

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling



Glossary of Terms

Terminology	Definition
Abstract Noun	A feeling or concept which cannot be touched, e.g. <i>love, hate, happiness, education, freedom, democracy, anger, liberty, generosity.</i>
Active Voice	A sentence is written in the active voice when the subject of the sentence is performing the action, e.g. <i>The cat chased the mouse.</i>
Adjective	A word which is used to describe and give more information about the noun, e.g. <i>beautiful, angelic, adorable, athletic, proud, thoughtless.</i>
Adverb	A word which describes how a verb action is being carried out. It will tell you how, when, where or why something is being done, e.g. <i>quickly, silently, unbelievable, swiftly, never, once, everywhere.</i>
Adverbial Phrase	A phrase built around the adverb, e.g. <i>as quickly as possible, quite slowly, at first sight, as a consequence.</i>
Ambiguity	A sentence where ambiguity is included means that it could be open to more than one meaning, e.g. <i>I saw bats, I saw her duck, the chicken is ready to eat.</i>
Antonym	A word with the opposite meaning to another, e.g. <i>big/small, good/bad, hot/cold.</i>
Apostrophe	Punctuation marks used to show possession or to represent missing letters in the contracted form, e.g. <i>it's, we'll, I'll, Ben's.</i>
Articles	Words which tell us if a noun is general (any noun) or specific. There are three articles. The indefinite articles are 'a' and 'an' which refer to general nouns, e.g. <i>A penguin eats fish.</i> 'The' is the definite article which refers to specific nouns, e.g. <i>The boy's shirt is white.</i>
Auxiliary Verb	A verb which forms the tense, mood and voice of other verbs, <i>be, do</i> and <i>have</i> plus the modal verbs.
Brackets ()	A punctuation mark used to set a word or phrase aside from the rest of the sentence, this is also known as parenthesis, e.g. <i>My friend Sally (who is three months older than me) is coming to my house tonight.</i> This is a non-essential part of the sentence.
Bullet Points	A way of setting information out in a list of points, these may be phrases, words or short sentences. If the list is headed with a colon, use a semi colon and lower case for each bullet point. If a subheading is used before the list, then no punctuation is needed. If you are writing statements then a capital letter and full stop should be used for each point.
Capital Letter	Used at the beginning of a sentence or for a proper noun. They may also be used at the beginning of important words in a sign, e.g. <i>Stay Out</i>

Clause	Clauses are the building blocks of sentences. They are a group of words that contain a subject and a verb and can be main or subordinate.
Cohesion	A sentence will have cohesion if all of the parts fit together, e.g. if tenses and pronouns are consistent and determiners refer to the correct noun.
Collective Noun	A noun which refers to a group of people, animals or things, e.g. <i>a herd of horses, a pride of lions, fleet of ships, pack of cards.</i>
Colon :	A punctuation mark that can be used to introduce a list, e.g. <i>I need to pack in my suitcase: sun lotion, swim costume and a towel.</i> It is also used in a sentence to separate two independent but linked clauses.
Comma ,	A punctuation mark used to separate items in a list, to mark a light break between different parts of the sentence or to separate clauses in order to reduce ambiguity.
Command	A type of sentence which instructs or orders an action to take place. Contains an imperative verb, e.g. <i>Close the door. Eat you dinner.</i>
Common Exception Word	A word which does not follow the common phonetic spelling rules, e.g. <i>any, because, climb.</i>
Common Noun	Describes a class of objects, e.g. <i>pencil, table, dog</i> and does not have a capital letter.
Comparative	The comparative form of an adjective or adverb is used to compare one person, thing, action or state to another, e.g. <i>sadder, lighter, more famous, worse</i> 'My cake is big but hers is bigger.' The comparative is usually formed by adding the suffix <i>-er</i> .
Complex Sentence	A complex sentence is formed when a main clause and a subordinate clause are joined using a subordinating conjunctions. They can also be called multi-clause sentences, e.g. <i>I burned dinner when I was on the phone.</i>
Compound Sentence	A compound sentence is formed by joining two main clauses with a connective, e.g. <i>I like meat but my friend is a vegetarian.</i>
Compound Word	A combination of two or more individual words that have a single meaning, e.g. <i>carwash, football, sunflower.</i>
Concrete Noun	Something you can touch such as a person, an animal, a place or a thing. They can be common nouns, e.g. <i>man, film, city</i> or they can be proper nouns, e.g. <i>Mrs Bell, The Twits.</i>
Conjunction	A type of connective that joins clauses. Co-ordinating conjunctions include <i>and, but, so.</i> Subordinating conjunctions include <i>because, if, until.</i>
Connective	Any word which joins one bit of text to another. Connectives can be conjunctions, prepositions and adverbs.
Contracted Form	These are short words made by putting two words together and omitting some letters which are replaced with an apostrophe, e.g. <i>didn't.</i>
Co-ordinating Conjunction	A conjunction which joins two main clauses to create a compound sentence, e.g. <i>for, and, now, but, or, yet, so.</i>

Dash -	A versatile punctuation mark that can be used within a sentence instead of brackets or a colon as parenthesis to set information apart, e.g. <i>My three friends – Jack, Sam and Luke – are coming to my house for tea.</i>
Determiner	A determiner is a word that introduces a noun and identifies it in detail. <i>Determiners can be articles, (a, an the), a demonstrative (this, that), possessive (your, my) a quantifier (some, many) or a number (six, ten, half.)</i>
Digraph	A sound represented by two letters, e.g. <i>ee, th.</i>
Direct and Indirect Speech	Direct speech is a sentence in which the exact words spoken are reproduced in speech marks (inverted commas) e.g. <i>“Tidy your room, please,” said Mum.</i> Indirect or reported speech is when the general points of what someone has said are reported, without actually writing the speech out in full. Speech marks are not used, e.g. <i>‘Mum told us to tidy our rooms.’</i>
Ellipsis ...	Three dots which are used to show missing words or to create a pause for effect, e.g. <i>So ... tell me what happened.</i>
Embedded Clause	A clause used in the middle of another clause and usually marked by commas, e.g. <i>The man, walking along with his dog, whistled a tune to himself.</i>
Etymology	The origin of words and how they have changed over time.
Exclamation Mark !	A punctuation mark used at the end of an exclamation sentence, e.g. <i>What a day we have had!</i>
Exclamation Sentence	A forceful sentence which expresses high levels of emotion or excitement, e.g. <i>How cold it is today!</i>
First Person	A sentence written in the first person is if it is written from the point of view of the subject, i.e. using the pronouns I or we.
Formal Speech	A type of speech or writing used in formal, serious texts and situations, e.g. a letter of complaint.
Fronted Adverbial	Are words or phrases at the beginning of a sentence that are used like adverbs to describe the action that follows, e.g. <i>With a happy smile, she skipped into the room.</i>
Full Stop .	A punctuation mark used to demarcate the end of a statement or command.
Future Tense	A verb tense which describes actions that are going to take place in the future, often using the auxiliary verb ‘will.’ E.g. <i>Tomorrow I will go to the dentist.</i>
Grapheme	A letter or string of letters that represents spoken sound.
Homophone	Are words that sound the same but have different meanings. Some homophone are pronounced the same way but have different spellings, e.g. <i>their, there, they’re.</i> Some are spelled the same way but have different meanings, e.g. <i>Let’s go to the fair, That’s not fair.</i>
Hyphen -	A punctuation mark used to link and join words, often used to reduce ambiguity in sentences, e.g. <i>man-eating, long-legged, mother-in-law.</i>
Imperative Verb	A verb that tells someone to do something so that the sentence it is in becomes an order or command.

Inverted Commas	Punctuation marks used to demarcate direct speech in a sentence, also previously known as speech marks prior to 2014 curriculum.
Main Clause	The leading clause in a sentence which indicates the main subject and action of the sentence. It can stand alone and make sense without any additional clauses, e.g. <i>I will still go for a walk.</i>
Modal Verb	A type of verb which changes or affects other verbs in a sentence. They are used to show the level of possibility e.g. <i>I might have pizza for tea</i> , indicate ability e.g. <i>You can ride a bike now</i> , show obligation e.g. <i>You should do your homework</i> or give permission e.g. <i>You may go out now.</i>
Morphology	The study of words, how they are formed and their relationship to other words in the same language, e.g. <i>knowing that medicine, medical and paramedic all share a common root.</i>
Noun	A naming word for things, animals, people, places and feelings. Can be common, proper, concrete, abstract or collective.
Noun Phrase	A small group of words that does not contain a verb. A noun phrase includes contains a noun plus words to describe it, e.g. <i>the furry, ginger cat.</i>
Object	The object in a sentence is the thing or person that is involved in an action, but does not carry it out, e.g. <i>The cat chased the mouse.</i>
Paragraph	A section of a piece of writing which usually has a single theme. It is indicated by starting a new line or indenting the start of the first sentence.
Parenthesis	Is a word, phrase or clause inserted into a sentence to add extra, subordinate or clarifying information.
Passive Voice	A sentence written in the passive voice is when the subject is having something done to it, e.g. <i>The mouse was chased by the cat.</i>
Past Progressive Tense	Also known as the past continuous tense is a form of the past tense where something goes on for a period of time in the past, .g. <i>I was walking in the park.</i> It usually is formed by adding the suffix -ing to a verb.
Past Tense	Any one of a set of verb tenses which describe an action which took place in the past, e.g. <i>I went to the shops.</i>
Phrase	A small group of words that does not contain a verb.
Plural	A plural word indicates that there is more than one. Using plurals can affect the nouns and verbs in a sentence.
Phoneme	A sound which makes up all or part of a word, e.g. <i>light l-igh-t</i>
Personal Pronoun	Is a word which can be used instead of a person, place or thing, e.g. <i>I, you, he, she, we, they, it, me, him, her, us, them.</i>
Possessive Pronoun	A pronoun which is used to show ownership. Some can be used on the own, e.g. <i>mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs</i> whilst others need to be attached to a noun, e.g. <i>my, your, her, our, their, whose.</i>

Prefix	A prefix is a string of letters that go in front of a root word and change its meaning, e.g. <i>happy/unhappy, appear/disappear.</i>
Preposition	A linking word in a sentence, prepositions explain where things are in time and space, e.g. <i>under, beside, next to, under.</i>
Prepositional Phrase	A phrase which contains a preposition but has no verbs, e.g. <i>under the mat, behind the door, after school.</i>
Present Perfect Tense	The tense which describes actions that are completed at an unspecified time before this moment, e.g. <i>I have cycled two miles already.</i>
Present Progressive Tense	A tense which describes an action which began in the past and is still going on now, e.g. <i>I am learning to speak Spanish.</i>
Present Tense	Any one of a set of tenses that describe actions which are happening now
Pronoun	Any word which can be used to replace a noun.
Question ?	A type of sentence which asks a question. It either begins with one of the questions words <i>who, what, where, when, how why</i> or reverses the pronoun/noun/verb order in a statement, e.g. <i>Sarah is washing the dishes becomes Is Sarah washing the dishes?</i>
Question Mark ?	A punctuation mark which indicates a question and comes at the end of the sentence in place of the full stop.
Relative Clause	A relative clause is a type of subordinate clause that adapts, describes or modifies a noun by using a relative pronoun, e.g. <i>who, which, that. He ate too many cakes, which made him feel ill. The old man, who sat at a beautiful antique piano, began to tenderly tap the keys.</i>
Root Word	A basic word with no prefix or suffix added to it. Adding prefixes and suffixes will change the meaning of the word, e.g. <i>act, art, graph.</i>
Second Person	A sentence is written in the second person if it is written from the point of view of a person being spoken to, i.e. using the pronoun <i>you.</i>
Semi Colon ;	A semi colon is a punctuation mark that is used to separate two closely related independent clauses, e.g. <i>My car is red; my friend's car is blue.</i>
Simple Sentence	A simple sentence has a subject and one verb
Singular	When a noun is singular, it means there is only one person, place or object.
Speech Marks “ “	Punctuation mark used to demarcate direct speech in a sentence.
Split Digraph	A digraph that is split by a consonant. Usually represent long vowel sounds, e.g. <i>a - e in cake, i - e five, o - e code.</i>
Statement	A sentence that conveys a simple piece of information, e.g. <i>It is raining today.</i>
Subject	The subject of a sentence is the thing or person who is carrying out the action, e.g. <i>The cat drank the milk.</i>

Subjunctive Form	The subjunctive is a verb form used to express things that could or should happen, e.g. <i>If I <u>were</u> a boy.</i>
Subordinate Clause	A subordinate clause needs to be attached to the main clause otherwise it will not make sense on its own, e.g. <i>I take my dog to the park every day, even though <u>sometimes it is raining.</u></i>
Subordinating Conjunction	A conjunction that connects a main clause to a subordinate clause, e.g. <i>because, until, when, as, since, whereas, even though.</i>
Suffix	A string of letters that go at the end of a root word, changing or adding to its meaning. Suffixes can also show if a word is a noun, verb, adjective or adverb.
Superlative	A form of an adjective or adverb that is used to compare one person, thing, action or state to the others in its class. It is usually formed by adding the suffix <i>-est</i> or the word 'most,' e.g. <i>Lucy ran <u>fastest</u> on Sports Day. I am hungry, but my brother is <u>hungrier.</u></i>
Synonym	A word which has the exact or almost exact and near meaning as another word, e.g. <i>terrible/horrible, large/huge, hot/boiling.</i>
Third Person	A sentence written in the third person is in the point of view of a person being spoken about, e.g. <i>he, she, it, they.</i>
Time Connective	Words or phrases which tell the reader when something is happening, e.g. <i><u>After</u> dinner, you must do your homework. <u>Later on,</u> you can play.</i>
Trigraph	A string of three letters which make a single sound, e.g. <i>igh.</i>
Verb	A word used to describe an action, occurrence or state. It is an important part of a sentence which helps it to make sense.
Vowel	The letters a, e, i, o, u.
Word Family	A group of words which may share a common root word or morphology, e.g. <i>happy, unhappy, happiness, happily, unhappily.</i>