Grammar Terminology

at

Woodhouse West Primary School

Parts of Speech

Words in the English language can be classified into parts of speech according to the function they perform in the sentence. We also call these word classes.

Verb– this expresses an action. It is a *doing* word (to run, to love, to eat)

Verb tense- this tells us about time…when the action happened.

- Past tense – He remembered the book.
  - **Simple past tense** - He walked into the monster's cave
  - **Past progressive (continuous)** - He was walking into the monster's cave
  - **Past perfect** - He had walked into the monster's cave
- Future tense - Next year I will go to Outwood Academy City
  - **Simple future** - He will walk into the monster's cave
  - **Future progressive (continuous)** - He will be walking into the monster's cave
  - **Future perfect** - He will have walked into the monsters cave
- Present tense - I live in Sheffield
  - **Simple present** – He walks into the monster's cave
  - **Present progressive (continuous)** - He is walking into the monster's cave
  - **Present perfect** - He has walked into the monster's cave

Imperative verbs – give commands e.g. add the hot water, ***chop*** the cucumber, ***feed*** your hamster, ***stir*** the mixture.

The subjunctive is a verb form or mood used to express things that could or should happen. It is used to express wishes, hopes, commands, demands or suggestions. For example:

- *If I were you, I'd accept.*
- *I suggested he take a rain coat.*

The **subjunctive** is the same as the (indicative) verbs we use in almost every case, but it is different in the third person singular and when using the verb to be. For the subjunctive we remove the final s at the end of the verb, so:

I request that he write to her (instead of he writes to her)

Modal verbs - Modal verbs change or affect other verbs in a sentence. They are used to show the level of possibility, indicate ability, show obligation or give permission. Modal verbs behave differently to 'ordinary' verbs:

- *It might rain tomorrow.*
- *"I shall go to the ball!" said Cinderella.*
- *We will have fish and chips for tea.*

Parts of Speech

Noun – a thing or item…such as…a person, place or idea (*table, Sam, Sheffield, fear)*.

- **Concrete nouns** are things you can touch or observe with your senses, e.g. *chair, town, bicycle*
- **Abstract nouns** are ideas or concepts, e.g. sadness, hatred, boredom
- **Proper nouns** are the names of specific things – individual things! The names of particular places, things and people are the most common examples of proper nouns ,
    - e.g. Joshua, Hallam, January, Christmas, Monday
- **Common nouns** are just ordinary things, e.g. dog, city, month, boy, day, country

Adjective – tells you about a noun… describing words.

- The ***wooden*** table
- The sky was ***blue***
- The ***hairy*** monkey

Adverb – describes how a verb is done – when, where or how it happens; they often end in the suffix "- ly".

- She ran ***quickly***.
- Dan ate ***greedily***.
- ***Suddenly***, he disappeared.

Pronoun – a word that stands in for a noun (*I, he, she, it, they, we, you).*

- Sarah ran for the bus - can *be* … She ran for the bus.

Preposition – a word to do with place or position - (*to, under, behind, in, outside).*

Conjunction – a word that connects together words, sentences, phrases, or clauses. They used to be called connectives - (*and, or, so, then, therefore, however, because)*.

- Thomas fell over; *however*, he got up to come second in the race.
- Natasha stayed with her sheep *because* they were afraid of the foxes.

Interjection - a part of a sentence that stands alone and expresses a strong emotion or reaction – *Ouch! Hello! What? Excuse me!*

Determiner – a determiner is a word that introduces a noun, such as … *a/an, the, this, those, every, many).* **Examples:**

- a cat;
- the cat;
- this cat;
- those cats;
- every cat;
- many cats.

Parts of Speech

The determiner the… is known as the **definite article** and the determiner a (or an)… as the **indefinite article**.

Possessive determiners – words like… my, our, your, his, her, its and their… are known as possessive determiners. They come before nouns and are sometimes known as possessive pronouns.

• *My* leg hurts.

• Hassan swapped *his* bike.

• Take *your* children to the zoo.

Sentences, phrases and clauses

What is a sentence?

A sentence is a group of words that make complete sense. It must contain a main verb and begin with a capital letter. It ends in a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

Examples:

• James plays tennis.

• Lily likes acting on stage.

• Oliver walked down the hill and into town.

Almost all of your work will be written in sentences.

Breaking the rules for effect!

Sometimes when writing you might find the need to break the rules to get an interesting effect.

Examples:

- The room was a complete bomb blast! UTTER CHAOS!
- This was a soldier. A machine. A unit of fear!
- It was a steady beating… thud, thud, thud! The rhythm of a heart.

It should always be clear that this is being done for effect and not an error in your work.

What is a clause?

A **clause** is a group of words containing a verb, which makes up part of a sentence.

Examples:

• *They arrived early because everyone was really excited.*

*= two clauses: 1. 'they **arrived** early,' 2. 'because everyone was really **excited**.'*

Sentences, phrases and clauses

- *The man wanted to sneeze and he got his handkerchief out.*

  *= two clauses: 1 'the man **wanted** to sneeze,' 2 'and **got** his handkerchief **out**'*

NOTE: every clause has a verb … 'arrived', 'excited', 'wanted', 'got out.'

Types of clause: Clauses can be put into two types:

1) **Independent or main** clauses – these make sense on their own and have a subject and a verb in them;
2) **Subordinate** clauses – these need another part of the sentence to make sense.

Examples:

1. **Independent or main clauses:**

- *It was hot.*
- *I eat a lot of bread.*
- *This tree is very old.*

2. **Subordinate clauses:**

- *Because of the amount of rain we've had.*
- *Even though they were really keen to start.*
- *Running down the hill.*

Types of sentences: We classify sentences *according* to the number and types of clauses that are present. There are three types of sentences.

1. **Simple sentences:** These have just one main clause in them.

Examples:

- *The shops are on the other street.*
- *We often go to France.*

2. **Compound sentences:** These have two or more clauses in them, all of them being main clauses. The clauses are joined together by **conjunctions** like **and, or, so** and **but**

Examples:

- *The rain has been heavy and we have decided not to go out.*
- *The child in the green shirt won the race but, her horse was bigger than the rest.*

3. **Complex sentences:** These have two or more clauses in them and are a mixture main clauses and sub-ordinate clauses.

Examples:

- *If you'd like to learn to play guitar this term, you will need to sign up for lessons.*
- *Teachers often spend whole evenings marking, even when they are very tired.*

Sentences, phrases and clauses

Phrases: A phrase is a small group of words that forms a meaningful part of a clause. There are several different types, as follows:

Noun phrase and expanded noun phrases - A noun phrase is built around a single noun.

Examples:

- ***A vase of roses*** *stood on the table.*
- *She was reading* ***a book about football****.*

Verb phrase - A verb phrase is the verbal part of a clause.

Examples:

- *She* ***had been living*** *in London.*
- *I* ***will be going on holiday*** *next year.*

Adjective phrase - An adjective phrase is built around an adjective.

Examples:

He's led a ***very interesting*** *life.*

A lot of the girls are ***really keen*** *on football.*

Adverbial phrase - An adverbial phrase is built round an adverb by adding words before and/or after it.

Examples:

- *The tortoise ran* ***very slowly****.*
- *They wanted to leave the country* ***as fast as possible****.*

Prepositional phrase - In a prepositional phrase the preposition always comes at the beginning.

Examples:

- *I wanted to live* ***near the sea****.*
- *The dog was hiding* ***under the kitchen table****.*

Capital Letters

Capital letters at the start of sentences:

Every sentence should start with a capital letter. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Capital letters for proper nouns and Names: We give capital letters to any proper noun. This means the actual name of something or someone. We give capitals to all the main words that are part of the name.

Examples:

- Harry Potter;
- Woodhouse West Primary School;
- Sheffield;
- Christmas;
- Monday 16th January.

Capital letters for titles: We give capital letters to all the main words in titles, including in books, films, and pieces of work. Small words (such as of, the, a, an) are not given capitals unless they are the first word of the title.

Examples:

- The History of Sheffield;
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory;
- The Prince of Wales;
- The Return of the Jedi;
- The Uses of Capital Letters.

Abbreviations: When you abbreviate a word, you should use capitals

Examples:

- *GCSE;*
- *TV;*
- *BBC;*
- *SWFC;*

The pronoun 'I': Whenever you use the pronoun 'I' to represent yourself, you must use a capital. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Capital Letters

Common confusions:

1. **Common nouns used as names**. People are often tempted to write 'My Mum' or 'My Dog', thinking that it is a proper noun. However, 'mum' and 'dog' are not their names and so you should not use a capital letter.

The exception to this is if or when the common noun is used as their name.

Examples:

- *I loved the way that Mum was always laughing***.**
- *We named him Dog because we couldn't think of another name for him.*

2. **Importance**. Some people are tempted to use capital letters just to suggest that something is important.

Examples:

- *You must always do your Homework*.
- *At the school, Football is a popular sport.*

  This is wrong. Football and Homework are not proper nouns and should not have capital letters.

Commas

The comma is a much-misused piece of punctuation. This is partly because there are several different situations in which the comma is the correct piece of punctuation to use. The trick is to identify those situations so as not to use the comma in places where it really should not be.

The following are some of the situations in which a comma should be used:

To separate words in a list of three or more items:

- *I need to buy milk, bread, eggs and cheese*.

To separate a subordinate clause from the main clause when the subordinate clause comes first in a sentence:

Use a comma to separate a subordinate clause at the start of a sentence from the main part of that sentence.

- ***After being caught in the rain****, Michael was lucky not to catch a terrible cold.*
- ***As the evening drew to a close****, the children wandered home.*

Commas

To separate parenthetical elements (asides) or subordinate clauses within a sentence:

A comma is used to set off subordinate clauses contained within main clauses. The subordinate clause (also known as an aside) is part of the sentence that can be removed without changing the meaning of the sentence - it is just adding extra information.

Examples:

- *Sam, the youngest pupil in the class, was always on time for school.*
- *The Thames, one of the greatest rivers in Great Britain, passes right through London.*

It is important that the aside is opened and closed with a comma. A common mistake is to omit the second comma.

Commas are used to separate out words or clauses that are separate from the main part of the sentence.

Commas are used to separate phrases and words that come before, within, or after another part of the sentence. As above, these words or phrases could be removed without changing the essential meaning of the sentence.

Examples:

- *In truth, there are a lot of houses for sale in Woodhouse.*
- *It is, have you noticed, too cold to sit outside.*

Commas are used to separate dates and years, towns and counties etc.:

Examples:

Her home was in Sheffield, South Yorkshire. My mother was born on March 13, 1949

Commas are used to separate several adjectives.

Examples:

- *The old, ramshackle, dilapidated house had a charm of its own.*
- *That rather dull-looking, badly-dressed, clumsy man is actually a university professor*.

Apostrophes

The apostrophe is used for several different functions.

The apostrophe of contraction:

One use of the apostrophe is in contracted words, which have been joined together and shortened with letters taken out. The apostrophe is used where a letter or letters has/have been taken out.

Examples:

He is = he's	*I would = I'd*
I am = I'm	*Let us = Let's*
They have = They've	*She has = She's*
It is = It's	*Who is = who's*

**Be careful when contracting 'would have' into 'would've' – a common mistake is to write 'would of' and you should avoid this.

The apostrophe showing possession:

The second use of the apostrophe is to show possession - that something belongs to someone or something else.

Examples:

- *He loved Madrid's winding streets.* (The streets belong to Madrid).
- *I'm interested in Ella's point of view.* (The point of view belongs to Ella).
- *The building's walls were well built.* (The building belong to the building).

Tip: If you're not sure if an apostrophe of possession is needed, see if you can rearrange the phrase to include an 'of'. For example, Madrid's winding streets can be rearranged as 'the winding streets 'of' Madrid, while Ella's point of view can be rearranged as 'the point of view of Ella'. If you can rearrange to include an 'of', then an apostrophe of possession is needed.

If the apostrophe is a plural ending in s, the apostrophe needs to come after the s

Examples:

- *The teacher was always losing her pupils' books. (There are many pupils who have books).*
- *I can never understand the boys' obsession with football. (There are many boys).*

This also happens with names that end in s. Examples:

- *James' shoes are in the corner.*
- *Jesus' disciples included James and Matthew.*

Apostrophes

Mistakes with apostrophes

1. A very common mistake is to put apostrophes in every time a word ends in s even if there is no relationship of possession.

Examples:

You can have pea's with your meal.

Sheffield contain's lots of lovely old buildings and streets.

2. A second common mistake is to put the apostrophe in the wrong place for singular and plural words. This can completely change the meaning of the sentence.

Examples:

- *The pupil's uniform was very smart (one pupil).*
- *The pupils' uniform was very smart (lots of pupils).*

3. These words, *its, his, hers, whose, theirs* **do not carry possessive apostrophes** ;

Examples:

- *The cat likes its food.*
- *The book is hers.*
- *Whose is this pencil?*

If you write 'it's', it MUST be short for 'it is' or 'it has', and if you write 'who's', it MUST be short for 'who is' or 'who has'

Semi Colons

The semicolon is a great punctuation mark; using it shows that you are a good writer. It will allow you to express your ideas and opinions with more subtlety and precision. We use it in the following ways:

In complicated lists: The semicolon can be used to sort out a complicated list containing many items, many of which themselves contain commas.

Example:

- *The meeting today was attended by Mr Grumpy, City Councillor, Dr Jones, the local doctor, Mrs Happy, a lawyer and Jo Bloggs, the Chair.*

In a list like this where the 'items' are more than one word long, the semicolon can help make things a lot clearer:

- *The meeting today was attended by Mr Grumpy, City Councillor; Dr Jones, the local doctor; Mrs Happy, a lawyer and Jo Bloggs, the Chair.*

Semi Colons

Separating closely-related independent clauses: The semicolon is also used to connect two closely related independent clauses.

Example:

- *Charlie always ate big meals; he got terribly hungry*.

The two clauses here are closely connected but the link has not been made clear.

They could have been separated by a full stop.

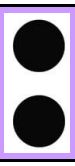
- *Charlie always ate big meals. He got terribly hungry*.

They could have been connected by a conjunction.

- *Charlie always ate big meals, but he got terribly hungry*.

If you are going to use a semicolon to connect two clauses, it is very important that the two clauses are both independent. That means that each clause has to be able to stand alone and make complete sense without the other, or in other words, that each part could be a sentence in its own right. If either clause cannot stand alone, a semicolon **cannot** be used.

Colons



The colon has a number of functions:

To introduce an idea: The colon introduces an idea that is an explanation or continuation of the one that comes before the colon. The colon can be considered as a gateway inviting the reader to go on.

Examples:

- *You don't have much choice*: *you will need to re-do the work*.
- *There is one food that I couldn't live without: pizza.*

You will see that you have some idea of what will come after the colon.

To introduce a list: You need to be careful doing this; many people assume that a colon *always* comes before a list but this is wrong. As above, the clause before the colon must make complete sense on its own.
Examples:

- *The cake contained some delicious ingredients: chocolate, syrup, butter, and hazelnuts.*
- *The cake contained chocolate, syrup, butter and hazelnuts.*

Style: A colon can add emphasis and punch to an idea. **Examples:**

- *The one thing we all love is success.*
- *There is one thing we all love: success.*

Both these examples are grammatically correct, but the second gives more emphasis. You can choose which you prefer.

Punctuating Speech

There are two ways of putting speech into your writing. The speaker's words can either be reported, or they can be quoted directly in what's called direct speech.

Reported speech:

In reported speech, the actual words are not usually quoted directly.

They can be rephrased in your own words and there is no need for any extra punctuation.

Example:

- *The 90 pupils in the year said that the main reason for choosing a subject was that they thought they would do well in it.*
- *The athletes said how pleased they had been to win medals.*

Direct speech:

This is when you put the actual words that a person speaks into your writing. There are a number of rules to follow in setting out and punctuating.

1. The words that are actually spoken should be put in inverted commas.

Example:

- *'He's done really well, you know.'*

You can use single inverted commas or double ones:

Example:

- *"He's done really well, you know."*

2. Whenever a new speaker says something, you need to start a new paragraph:

Example:

- *'He thinks it's a good idea,' said Barry.*
- *'I think so too,' I replied.*

3. There must be a comma, full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark at the end of a piece of speech. It should go before the speech mark.

Example:

- *'Can I join you?' she asked.*
- *'Wait there!' he called.*
- *'You're running late,' he said.*
- *'I thought you'd be ready by now.'*

4. If the speech follows where we find out about who is speaking, you should use a comma to introduce the piece of speech, before the first speech mark

Punctuating Speech

Example:

- *Luke replied, 'If you like.'*

5. If the direct speech is broken up by a speaker's name , you need a comma (or a question mark or exclamation mark) to end the first piece of speech and a full stop or another comma before the second piece (before the speech marks):

Example:

- *'You're on to something,' he said. 'This isn't right.' 'Looking back,' she said, 'we could have done better.' 'Yes!' he cried. 'I can't believe we've done it!'*

Other pieces of punctuation

There are a number of other punctuation marks that you can use, and they can help add clarity, variety, and style to your work.

Brackets: These are sometimes called **parentheses**. They are used around parts of the sentence that give additional information that could be removed or is just as aside. Avoid overusing them.

( )

Example:

- *The sweet shop (which you probably visited in the summer) opens today at noon.*
- *Sienna (who always makes pizza) should be around this evening.*

Dashes: These can be used as follows:

—

1. In pairs, to separate information that is not essential to understanding the rest of the sentence (a bit like with brackets).

Example:

- *Thousands of people – like the ones you have seen on the film – are now at risk of serious famine.*
- *My friend – is she over there by the table? – would like to see you.*

2. To show a break in a sentence where a comma, semicolon, or colon could also be used.

Example:

- *One thing's certain – he still needs to hurry up.*
- *Things have changed since last time we came – they have built a new swimming pool.* Dashes are especially common in informal writing, but it's probably best to avoid overusing them in formal writing – commas, semicolons, and colons can generally be used in their place.

Other pieces of punctuation

Ellipsis: This is the proper name for a 'dot, dot, dot'. It is used when a sentence trails off, to give suspense, or to show that something is missing.

Example: ...

- *'What the….?' Exclaimed Dan, as he saw what was happening.*
- *But Harriet had always been afraid of dark places….*

Exclamation mark: This shows that something is said with emotion or emphasis. The main thing to say about these is that they should not be overused..

Example:

- *"Be careful!" shouted Mrs Smith.*
- *"Goal!" roared Nicola as the ball hit the back of the net.*

!

Paragraphing

The key point to take on board is that all written work needs paragraphs. As soon as you are writing an answer or a piece of more than a few sentences, you need to start considering paragraphs.

Paragraphs in non-fiction writing

- You must have paragraphs to separate out the different ideas in your writing.
- Paragraphs should not just be random breaks in your work when you feel a gap is needed.
- They should clearly show where the steps in the ideas are.
- They show how you are organising your thinking across a whole text.

Introductions and conclusions have particular functions and should be separate paragraphs.

The introduction should lead the reader into your piece by giving an idea about what you are going to write about and why it is an interesting topic.

- The introduction should not be vague; be specific and avoid just repeating words from the question or title.
- The conclusion should give a clear summary of what you have said in your work, and should give the reader a clear idea of what they should go away thinking.
- It is often a good idea to refer back to the introduction in your conclusion. Do not merely repeat the introduction or leave things unresolved.

Each paragraph should have the same basic structure.

- A topic sentence – summarises and introduces the idea of the paragraph. It is like a mini-introduction to your paragraph.

Paragraphing

- Detail/ development – sentences in the middle of the paragraph that give further explanation and take your ideas further.
- Rounding off – a sentence that draws the paragraph together.

Conjunctions: You should make regular use of conjunctions to join together ideas both within and between your paragraphs.

- This will help show how your ideas link together and will make your work logical.
- Conjunctions include: *therefore, in contract, because, however, on the one hand, on the other hand, thus, hence, although, in conclusion*.

Paragraphs in narrative/descriptive writing:

You also always need to use paragraphs when you are writing more creative pieces – descriptive writing or narrative (story) writing, for example.

- **In this type of writing, you can use the TiP ToP rule.** This says that you should start a new paragraph for a **change of Ti**me**, P**lace**, To**pic or **P**erson**.**
- In more creative pieces of work, you can also use very short paragraphs for effect and impact.