

## A Guide to Sitting Our Durham CEM-Style Mock 11+ Papers at Home

Here are a few Q&As to make sure your child has the best exam experience possible. Please read this guide before your child completes our mock exam papers.

### **When should my child sit 11+ mock exam papers?**

The answer to this differs depending on each child. If your child is working above their expected level in Year 5, they can start with practice papers from September of Year 5 onward (although we would recommend waiting until January). However, please ensure that you set your expectations accordingly in this case. Your child is unlikely pass a mock exam with flying colours before they have done much preparation, and it will likely take some practice for them to improve. Confidence is important, so it's often best to wait until your child feels more prepared to tackle a full paper.

As a rule, we suggest that full mock exams are best left until the spring or summer of Year 5. This will ensure they've covered the topics at school and in their FSL 11+ Online preparation work.

Before then, you can of course give your child practice papers to complete untimed, as this will familiarise them with the exam without doing too much too soon. You could also encourage them to complete the papers earlier in the school year, then again later in the school year as a way to gauge improvement.

### **What is the format of the exam?**

Each mock exam consists of two papers (Paper 1 and Paper 2). Both papers contain a mix of English, Verbal Reasoning, Maths, and Non-Verbal Reasoning. Once both papers have been completed, your child's marks will be added together to make their final score.

### **Is it multiple choice?**

Yes, Durham CEM exams almost always use the multiple choice format. Your child should use the multiple choice answer sheets provided with our mock exams to ensure that they're familiar with the format by the time they sit the real exam. If you're in a region where the exam is not multiple choice, however, your child can fill out the answers in the spaces provided on the question papers.

### **Should my child sit both exam papers on the same day?**

If possible, yes. In most regions, children will sit both papers on the same day with a short break (no more than half an hour) in between. If your schedule doesn't allow for your child to sit both mock papers in one day, however, don't worry. Sitting them on different days is unlikely to alter your child's final score by too much.

### **How does the timing work?**

Most Durham CEM 11+ exams consist of different sections that are individually timed, so we have created our mock exams in the same format.

**Timing:** Use the audio instruction guide provided to help you. Make sure the audio track you have corresponds to the correct paper, then press play when your child is ready to begin. The audio track will guide them through, and will offer time at the beginning to fill in their name and read the instructions on the front of the paper. The audio guide will tell them when to start each section, and will give halfway warnings where appropriate. Instructions for each section are also clearly marked on the question paper. Your child will also be given separate time to read the example questions.

### **What does my child need to complete the mocks?**

1. A quiet environment. Try to make sure you have at least a couple of hours set aside where your child is unlikely to be disturbed.
2. The question paper (make sure the child has the correct one in front of them).
3. The multiple choice answer sheet (unless your child will be filling in their answers directly on the question paper). Make sure you have the correct answer sheet to go with the question paper - they are clearly labelled at the top).
4. The audio guide.
5. A couple of sharp pencils, an eraser, and a drink if you feel they'll need it.

### **How do I mark my child's papers?**

Your child should have filled out all their answers on the multiple choice answer sheet, so you should mark this using the answers provided for each paper. Once you've done so, consult the score guide provided to help you work out their percentage scores. The score guide provides guidance on performance, average scores, and how your child can improve for next time.