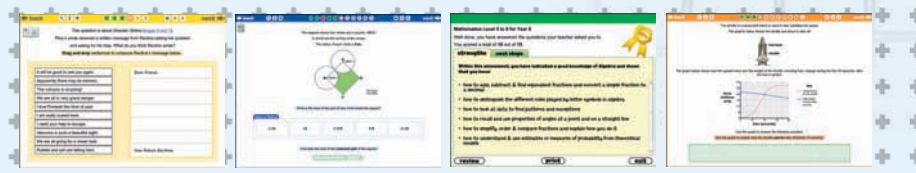


# Alfie

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Imagine all the hours you have spent photocopying test papers over the years. Think of the enormous cost; think of the trees! Well, we can now put that all behind us, save a lot of time and money, and do our bit for the planet, too, by investing in computer-based testing such as Alfie (Assessing Learning for Informed Education).

Alfie is an award-winning assessment tool and the only online digitised source of QCDA questions and tests in English, maths and science. These are computer marked and provide instant analysis for helping to map pupils' progress, giving formative and diagnostic information about a student's strengths and weaknesses and helping to contribute towards personalised learning and progress targets. Alfie contains QCDA tests and items from 2000-2011, generating

accurate national curriculum levels and sub-levels at topic, strand and whole paper level. The 8,500+ questions have been reviewed and updated for 2012 to ensure tests are mapped to the current curriculum and level descriptions. The font size and colour of the questions can be altered and there is audio for levels 2-5 in maths with more planned for other levels and other subjects.

From a learner's point of view, an Alfie test gives you feedback straight away because it marks itself – saving a lot of worry and helping with motivation. From a teacher's perspective the system is incredibly efficient and will save hours of valuable time that you can use instead for planning, resource building and purposeful intervention.

The unique selling point of Alfie isn't about being cheaper or more efficient – marvellous though those two things are for your budget and for your weekends. Alfie's real USP relates to the incredible level of data analysis it has to offer and the excellent exhaustive insights into pupil performance you have in an instant. If you generate a report from a test you can see in splendid detail a student's strengths, weaknesses and next steps both graphically and numerically. The reports show comparisons by boy/girl, free-school meal, questions, strands, and attainment targets, allowing you accurately to scrutinise individual pupil and group performance in specific curriculum areas, and track progress. Using Alfie tests will enable you to make regular reviews of and refinements to targets and teaching with real vision because the identification of knowledge and understanding gaps is obvious. The data analysis generated by Alfie tests can be reviewed and manipulated in Excel as well as being easily transferred to analytical and tracking software such as SIMS Assessment Manager at the click of a button.

Alfie tests can be taken at home too so that parents can see what progress their children are making and what levels they are working at, helping them to offer extra support outside of the classroom. The tests could be used formatively, as well summarively, as required.

But what are the concerns? The flip side of using a computer-based system is that you



might not get the full picture, because pencil and paper tests can demonstrate working out in ways that a computer can't. If I want to see different attempts, crossings out and potential thought processes, then a digitised test won't necessarily show method marks. Whether there is a method mark or not, I need to see how someone might be thinking and what steps they might be taking and so to ditch paper-based methods completely would be a mistake. This means you will still have to mark work, sorry. Further to this, although a computer interface offers a rich experience for some because graphics can be manipulated, not all pupils like taking a test via a computer screen.

Want to know more? You can sign up for a free edition or arrange for a full pilot and find out more about pricing (which works out a lot cheaper than photocopying). There is also a fantastic range of training options available to enable you to get the most out of this very exciting assessment tool

## FAR OUT!

Rock UK Adventure Centres Ltd is a Christian charity that has been providing exciting outdoor adventure for 90 years through its UK venues, and inspiring UK and worldwide expeditions and charity challenges through Trailblazers. The organisation offers your school fun and exciting residential and day activity trips with programmes designed to bring out the best in every child. Bespoke programmes encourage high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities and can help develop communication skills and social interaction with teachers and peers. Everyone remembers their school trip and Rock UK create memories for life (Rock UK, 0844 8000 222, adventures.rockuk.org)



**VERDICT:**  
*Passes the test*  
 When applying the four principles of best value, Alfie comes out as a clear winner – it's easy to install, slick to use, saves time and a lot of money but more importantly, offers high quality data analysis.