

NEW

 SCHOLASTIC

“Creates challenging  
and aspirational  
targets for pupils.”

Meena Kumari Wood, Senior Education Adviser,  
London Borough of Bexley  
(Former HMI Ofsted)



# STEPS

Strategic Targets for Educational  
Progress and Success at Key Stage 3

- ✓ Step beyond levels
- ✓ A NEW assessment and progression solution for KS3
- ✓ Tried and tested in schools



[scholastic.co.uk/steps](http://scholastic.co.uk/steps)

# What is STEPS?



STEPS is an assessment and progress monitoring, tracking and reporting programme for secondary schools. It provides a simple and straightforward method of measuring attainment and progress in Years 7–9 following the end of well-established Key Stage 3 Attainment Levels from September 2014.

Designed and developed by Martin Smith, in conjunction with a team of specialists at Darrick Wood School in Bromley, STEPS provides a tried-and-tested assessment and progression solution that schools can trust. Darrick Wood is a highly respected leading educational establishment, having achieved both Teaching School status and the World Class Schools Quality Mark in recent years.

## Stepping beyond levels

STEPS builds on the hard work already done by teachers. It uses the frameworks and assessment focuses created by subject leaders since the introduction of APP and the National Strategies, adopting positive elements from a range of systems to create a comprehensive, proven solution to life after levels.

### Baseline assessment tests

With conflicting KS2 data, standard aptitude tests (e.g. CAT4/MidYIS) and information from feeder primary schools, one of the biggest challenges for secondary schools is benchmarking new pupils in Year 7. STEPS provides teachers with baseline tests in each subject and effectively supports the transition between primary and secondary phases. It helps teachers to gather clear and accurate baseline data from which to set targets and monitor pupils from the beginning of KS3.

### A FLEXIBLE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK THAT PROVIDES:

- Baseline assessment tests
  - Purposeful, valid data
  - Clear targets for pupils
  - Consistent reporting
- = PROGRESSION

“The system proposed here overturns the culture of levels, prioritising high-quality, in-depth teaching, supported by in-class formative assessment.”

Meena Kumari Wood, Senior Education Adviser, London Borough of Bexley (Former HMI Ofsted)

### Purposeful, valid data

STEPS supports the principles of the DfE Workload Challenge Report, *Eliminating unnecessary workload associated with data management* (March 2016).

STEPS helps teachers to collect data that:

- ✓ is purposeful, valid and reliable
- ✓ is grounded in educational principles
- ✓ is focused on key performance indicators
- ✓ incorporates the use of standardised tests
- ✓ is compatible with management information systems such as SIMS

### Clear targets for pupils

The cornerstone of STEPS is a simple grid and a progressive set of attainment targets that present challenge at all levels of ability throughout KS3. The grids are broken down into subject ‘Strands’ and then into ‘Steps’. This level of detail means that pupils can make fine levels of progress and teachers can create incremental, personalised targets based on assessment throughout KS3.

### Consistent reporting across all subjects

Compatible with SIMS, STEPS data can be converted to provide clear reports in many levels of detail, for the full range of stakeholders. It provides a consistent language when talking about attainment across all subjects – meaning that teachers, parents, subject leaders and senior leadership are working together to ensure pupils’ progress in the lead-up to GCSEs.

“In the vacuum left by the removal of KS3 levels, the STEPS approach provides an invaluable way of both quantifying pupil progress and focusing pupils, parents and teachers on the next key steps in learning. It has now become the bedrock of all our assessment and reporting procedures.”

Richard Ellis, Vice Principal, The Archbishop of Lanfranc – Coloma Trust

### STEPS subjects

- ✓ English
- ✓ Maths
- ✓ Science
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ History
- ✓ Languages
- ✓ Computing
- ✓ Design and Technology
- ✓ Art and Design
- ✓ Drama
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Religious Studies
- ✓ Physical Education

### In summary:

- ✓ Allows teachers to monitor progress over a variable time-scale
- ✓ Ensures clear and purposeful data
- ✓ Provides finely-levelled feedback to pupils
- ✓ Allows for clear target setting and reporting
- ✓ Flexible and adaptable: STEPS provides a framework with which schools can develop their own programmes
- ✓ Simple and easy to implement



# How does STEPS work?

The STEPS system allows for incremental levels of advancement in each subject. At the heart of it is the STEPS Grid, a simple set of progressive attainment targets.

## STEPS at a glance

Each subject has its own STEPS Grid. It is broken down into 'Strands', and these are further broken down into 'Steps'. These are the steps that children need to travel through to achieve the KS3 requirements.

### Strands

Strands are the topics covered in each subject at KS3, representing the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils must exhibit. On average, there are five Strands per subject.

EXAMPLE: In Geography, one strand might be 'Physical processes' while another would be 'Human processes'.

### Steps

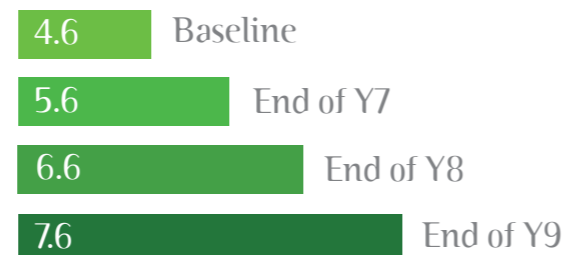
Within each Strand there are nine Steps. One Step represents the expected progression for an average pupil to achieve in a year. The combination of Step scores across each Strand gives pupils a Step Point Score. This becomes the pupil's average in the subject.

EXAMPLE: Average expected progress in Geography from Year 7 to Year 9 using Step Point Scores:

### Forward estimates

The Step Grid also provides an early indication of KS4 performance, matching Step scores to predicted GCSE grades and allowing pupils to become familiar with the new GCSE grading system.

EXAMPLE: Expected progress in Geography from Year 7 to Year 9 for a pupil whose 'Baseline' Step Point Scores averaged out at 4.6:



## STEPS in detail

STEPS provides both qualitative and quantitative data and can be used for both simple and complex feedback to all stakeholders.

### Quantitative data

The desire for five Strands per subject is based on the idea that each Strand will have a value of 0.2 when converting qualitative data to a numerical score.

However, in some subjects, Strands deemed more important are double weighted to give them additional input.

EXAMPLE: In Drama, the 'Performance' strand is crucial to overall attainment, meaning that it is double weighted and given additional input to the final quantitative score.

### Simple and complex

The quantitative score created by these numerical values provides a complex breakdown of how pupils are performing. It allows teachers to identify areas for improvement, to pinpoint where intervention is needed and to inform their target-setting.

On the other hand, the Step Point Score in each subject provides a quick-and-easy reference point for parents, who can see their child's progress year-on-year via a simple traffic-light system:

- Red: Progress between 0 and 0.74 Step Points
- Amber: Progress between 0.75 and 0.99 Step Points
- Green: Progress of 1.00 or above

### STEPS provides multifaceted feedback

EXAMPLE: Feedback for a Year 8 pupil in Drama and across other subjects:

- **Fine detail**  
Step 6 in 'Performance' Strand for Drama
- **Medium detail**  
Step Point Score of 6.6 in subject
- **Big picture**  
Average Step Point Score of 6.3 across all subjects

## In summary:

- ✓ Qualitative and quantitative data
- ✓ Multifaceted feedback
- ✓ Finely-levelled progression
- ✓ Drill-down detail available
- ✓ All stakeholders informed
- ✓ Personalised targets for pupils
- ✓ KS4 projected grades

*"STEPS makes a difference in schools towards creating greater transparency, accuracy and impact in assessing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding."*

Meena Kumari Wood, Senior Education Adviser, London Borough of Bexley (Former HMI Ofsted)

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| STEP | Strand 1  | Strand 2  | Strand 3  | Strand 4  | Strand 5  | GCSE ESTIMATE |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|
|      | (Equal weighting) Reading fiction. This includes: literature and modern fiction, poetry, plays and drama and short stories.   | (Equal weighting) Reading non-fiction. This includes: literary non-fiction (travel writing), newspapers, factual documents (reports), speeches etc.   | (Equal weighting) Imaginative writing   | (Equal weighting) Transactional writing   | (Equal weighting) Spelling, punctuation & grammar   |               |
| 9    | A critical analysis of writing, expressing a detailed understanding of all that is below and...<br>• has the ability to explore a text from a specific point of view.<br>• has the ability to explore the strengths of a text and how these are achieved and how different interpretations of a text or idea can be made.                               | A critical analysis of writing, expressing a detailed understanding of all that is below and...<br>• has the ability to explore a text from a specific point of view.<br>• has the ability to explore the strengths of a text and how these are achieved and how different interpretations of a text or idea can be made.                               | All of the below and...<br>• writes maturely, originally and with an impact.<br>• has full control of language and technique is demonstrated with clear planning and purpose behind choices.  | All of the below and...<br>• writes maturely, originally and with an impact.<br>• has full control of language and technique is demonstrated with clear planning and purpose behind choices.  | All of the below and...<br>• deploys all punctuation, spelling and sentence structures correctly, there is evidence of craft and thoughtful design behind every decision. | 9             |
| 8    | Thorough and surprising exemplification of all that is below and...<br>• has imaginative and evaluative responses to all texts, expressed in thorough detail employing critical terminology.<br>• has an appreciation of the writer's art and how readers and audiences respond to this. This will include careful comparisons between texts and ideas. | Thorough and surprising exemplification of all that is below and...<br>• has imaginative and evaluative responses to all texts, expressed in thorough detail employing critical terminology.<br>• has an appreciation of the writer's art and how readers and audiences respond to this. This will include careful comparisons between texts and ideas. | All of the below and...<br>• shows mature creativity in the way that vocabulary, techniques and literary devices are used.<br>• all writing is designed to create impact on the reader and for a purpose.<br>• uses layers of meaning and subtlety of language to convey a point of view. | All of the below and...<br>• shows mature creativity in the way that vocabulary, techniques and persuasive devices are used.<br>• all writing is designed to create impact on the reader and for a purpose.<br>• uses layers of meaning and subtlety of language to convey a point of view. | All of the below and...<br>• deploys all punctuation, spelling and sentence structures correctly, with maturity and originality.  | 8             |
|      | All of the below and...<br>• can analyse the way meaning is created in different texts.<br>• can explore in detail the complex...   | All of the below and...<br>• can analyse the way meaning is created in different non-fiction texts.<br>• can explore in detail the complex...   | All of the below and...<br>• has confident written expression across a range of texts.<br>• creates settings, characters and action   | All of the below and...<br>• has confident written expression across a range of texts.<br>• creates facts, information and ideas  | All of the below and...<br>• deploys punctuation maturely and for impact.<br>• uses sentence types and structures to  |               |

# STEPS: everyone benefits

STEPS provides a framework to help schools develop their own personalised programme; one that means something to their pupils, their staff and their individual environment.

## STEPS for Senior Leadership Teams

- ✓ STEPS provides an extra level of detail for each subject and helps to establish accountability across the school.
- ✓ STEPS provides simple, consistent and robust data for each subject that can be used alongside other assessment methods to triangulate target setting.
- ✓ Easy to import into SIMS, with full instructions provided.

## STEPS for Pupils

- ✓ Pupils enjoy the constant exposure to the 'Big Picture' that the STEPS framework provides.
- ✓ Using the STEPS Grids, pupils can easily identify their own attainment and targets within each Strand.

## STEPS for Parents

- ✓ Parents can see a breakdown of each subject at KS3.
- ✓ Parents like the simplicity of the Step Point Score combined with the detail of the individual Strand scores.

“Staff, students and parents/carers have found STEPS easy to use and it has helped us raise standards at KS3.”

Ben Morgan,  
Assistant Headteacher, Erith School

## STEPS for Subject Leaders

- ✓ Subject Leaders can identify Strands that the pupils are finding more difficult and provide support.
- ✓ The level of detail helps to raise an early warning to individual pupils who are under-achieving or making unusual rates of progress.

## STEPS for Teachers

- ✓ Teachers value the focused subject-specific approach when planning.
- ✓ STEPS Grids provide guidance and support for setting targets and speaking to parents.

“This system works because it allows schools to brand it with their own individual touch that fits their own school setting, culture and ethos.”

Meena Kumari Wood, Senior Education Adviser,  
London Borough of Bexley  
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# Getting started

STEPS begins with baseline tests in Year 7 when the starting Step for each pupil is established. Pupils can then progress through the STEPS Grid for each subject. The STEPS Starter Kit has everything you need to ensure that this process runs as smoothly as possible.



STEPS Starter Kit

Each STEPS Starter Kit box includes the following components\*:



## 1. Implementation Guide

The Implementation Guide provides an overview of the programme including instructions for how to import to SIMS, supporting teachers with its seamless implementation across the whole of Key Stage 3.

## 2. Implementation CD-ROM

The CD-ROM contains an editable STEPS Grid for each subject and templates for inputting data into SIMS, videos for cascading training across the whole school and supporting documents for the delivery of Baseline Assessments.

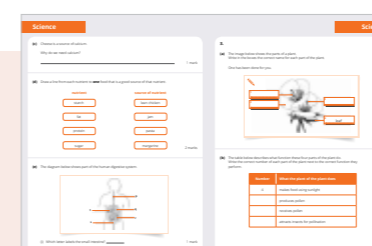


## 3. Handbook

Our Handbook is useful for sharing focused and personalised targets with parents and pupils. It includes the STEPS Grids that break down each curriculum subject into Strands and Steps.

## 4. Subject Teacher Guides x13

Subject Teacher Guides contain information about how to conduct the Baseline Assessments and establish prior learning, as well as mark schemes, STEPS Grids and ideas to support planning.



## 5. Baseline Assessments x13

A Baseline Assessment is included for each subject†. These allow teachers to make a strong interpretation of pupils' attainment in Year 7 and identify strengths and weaknesses for future teaching.

\*Contents correct at time of printing.

†There are Baseline Tests for 7 of the 13 subjects. The remaining subjects are assessed via group-based work over several lessons.

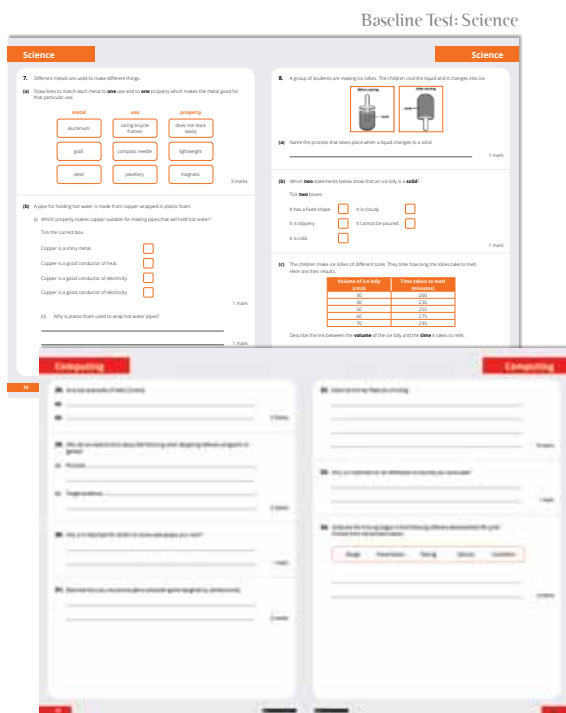
# How to buy STEPS

## STEPS Key Stage 3: Starter Kit

Our complete Starter Kit is a cost-effective assessment and progression solution for KS3, bringing everything you need together in one pack.

### STEPS Key Stage 3: Starter Kit

**EARLY BIRD OFFER**  
until 31st July 2016 **£550**



Baseline Test: Computing

Additional copies of the STEPS baseline tests for each subject will be required to effectively deliver the programme.

## STEPS Key Stage 3: Subject Test Packs

Maths      Computing      History  
Science      Geography

**£15 PER PACK** CONTAINS: 10 copies of one test paper (10 papers total)

The Test Pack for **English** is made up of three separate papers per pupil (30 papers per pack).

### English

**£45 PER PACK** CONTAINS: 10 copies of three test papers (30 papers total)

The Test Pack for **Languages** is made up of two separate papers per pupil (20 papers per pack).\*

### Languages

**£30 PER PACK** CONTAINS: 10 copies of two test papers (20 papers total)

\*Contents and price of Languages Test Pack correct at time of printing.

Web | [scholastic.co.uk/steps](http://scholastic.co.uk/steps)  
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## Book a consultant visit

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