

GRAMMAR & PUNCTUATION

Glossary

a

abbreviation

An abbreviation is a shortened form of phrase or word.

active voice

A sentence in the active voice means the subject is **doing** the action.

adjective

Adjectives are describing words. They add detail to your writing and give more information about nouns.

adverb

Adverbs give you more information about verbs, adjectives or other adverbs. They tell you how something is done or how something happens. Adverbs are often made by adding **-ly** onto the end of an adjective, although this is not always the case.

adverbial

An adverbial can be either a word or phrase which gives you more information about the verb. Many types of words can be used to do this. Adverbials tell you about time, manner (how and why), place or number, and can link ideas across paragraphs.

ambiguity

Ambiguity means 'confusion' or 'not making something clear'. It means that there is more than one way to understand the meaning of something.

antonym

Antonyms are words that are opposite in meaning.

apostrophe

An apostrophe has two uses: to show that two words have been shortened to make one (called a 'contraction') and to show who or what owns something in a sentence.

b

bracket

A bracket is a form of punctuation mark that is used to separate extra information in a sentence, known as 'parenthesis'.

bullet points

Bullet points help to organise writing into a list. There are rules to using them: they must be introduced with a colon and the punctuation for each point must be the same.

c

capital letter

Capital letters are used at the beginning of sentences. They are also known as 'upper case letters'. The first letter of a sentence is always a capital. Proper nouns and the pronoun 'I' always use a capital letter.

cause

cause

Cause is the reason why something happened, is happening or may happen.

clause

A main clause is a group of words that have a subject and a verb. A sentence can be made up of one or more main clauses, as well as subordinate clauses.

cohesion

Cohesion is when different parts of writing fit clearly together. There are different writing tools you can use to help link sentences and paragraphs together to create cohesion.

cohesive device

Cohesive devices are writing tools, such as repetition, adverbials and ellipsis, that link ideas together, either within sentences or across them, or across paragraphs.

colon

A colon is a punctuation mark, made up of two dots, that can be used to introduce a list, explanation, example or a quotation.

column

Columns are a type of layout device. They are useful for presenting information such as facts or figures clearly.

comma

A comma is a punctuation mark that can be used to show a 'pause' in writing. They can separate words in a list, show parenthesis, or make meaning clearer.

complete sentence

A complete sentence is one in which there are no missing words and the sentence makes sense on its own.

complex sentence

A complex sentence is made up of a main clause and a subordinate clause.

concise

Writing in a concise way means leaving out unnecessary information.

conjunction

Conjunctions are joining words, used to join clauses or sentences together.

connective

Connectives are joining words or phrases. They often express time or cause.

consonant

A consonant is any letter which is not a vowel. There are 21 consonant letters. A vowel is either **a, e, i, o** or **u**.

contraction

A contraction is a combination of two words which have an apostrophe inserted to show the missing letters.

d

dash

A dash is a punctuation mark that can show a pause. Using a dash gives the pause more importance than a comma. It can also show that extra information has been inserted into a sentence. Two dashes are used to do this.

determiner

A determiner is a word that comes before a noun. It tells you who or what the sentence is about, or how many or much of them there are. Examples include **a, an, this** and **my**.

direct speech

Direct speech is the words that a character says, written down. Speech marks are used to show when the speech starts and finishes.

e

ellipsis

Ellipsis is a punctuation mark made up of three dots. It is used in writing to show that words have been missed out or that the writing has not finished.

emphasis

Emphasis means applying extra importance to a part of writing. This can be done by changing the position of words or phrases.

expanded noun phrase

An expanded noun phrase is extra information about the noun in a sentence, such as what it looks like or what it is doing.

f

formal vocabulary

Formal vocabulary is the language used when speaking or writing in formal situations, i.e. to a person of authority.

fronted adverbial

A fronted adverbial is an adverbial that comes at the start of a sentence.

g

grammatical connection

A grammatical connection is a tool which helps build cohesion in writing. Adverbials are an example of a grammatical connection.

h

heading

A heading tells the reader what the subject of the writing is about.

hyphen

A hyphen is a punctuation mark that can be used between two words to join them. Using a hyphen can help make meaning clearer.

i

independent clause

An independent clause is a group of words with a subject and a verb that make sense on their own.

indirect speech

Indirect speech, also called reported speech, is when the writer reports what a character has said.

inflection

Inflection is the change in form of a word, often the ending.

informal vocabulary

Informal language is the type used when speaking with or writing to friends or family.

inverted commas

Inverted commas, also known as 'speech marks', are used to show direct speech. They are written at the start and end of speech.

j

layout

Layout is how text is arranged on the page. There are different layout tools that can help make information clearer to read.

m

main clause

A main clause is a group of words in a sentence that have a subject and a verb.

modal verb

Modal verbs are used to express possibility or likelihood.

modify

To modify something is to change it, but not dramatically.

n

non-standard English

Non-standard English is usually spoken English, and can change according to people's dialects or accents.

noun

A noun is the name of a person, place or thing.

noun phrase

A noun phrase is formed when two or more words act as a noun.

o

object

An object is usually a noun which shows who or what is being affected by a verb.

p

paragraph

A paragraph is a group of sentences that share similar meaning.

parenthesis

Parenthesis is extra information added into a sentence, along with punctuation. The punctuation used can either be brackets, dashes or commas.

passive voice

The passive voice is used when the writer wants to place more importance on what happened, instead of who did something. A sentence in the passive voice places the recipient of the action, the person or thing affected by the verb action, first.

plural

Plural means 'more than one'.

plural possession

Plural possession means something belongs to more than one person or thing.

possessive 's'

Possessive 's' is used to show that something belongs to someone, something or to many.

prefix

A prefix is a group of letters that can go at the start of words to make new words.

preposition

A preposition can describe the position of something, the way in which something is done or the time when something happens.

present perfect tense

The present perfect tense is used to show that something has happened but is still relevant to what is going on in the present. **Has** or **have** are used with the past tense of the verb.

pronoun

A pronoun is a word that is used to replace a noun. Using pronouns in your writing means you don't have to repeat the name of the thing you are writing about.

q

question tag

A question tag is when an opinion or fact is put as a question and you're asking someone to agree with it, e.g. **you're ready aren't you?**

r

relative clause

A relative clause is a type of subordinate clause. It gives more information about the noun in a sentence and begins with either **who, which, that, whose** (which are 'relative pronouns'), or **where, why, when** (which are 'relative adverbs').

reported speech

Reported speech, also called 'indirect speech', is when the writer reports what a character has said.

root word

A root word is a word not made up of prefixes, suffixes or any smaller root words. Root words are common to words in a word family.

S

semi-colon

A semi-colon is a punctuation mark that can be used to create a pause in a sentence. The pause or break in a sentence is more than a comma, but less than a full stop. A semi-colon can be used to join sentences, marking the boundary between clauses.

sentence

A sentence is a group of words that are connected in meaning and grammar. It begins with a capital letter and has punctuation to end it.

simple sentence

A simple sentence is one that contains only one main clause.

singular possession

Singular possession means that something belongs to one person or thing, and is shown by using an apostrophe before the 's'.

speech marks

Speech marks, also known as 'inverted commas', are used to show direct speech. They are written at the start and end of speech.

Standard English

Standard English is the English you would find in most newspapers, and on television and radio.

sub-heading

Sub-headings are used under headings. They tell the reader what a particular section or paragraph is about.

subject

The subject of a sentence is the person or thing that is doing the action of the verb. It is either a noun or pronoun.

subordinate clause

A subordinate clause is a group of words that add more information to a main clause, but do not make sense on their own. The subordinate clause can be put into different places in the sentence. In each case, the two different clauses are always separated by a comma.

suffix

A suffix is a group of letters that can go at the end of words to make new words.

synonym

Synonyms are words that have a similar meaning.

U

unspoken words

Unspoken words are the words in a sentence which explain who is speaking and how they are speaking, e.g. 'he said'.

V

verb

A verb describes the action in a sentence. Every sentence needs to have a verb in it. Verbs change when the 'who', 'what' or 'when' of a sentence changes.

vowel

A vowel is a letter that is either **a, e, i, o** or **u**.

W

word

A word is a group of letters arranged together to form a meaningful unit.

word choice

Word choice refers to the selection of appropriate words for different situations.

word class

Word class refers to the different names given to different parts of sentences.

word family

A word family is a group of words that are connected in meaning. They share the same spelling for some of the word.