Starting Year 7

A calm, parent-led check of the maths and English that matter for the year ahead.

Maths	**20 questions · 35 minutes**
English	**Reading, language and writing · 40 minutes**
You will need	**Pencil, ruler, paper, a quiet table**
Includes	**Answers, scoring guide and a 4-week plan**

01

Do the check

Maths first, a break, then English. No timer pressure.

02

Mark it together

Use the answer key and the strand table. Start with what worked.

03

Choose 2–3 things

Use the 4-week plan. Ten minutes, three times a week.

No app. No screen. No subscription. Print it, do it together, and use the answers to choose what to practise.

This is a conversation starter, not a test. Do it in two sittings, stop if your child is tired or upset, and use the results to choose two or three things to practise — not to label your child.

READ THIS FIRST

How to use this pack

A 65–75 minute check, done together, to find two or three things worth practising over the summer.

WHAT THIS IS

- A short, curriculum-aligned check of key maths and English skills.
- A way to start a conversation about what feels easy and what feels wobbly.
- A guide to what to practise next — with answers and a 4-week plan.

WHAT THIS IS NOT

- Not a validated diagnostic assessment.
- Not a NAPLAN paper, and not a prediction of NAPLAN results.
- Not a test to be timed, ranked or compared with other children.

> **The only rule**
>
> If your child is tired, anxious or upset, stop. A positive 20 minutes is worth more than a completed page.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. **Two sittings.** Maths first (30–35 min), then a break. English next (35–40 min).
2. **Set up.** Quiet table, pencil, ruler, scrap paper. No calculator.
3. **Read the question aloud** if needed. Say: “Have a go, then we'll look at it together.”
4. **Let them write in the spaces.** Working out matters more than a neat answer.
5. **Mark it together** using the answer key at the back. Celebrate what worked first.

HOW TO MARK IT

Give 1 mark per maths question. For English, use the answer key and the writing rubric. Then fill in the strand table on the scoring page. Use the **strand profile**, not the total score, to choose what to practise.

> **A note on “diagnostic”**
>
> This is a skills check, not a diagnosis. If you are worried about a learning difficulty, talk to your child's teacher. Do not use this pack to self-diagnose.

WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOUR CHILD IS STUCK

> **“What do you notice?”**
>
> Start with the information in the question, not the answer. “What do you know? What are you trying to find?”

> **“Have a go, then we’ll look.”**
>
> Let them attempt it. A wrong attempt is more useful than a blank page — it shows where the thinking broke down.

> **“Let’s leave it and come back.”**
>
> If frustration is rising, stop. Mark it as “not yet” and return after a break. Do not turn it into a lesson.

PRIVACY AND ATTRIBUTION

Please do not write your child's full name, school or date of birth in this pack. The optional feedback form asks for your email, your child's year level and your state — not your child's name. Data is stored in Australia and deleted after 12 months. Curriculum content descriptions are referenced from the Australian Curriculum v9.0, © ACARA, licensed CC BY 4.0. This resource is not endorsed by ACARA and is not a NAPLAN paper.

MATHS · 35 MINUTES

A · Number & Algebra (part 1 of 2)

Show your working. If you get stuck, write what you know and move on. You can come back to it.

1 −7 + 12 = _____

2 3 + 4 × 5 = _____

3 2/3 + 1/6 = _____

4 0.6 × 0.4 = _____

5 15% of 80 = _____

MATHS · 35 MINUTES

A · Number & Algebra (part 2 of 2)

Show your working. If you get stuck, write what you know and move on. You can come back to it.

6 Divide $40 in the ratio 3 : 5.

7 Simplify $4x + 3x - 2x$.

8 Solve: (a) $x + 7 = 15$ (b) $3x = 21$

9 $2^3 + 4^2 =$ _____

10 Simplify the ratio 18 : 24.

MATHS · 35 MINUTES

B · Measurement & Geometry

Show your working. If you get stuck, write what you know and move on. You can come back to it.

11 A triangle has a base of 10 cm and a height of 6 cm. What is its area?

12 A rectangular prism is 4 cm × 3 cm × 2 cm. What is its volume?

13 Two angles sit on a straight line. One is 65°. What is the other?

14 Name the quadrant of A(3, 4) and B(−2, 1).

15 A rectangle is 12 cm by 7 cm. What is its perimeter and area?

MATHS · 35 MINUTES

C · Statistics & Probability

Show your working. If you get stuck, write what you know and move on. You can come back to it.

16 Find the mean of 4, 7, 9 and 10.

17 Find the median of 3, 8, 5, 9 and 4.

18 A bag has 3 red and 2 blue marbles. What is the probability of drawing red?

19 Convert 3/8 to a decimal.

20 A pattern starts 5, 8, 11, 14. Write the next two terms and the rule.

ENGLISH · READING

INFORMATION REPORT

The Platypus: An Australian Enigma

The platypus is one of the strangest animals in the world. It has a duck-like bill, a beaver-like tail, webbed feet and fur. When European scientists first saw a preserved platypus in 1799, they thought it was a hoax. They even checked the stitching.

The platypus is a monotreme, a mammal that lays eggs. The female lays one to three eggs in a burrow near a riverbank. She curls around them to keep them warm. When the eggs hatch, the babies are tiny and helpless. They drink milk from their mother's skin.

The platypus lives in freshwater rivers and streams in eastern Australia. It uses its bill to find food. The bill is covered in receptors that detect the electrical signals made by small animals. This is called electroreception. The platypus can find yabbies, worms and insects even in muddy water.

It is a strong swimmer. It uses its front feet to paddle and its tail to steer. It can stay underwater for up to two minutes. When it dives, it closes its eyes, ears and nostrils. It relies on its bill and its sense of touch.

The platypus is shy and mostly active at dawn and dusk. It is difficult to see in the wild. Scientists use nets and cameras to study it. They also collect water samples to look for DNA.

The platypus is threatened by habitat loss, pollution and drought. Climate change is making some rivers drier. Conservation groups are working to protect riverbanks and improve water quality. The platypus is a reminder that Australia's wildlife is unique and fragile.

Words to know

monotreme
a mammal that lays eggs

electroreception
sensing the electrical signals made by other animals

enigma
a mystery or puzzle

While you read

Ask: What is the main idea? Which sentence tells you? What does the word “monotreme” mean?

Read first, then answer

Read the whole text once. Then turn the page and answer the questions. You can look back at the text as often as you like.

ENGLISH · READING QUESTIONS

The Platypus: An Australian Enigma

Answer in full sentences where you can. Use evidence from the text.

1 Why did scientists think the platypus was a hoax?

2 What is a monotreme?

3 How does the platypus find food?

4 What adaptations help the platypus swim and dive?

5 What threats does the platypus face?

6 What is the author's purpose?

7 How is the text organised?

8 What does “enigma” mean in the title?

> **Parent observation**
>
> Did your child look back at the text? Did they use evidence? Did they answer in a full sentence? Note one thing that surprised you — it is more useful than the score.

ENGLISH · READING

PERSUASIVE

Why Every School Should Have a Kitchen Garden

Every school should have a kitchen garden. It teaches students where food comes from, improves their health and brings the whole school community together.

First, a garden makes learning real. Students can measure beds, test soil, record plant growth and calculate harvests. They can write instructions, labels and recipes. A garden turns maths, science and English into something they can see and touch.

Second, a garden improves health. Many young people eat too much processed food and too little fresh produce. When students grow vegetables, they are more willing to taste them. They learn to cook simple meals and understand seasonal food.

Third, a garden builds responsibility. Students take turns watering, weeding and harvesting. They see the results of their work. This builds patience and teamwork.

Some people say gardens are expensive and take too much time. But a small garden can start with a few raised beds, donated tools and parent volunteers. The benefits are worth the effort.

A kitchen garden is not a luxury. It is a practical, hands-on way to teach students about food, health and the environment. Every school should have one.

Words to know

claim
the main point the writer wants you to accept

counter-argument
an opposing view

tone
the writer's attitude

While you read

Ask: What is the main idea? Which sentence tells you? What does the word “claim” mean?

Read first, then answer

Read the whole text once. Then turn the page and answer the questions. You can look back at the text as often as you like.

ENGLISH · READING QUESTIONS

Why Every School Should Have a Kitchen Garden

Answer in full sentences where you can. Use evidence from the text.

1 What is the writer's main claim?

2 Give two reasons the writer uses.

3 What counter-argument does the writer address?

4 How does the writer rebut the counter-argument?

5 Identify one persuasive technique and explain it.

6 What is the tone of the piece?

7 Who is the intended audience?

8 Which sentence is the strongest call to action?

> **Parent observation**
>
> Did your child look back at the text? Did they use evidence? Did they answer in a full sentence? Note one thing that surprised you — it is more useful than the score.

ENGLISH · LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Spelling, grammar and punctuation

Write the corrected word or sentence. One mark per question.

1 Correct the spelling: “enviroment”, “definately”, “seperate”.

2 Add punctuation: “the platypus which is native to australia lays eggs”

3 Add the apostrophe: “the animals habitat” and “the students work” (the work belongs to the students).

4 Choose the correct verb: “The platypus and the echidna is / are monotremes.”

5 Rewrite in the active voice: “The river was polluted by runoff.”

6 Underline the subordinate clause: “Although it was raining, the students planted the garden.”

7 Give a synonym for “fragile”.

8 What does “biodiversity” mean?

> **What to look for**
>
> Apostrophes (singular vs plural), subject–verb agreement, tense consistency, and punctuation at the start and end of sentences. If two or three of these are wrong, that is your English focus for the summer.

ENGLISH · WRITING · 25 MINUTES

Writing prompt

> **Your task**
>
> Write a persuasive piece for your school newsletter arguing that students should spend more time learning outdoors. Use at least two reasons and answer one counter-argument.

BEFORE YOU WRITE

- A clear position
- At least two reasons with evidence or examples
- One counter-argument and a response
- A strong opening and conclusion
- Paragraphs, varied sentences and correct punctuation

PARENT NOTE

Let your child plan for 3 minutes, then write for 25 minutes. Do not correct spelling during the writing. Use the rubric on the scoring page afterwards.

PLAN IT FIRST · 3 MINUTES

BEGINNING	PROBLEM / MIDDLE	ENDING

FOR PARENTS

Scoring and next steps

Use the strand profile, not the total score. A low total with one weak strand is a different problem from a low total across the board.

MATHS · 20 MARKS

STRAND	QUESTIONS	SCORE	/ TOTAL
Number & Algebra	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10		/ 10
Measurement & Geometry	11, 12, 13, 14, 15		/ 5
Statistics & Probability	16, 17, 18, 19, 20		/ 5

ENGLISH · 40 MARKS

SECTION	SCORE	/ TOTAL
Reading 1 · The Platypus		/ 8
Reading 2 · Kitchen Garden		/ 8
Language conventions		/ 8
Writing (rubric)		/ 16

WHAT THE BANDS MEAN

BAND	SCORE	WHAT TO DO
Secure	75–100%	Keep extending with richer problems and longer texts.
Developing	50–74%	Target the weakest strand with 10 minutes of practice, 3 times a week.
Needs support	Below 50%	Start with the prerequisite skill; talk to the teacher if it persists.

> **Do not over-read the total**
>
> This is a short check, not a standardised test. Use it to choose two or three things to practise — not to compare your child with others.

WRITING RUBRIC · 4 MARKS PER CRITERION

CRITERION	1 · STARTING	2 · DEVELOPING	3 · SECURE	4 · STRONG
Ideas	Idea is unclear or off topic	Idea is present but general	Clear idea with some detail	Original, well-developed idea
Structure	No clear beginning/middle/end	Some structure; weak ending	Clear beginning, middle and end	Well-paced; effective opening and ending
Vocabulary	Simple, repetitive words	Some descriptive words	Precise words; some variety	Vivid, deliberate word choice
Sentences & punctuation	Frequent errors; hard to read	Some variety; noticeable errors	Varied sentences; mostly accurate	Controlled sentences; accurate punctuation

YOUR 4-WEEK PLAN

WEEK	FOCUS	WHAT TO DO
Week 1	Number and algebra	10 minutes of integer and order-of-operations practice, 3 times; read for 20 minutes daily.
Week 2	Fractions, decimals and percentages	Use money, recipes and ratios; write three short persuasive paragraphs.
Week 3	Measurement and geometry	Measure, build and estimate; practise reading comprehension.
Week 4	Problem solving and persuasive writing	One mixed problem set; one full persuasive piece; review the checklist.

Answer key — remove these pages before giving the pack to your child.

MATHS · ANSWERS AND WORKING

Maths answer key 1 of 2

Q	ANSWER	WORKING
1	5	Start at −7 and move 12 to the right: 5.
2	23	Multiplication before addition: 4 × 5 = 20; 3 + 20 = 23.
3	5/6	2/3 = 4/6; 4/6 + 1/6 = 5/6.
4	0.24	6 × 4 = 24; two decimal places, so 0.24.
5	12	10% of 80 = 8; 5% = 4; 8 + 4 = 12.
6	$15 and $25	3 + 5 = 8 parts; $40 ÷ 8 = $5 per part; 3 × $5 = $15; 5 × $5 = $25.
7	5x	4 + 3 − 2 = 5, so 5x.
8	(a) x = 8 (b) x = 7	(a) Subtract 7 from both sides. (b) Divide both sides by 3.
9	24	$2^3 = 8$; $4^2 = 16$; 8 + 16 = 24.
10	3 : 4	Divide both parts by 6.

Answer key — remove these pages before giving the pack to your child.

MATHS · ANSWERS AND WORKING

Maths answer key 2 of 2

Q	ANSWER	WORKING
11	30 cm²	A = 1/2 × base × height = 1/2 × 10 × 6 = 30 cm².
12	24 cm³	V = length × width × height = 4 × 3 × 2 = 24 cm³.
13	115°	Angles on a straight line add to 180°; 180 − 65 = 115°.
14	A: first quadrant; B: second quadrant	A has positive x and y; B has negative x and positive y.
15	Perimeter 38 cm; area 84 cm²	P = 2 × (12 + 7) = 38 cm; A = 12 × 7 = 84 cm².
16	7.5	4 + 7 + 9 + 10 = 30; 30 ÷ 4 = 7.5.
17	5	Order: 3, 4, 5, 8, 9. The middle value is 5.
18	3/5	3 red out of 5 marbles = 3/5.
19	0.375	3 ÷ 8 = 0.375.
20	17, 20; add 3 each time	The difference is 3; 14 + 3 = 17; 17 + 3 = 20.

Common errors to watch for

Order of operations; negative numbers; common denominators; area vs perimeter; mean vs median.

Answer key — remove these pages before giving the pack to your child.

ENGLISH · ANSWERS

English answer key 1 of 2

Q	ANSWER / SAMPLE RESPONSE
R1.1	It seemed to combine parts of different animals — a duck-like bill, a beaver-like tail, webbed feet and fur — so they thought it had been stitched together.
R1.2	A mammal that lays eggs.
R1.3	It uses electroreception: receptors in its bill detect the electrical signals made by small animals.
R1.4	Webbed feet, a tail for steering, a streamlined body, and the ability to close its eyes, ears and nostrils.
R1.5	Habitat loss, pollution, drought and climate change.
R1.6	To inform and explain, and to raise awareness of the platypus and its conservation.
R1.7	Introduction; what a monotreme is; habitat and feeding; swimming; behaviour; threats and conclusion.
R1.8	A mystery or puzzle — something difficult to understand.
R2.1	Every school should have a kitchen garden.
R2.2	It makes learning real; it improves health; it builds responsibility (any two).
R2.3	That gardens are expensive and take too much time.
R2.4	A small garden can start with a few raised beds, donated tools and parent volunteers.

Answer key — remove these pages before giving the pack to your child.

ENGLISH · ANSWERS

English answer key 2 of 2

Q	ANSWER / SAMPLE RESPONSE
R2.5	Rule of three (“where food comes from, improves their health, brings the community together”); emotive language (“not a luxury”); direct call to action; repetition of “every school”.
R2.6	Confident, persuasive and practical.
R2.7	School leaders, parents and the school community.
R2.8	“Every school should have one.”
L1	environment, definitely, separate
L2	The platypus, which is native to Australia, lays eggs.
L3	the animal's habitat; the students' work
L4	are
L5	Runoff polluted the river.
L6	Although it was raining
L7	delicate, vulnerable, easily damaged
L8	The variety of living things in a place.

Marking tips

Read the piece aloud once. Do not correct every spelling — focus on the four rubric criteria. A strong Year 5/7 response has a clear idea, paragraphs, varied sentences and accurate basic punctuation.

WRITING · PARENT RUBRIC

Read the piece once for meaning, then once for accuracy. Give 1–4 for each criterion. A total of 10–16 is strong for a first draft; 6–9 is developing; below 6 suggests a focus on sentence structure and paragraphing.

WHAT A STRONG RESPONSE LOOKS LIKE

Students should spend more time learning outdoors. First, outdoor lessons make abstract ideas concrete: measuring a garden bed teaches area and perimeter far better than a worksheet. Second, time outside improves focus and wellbeing, especially for students who struggle to sit still. Some teachers worry about lost lesson time, but a well-planned 20-minute outdoor task can cover the same content. Schools should timetable one outdoor lesson a week.

OPTIONAL NEXT STEP

Want us to mark it and send a plan?

We will mark the maths and English, identify two or three priorities, and send a 2–3 page personalised report with a 4-week plan.

The A$29 report

- Marked maths and English, with strand profile.
- Two or three priorities — not a list of everything.
- A 4-week plan you can actually do at home.
- 48-hour turnaround during January.

Scan to request the report
or visit `startingyear.com.au` and choose Year 7

Opens the report request form.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

This is v0.1. Your feedback shapes v0.2. Three questions:

1. What worked well?
2. What was confusing or too hard?
3. Would you pay A$29 for a marked report and plan? Why / why not?

Email `hello@startingyear.com.au` or use the QR form.

Privacy

We collect your email, your child's year level and your state. We do not collect your child's name, school or date of birth. Data is stored in Australia and deleted after 12 months.

HOW IT WORKS

01
Send the answers
A photo or scan of the completed pages is fine. No need to post anything.

02
We mark it
Maths, reading, language and writing, using the same guide in this pack.

03
Get the plan
A 2–3 page report and a 4-week plan within 48 hours.

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