

TASK MARKING AT JRCS

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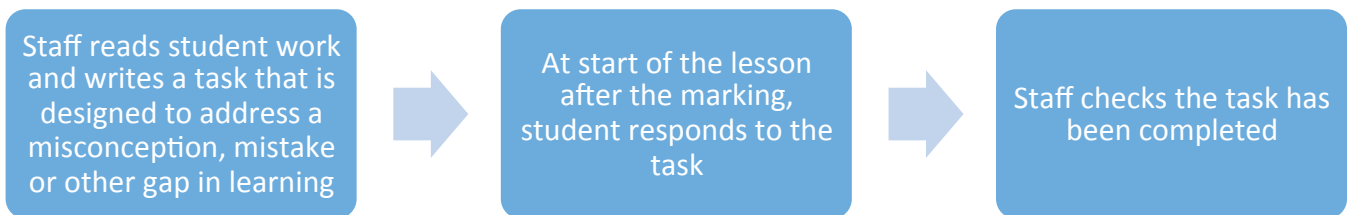
Task marking at JRCS

The purpose of this document is to support staff in our core departments so we:

- Are clear about the nature and purpose of task marking
- Can draw on best practice from across the core departments to improve personal practice
- Have consistency in approach and outcome across English, maths and science

What is the purpose of task marking?

The key purpose of task marking is to identify where a student's work could be improved and support them in making that improvement:



What kind of marking is task marking?

The key feature of task marking is that it is a specific task that students complete in their books that improves the learning that they have already done. It should not be new work or extension work. It should be focused on making sure that gaps in the learning that have occurred in class are closed.

Task marking would commonly take one of the following forms:

- *The reminder prompt* – this is simply a reiteration of the learning objective and is most suited to higher attaining students. (e.g. Say more about saturation. Learning objective: to understand saturation point)
- *The scaffolded prompt* – involves the teacher giving examples and ideas as words or phrases and is suited to most students. (Say more about saturation. How much salt was used? How did you know saturation had been reached? When exactly was it reached?)
- *The example prompt* – is particularly supportive of lower attaining students – it involves the teacher giving exact models of what the student might write and the student is invited to choose one of these or to then write their own example. (Choose one of these statements and/or create your own: Harold was unlucky because he had fought another battle against Norwegians OR Harold had a lot of bad luck particularly having to fight William soon after the Battle of Stamford bridge)
- *Responding to literacy marking* – the most helpful practice here is to highlight one or two paragraphs / pages worth of literacy errors using the literacy marking code. Students then correct the mistakes with purple pen and then check the rest of their work for similar errors.

In the book they might look like:

- “TASK: Re-write the highlighted paragraph / diagram / chart / making the following changes.....”
- “TASK: Correct the highlighted literacy mistakes” “Re-write the misspelled words three times”
- “T: Have another go at the highlighted question and include specific data”
- “T: Make corrections where highlighted”

What is not task marking?

Not extension: Task marking should be about closing the gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding that book work suggests exist. It is not about setting extension activities. It should not be new learning. If the task being set is new learning then it is not really marking but, rather, teaching new content by writing in books.

Not comments: Task marking does not include making general comments on work, such as “you should use more key terms” or “you need to show workings”*. Also, if positive comments are written on work, it would be worth getting students to record them in the “what I did well” part of their reflection sheets, otherwise it’s very hard to know whether they have read them.

*Both of these would be fine if they were phrased and set out as tasks, e.g. “TASK: Re-write the first paragraph, adding four key terms in purple”.

How often should we be task marking?

Student books should be thoroughly marked by staff once every six hours of teaching. Not all work should be task marked; normally it would be one or two identified pieces of work. It is likely that there would be examples of self / peer assessment in that time, also. At least one piece of work should also be marked for literacy and responded to by students.

When and how do students respond?

Student response should come at the start of the first lesson after the marking occurs. It is helpful if the student response is clearly differentiated from class work. (This is especially true if a couple of lessons have passed between the original work being produced and the marking). A good idea is to get students to leave a space under the original piece of work for the task. Students should label the response “Response to task marking” or something similar and complete the response in green pen. Staff should then show they have checked the work, although further detailed marking is not required. Stamps are good here, or a signature and date.

How do we set tasks out?

It should be clear that the task marking is a task, and not general comments etc. Some ways that this is done successfully is to write “TASK:” before the task or to put a “T” in a circle before it. In some departments they are highlighted, too. Tasks should be expressed as an instruction, not as a question.

What if the work over the previous six lessons is all correct – there are no gaps to close?

If this is the case then the work is too easy for the student. It is worth revisiting the SOW and lesson plans to make sure that all students are finding work hard. Students at JRCS should not be getting all their work right the first time.

What if the students have not done that much work?

Students should be doing lots of writing in their books. Content does need to be delivered to students and worksheets / handouts are sometimes needed to do this. These should clearly be responded to or interacted with by students though. This might be in the form of annotations, highlighting or summarising key points.