

Information for Parents: Grammar and Punctuation



Parts of speech...

Words in the English language can be classified into parts of speech according to the function they perform in the sentence.

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;

Future tense - Next year I will go to Manor High School;

Present tense - I live in Oadby.

Imperative verbs - give commands (we sometimes call them bossy verbs) e.g. add the hot water, chop the cucumber, feed your hamster, stir the mixture.

Modal verbs - tell us how likely something is (for example, might, should, will, must)

Noun - a thing or item...such as... a person, place or idea (table, Nikita, London, 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. Harmeet, Leicestershire,

January, Diwali, 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;

Matthew ate greedily ;

Suddenly he disappeared.

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

Bethany 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. (and, or, so, then, therefore, however, because).

Huzaiifa fell over; however, he got up to come second in the race.

Shaniya stayed with her sheep **because** they were afraid of the foxes.

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.

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.

Aaron swapped **his** bike.

Take **your** children to the zoo.

Synonyms are words that have the same meaning.
Example: **big, large, huge**.

Antonyms are words with opposite meanings. Example:
large, small.

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:

- Samik plays tennis.
- Layla likes acting on stage.
- Ashveer walked down the hill and into town.
- This was a soldier. A machine. A unit of fear!

What is a clause? A clause is a group of words containing a verb, which makes up part of a sentence. Examples:

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

2. 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:

Independent or main clauses: It was hot. I eat a lot of bread. This tree is very old. 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.

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

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

Complex sentences: These have two or more clauses in them and are a mixture main clauses and subordinate 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.

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 - A noun phrase describes the noun (thing), Examples:
The scruffy, green jumper.

Adverbial phrase - An adverbial phrase is built round an adverb by adding words before and/or after it. It tells us how something is happening.

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

Prepositional phrase -tells us where the action is taking place.

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:

Croxley

Monday July 13.

Harry

The Queen

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 London;
- 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, WFC

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

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.

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: It is, have you noticed, too cold to sit outside.

Commas are used to separate dates and years, towns and counties etc.: Examples : His home was in Croxley, Hertfordshire. My father 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 am = I'm They have = They've It is = It's

I would = I'd Let us = Let's She has = She's Who is = who's

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 Ravi's point of view. (The point of view belongs to Ravi).
- The building's walls were well built. (The walls belong to the building).

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

- The childrens' meals were served in a bright and clean dining room. (There are many children).
- 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.
 - The teacher was always losing her pupils' books. (There are many pupils who have books).

Semicolons

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 Ahmed, City Councillor, Dr Jones, the local doctor, Mrs Patel, a lawyer, and Jo Thomas, 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 Ahmed, City Councillor; Dr Jones, the local doctor; Mrs Patel, a lawyer and Jo Thomas, the Chair.

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.

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 156 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 line: Example:

'He thinks it's a good idea,' said Toby.

'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

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.
- Natalie Wan (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.

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 on earth?' exclaimed Paul, as he saw what was happening.
- But Laurie 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 Johnston.
- "Goal!" roared Joseph as the ball hit the back of the net.

What is required at each year group under the new National Curriculum 2014?

<u>Year 1</u>	letter, capital letter, word, singular, plural, sentence , punctuation, full stop, question mark, exclamation mark
<u>Year 2</u>	noun, noun phrase, statement, question, exclamation, command, compound, suffix, adjective, adverb, verb tense (past, present) apostrophe, comma
<u>Year 3</u>	preposition, conjunction, word family, prefix, clause, subordinate clause, direct speech, consonant, consonant letter vowel, vowel letter, inverted commas (or 'speech marks')
<u>Year 4</u>	Determiner, pronoun, possessive pronoun, adverbial
<u>Year 5</u>	modal verb, relative pronoun, relative clause, parenthesis, bracket, dash, cohesion, ambiguity
<u>Year 6</u>	subject, object, active, passive, synonym, antonym, ellipsis, hyphen, colon, semi-colon, bullet points

How is this taught at Yorke Mead?

This booklet is for your information and reference. We teach this information to pupils through the texts we are reading. We pull out good examples in the books we read, and look at how the writer uses grammar and punctuation to good effect. We collect good examples of vocabulary from the books we read as a class, and try to use them in our own writing.