daily challenges which are presented in the format of the KS2 arithmetic test. These are available to download, and it is suggested that they are printed out doubled sided for each child. It is important that children complete these on paper, rather than on-screen, as it gives the children experience of having each question being followed by a gridded working area.

Each day, children should be given exactly 5 minutes to complete the daily challenge sheet. The number of questions provided in each challenge increases as the year progresses, so that children develop their speed and fluency. The number of questions which should be completed using a written method also increase throughout the year in Year 6. The table below shows the number of questions in the daily challenges.

Year 5

Weeks 1 and 2	4 questions – 2 mental, 2 written.
Weeks 3 – 19	5 questions – 3 mental, 2 written.
Weeks 20 – 24	5 questions – up to 3 written (number varies each day for variation and to ensure the skill of identification has been developed).

Year 6

Weeks 1 – 8	5 questions – 3 mental, 2 written.
Weeks 9 – 14	6 questions – 3 to 4 mental, 2 to 3 written.
Weeks 15 – 24	7 questions – 4 mental, 3 written.

For both Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6, the daily challenges are designed within a clear progression structure, starting the year with questions which all sit within the previous year group's objectives, and progressing throughout autumn term to cover all of the objectives in the Progression in Objectives document for the current year group.

By spring term, all challenges will sit within the objectives of the current year group. The resource is structured so that certain 'tricky' objectives appear in each challenge during a given week, so that these skills can be developed. Each challenge also contains a mix of

other questions, so that a full breadth of the objective document is covered.

Each week of daily challenges is also accompanied by a ‘this week in a nutshell’ statement, which helps teachers see at a glance which skills are focused on during this week’s challenges.

Where to Find Everything you Need

- [Progression in Objectives Document Year 3](#)
- [Progression in Objectives Document Year 4](#)
- [Progression in Objectives Document Year 5](#)
- [Progression in Objectives Document Year 6](#)