

Term	Definition	Example
Abstract noun	A feeling or concept which cannot be touched.	love, happiness, education
Active voice	A sentence written in the active voice has the subject of the sentence carrying out the main action.	<p>'Hana won the race.'</p> <p>Hana is the subject, won is the verb and race is the object.</p> <p>Using the active voice means that the subject (Hana) does the action - she wins the race.</p>
Adjectival phrase	A phrase built around an adjective – for example 'bright red', 'frighteningly bad'.	The old, creaky floorboards added character to the house.
Adjective	A word which describes a noun .	bright, confident, fast
Adverb	An adverb can modify a verb , an adjective , another adverb or even a whole clause .	quickly, very, extremely, really
Adverbial phrase	A phrase built around an adverb.	<p>'as quickly as possible'</p> <p>'very rudely'</p>
Ambiguity	A sentence contains ambiguity if it could be open to more than one meaning. Pupils are taught to use hyphens to avoid ambiguity.	'Jaws is about a man eating shark' could be ambiguous, but with the insertion of a hyphen it becomes much clearer: 'Jaws is about a man-eating shark'.
Antonym	A word with the opposite meaning to another.	good/bad, wise/foolish, long/short
Apostrophe	A punctuation mark used to show possession or to represent missing letters in a contracted form . See also possessive apostrophe .	<p>you're = you are</p> <p>can't = cannot</p> <p>it's = 'it is' or 'it has'</p>
Article	Words which tell us if a noun is general or specific.	'The' is called the 'definite article' and refers to specific nouns: 'The man's hat is blue'. The 'indefinite articles' are 'a' and 'an', referring to general nouns: 'A cow eats grass'.
Auxiliary verb	A verb which forms the tense, mood and voice of other verbs. The auxiliary verbs are 'be', 'do' and 'have' plus the modal verbs.	'Be' is used in the progressive tense verbs such as 'I am running', 'he was eating'.

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Brackets ()	A punctuation mark used to set a non-essential section of a sentence apart. Also known as parenthesis.	'My friend Chloe (who is three months older than me) is coming to my house tonight'.
Bullet points	A way of setting information out in a list of points, which may be phrases , words or short sentences .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • these • are • bullet points
Capital letter	A letter used at the beginning of a sentence and for proper nouns. They may also be used at the beginning of the important words in a title or sign.	'Keep Off the Grass'
Clause	Clauses are the building blocks of a sentence . They are groups of words that contain a subject and a verb . They can be 'main' or 'subordinate'.	<p>'The white rabbit scurried into the burrow.'</p> <p>The subject of the clause is the white rabbit and the verb is scurried.</p>
Cohesion	A sentence will have cohesion if all its parts fit together, for example if tenses and pronouns are consistent and determiners refer to the correct noun.	If Demi takes a test, it's essential that she studies for it.
Collective noun	A noun which refers to a group of people, animals or things.	'a class of children', 'a herd of elephants', 'a pride of lions'
Colon :	A punctuation mark used in a sentence to indicate that something is about to follow, such as a quotation, an example or a list.	'I need three things from the shop: milk, eggs and bread.'
Comma ,	A punctuation mark used in a sentence to mark a slight break between different parts of a sentence, or to separate clauses in order to reduce ambiguity and increase cohesion. Primary pupils are taught to use commas to separate items in a list, to demarcate clauses and before introducing direct speech.	'Before I go home, I will play at the park.'
Command	A type of sentence which instructs or orders an action to take place. Contains an imperative verb which does not need a subject. Often a command will begin with this imperative verb or with a time connective.	<p>'Eat your dinner.'</p> <p>'Next, add the eggs to the mixture.'</p> <p>'Explain how you clean your teeth.'</p>
Common exception word	Common exception words are words that don't follow normal spelling rules.	could, would, should, people, behind, house

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Common noun	Describes a class of objects which do not have a capital letter. See also proper nouns .	dog, man, day, professor, city
Comparative	The comparative form of an adjective compares one thing with another. See also superlative .	'My cake is big but hers is bigger .' Usually formed by adding the suffix '-er' (smaller, higher, happier) or the word 'more' (more beautiful).
Complex sentence	Formed by joining a main clause with a subordinate clause using a subordinating conjunction. They can also be called multi-clause sentences. The main clause can stand alone but the subordinate or dependent clause cannot.	'I burnt dinner while I was on the phone.' 'Although it was raining, they decided to go for a walk.'
Compound sentence	Formed by joining two main clauses with a connective. The two clauses can stand on their own as sentences.	'I like dogs but my friend likes cats.'
Compound word	A combination of two or more individual words that have a single meaning.	football, carwash, sunflower
Concrete noun	Something you can touch. For example, 'bed', 'pencil', 'cat'. Can be common nouns , or proper nouns that need a capital letter. For example, 'Mr Jones', 'Blackpool Tower'.	
Conjunction	A conjunction is a word that joins a series of words, clauses or phrases together. There are three types of conjunctions: coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and correlative conjunctions. Conjunctions are also known as connectives.	and, but, or, however, furthermore, because, while
Connective	Any word which joins two bits of text.	and, but, because, however, due to
Consonant	Any letter of the alphabet other than the vowels (a, e, i, o, u).	
Contracted form	Short words made by putting two words together and omitting some letters, which are replaced by an apostrophe.	'did not' is contracted to 'didn't', 'could not' is contracted to 'couldn't'.
Co-ordinating conjunction	A conjunction which joins two main clauses to create a compound sentence.	for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so

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Co-ordination	The joining of clauses in a way that gives each one equal importance.	'I am seven and my friend is eight.'
Dash	Used in a similar way to brackets or parentheses to set information apart in a sentence.	'My three friends – Jack, Sam and Callum – are coming to my house for tea.'
Definite article	See article .	
Determiner	<p>A determiner is a word that modifies a noun, giving the reader a little more information about the noun.</p> <p>There are several types of determiner. These are definite articles (the), indefinite articles (a/an), demonstratives (e.g. this or that), possessives (e.g. his or my), quantifiers (e.g. some or few) and numbers (e.g. two or twenty).</p>	'your' can be used to modify the noun 'sandwich' to make it your sandwich. Now the reader knows who the sandwich belongs to.
Digraph	A sound represented by two letters.	'ee' or 'th'
Direct speech	A sentence where the exact words spoken are represented and shown in speech marks (also known as inverted commas).	"Tidy your room, please," said Mum.
Ellipsis ...	Three dots which are used to show missing words or to create a pause for effect.	'So... tell me what happened.'
Embedded clause	A clause used in the middle of another clause. It is usually marked by commas.	The man, walking along with his dog , whistled a tune to himself.
Etymology	The origin of words and how they have changed over time. Knowing the etymology of some words can help children to spell them.	Words with 'ch' pronounced 'sh' are often of French origin (e.g. machine, chef, brochure).
Exclamation	A sentence which expresses surprise or wonder, and ends with an exclamation mark in place of a full stop. Begins with the words 'how' or 'what' and must also contain a verb.	'What big eyes you have, Grandma!' or 'How cold it is today!'
Exclamation mark !	A punctuation mark used at the end of an exclamation. It can also be used at the end of a statement or command to show that something has been said with feeling or emotion.	'What a fantastic day we have had!' 'That was a really scary film!'
Exclamative statement	See exclamation .	

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First person	A sentence is written in the first person if it's written from the point of view of the subject – in other words, using the pronouns 'I' or 'we'.	
Formal speech	A type of speech or writing used in formal, 'serious' texts and situations. Children in primary school start to learn the difference between the language we use when speaking informally (for example, to our friends) and the language we may use for a formal text, such as a letter of complaint.	
Fronted adverbial	Words or phrases used at the beginning of a sentence, used like adverbs to describe the action that follows.	With a happy smile, she skipped into the room.
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 uses the modal auxiliary verb 'will'.	'Tomorrow I will do the shopping.'
GPC	Stands for grapheme-phoneme correspondence, and refers to the way that sounds heard in words are written down.	
Grammar	The rules that cover spoken and written language.	
Grapheme	A letter or string of letters that represents a spoken sound.	'a', 'ch' or 'igh'
Homophone	Words that sound the same but have different meanings. Some have different spellings and meanings but sound the same. Some are spelt the same but have different meanings.	there/ their/they're 'Let's go to the fair !'/ 'That's not fair .'
Hyphen -	A punctuation mark used to link and join words, and often used to reduce ambiguity in sentences.	twenty-seven, brother-in-law, man-eating, long-legged
Imperative verb	A verb that stands alone without a subject noun or pronoun in a command .	Cut the bread into small squares. Place them on a baking tray.
Indefinite article	See article .	

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Indirect speech	A sentence where the main points of what someone has said are reported without actually writing the speech out in full. Speech marks are not used.	'Mum told us to tidy our rooms.'
Informal speech	See formal speech .	
Inverted commas	Punctuation marks used to demarcate direct speech in a sentence. Also known as speech marks, but in the 2014 National Curriculum children are taught the term inverted commas instead.	"What would you like for dinner?" asked mum.
Main clause	The leading clause in a sentence which indicates the main subject and action of the sentence. It stands alone without any additional clauses.	'Even though the weather is bad, I will still go for a walk. '
Modal verb	A special verb which affects the other verbs in the sentence by showing obligation, possibility, ability or permission.	'You should do your homework.' 'I might have pizza for tea.' 'You can ride a bike now.'
Morphology	The study of words, how they are formed and their relationship to other words in the same language. It analyses the structure of words and parts of words, such as stems, root words, prefixes, and suffixes. An understanding of morphology can help children with spelling strategies.	Knowing that 'medicine', 'medical' and 'paramedic' all share a common root.
Noun	A naming word for things, animals, people, places and feelings. Can be common, proper, concrete, abstract or collective.	table, love, children, London
Noun phrase	A small group of words that does not contain a verb. A noun phrase contains a noun plus words to describe it.	The spotty, black dog.
Object	The object of a sentence is involved in the action but does not carry it out.	'I dropped my cup. '
Paragraph	A distinct 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	See brackets .	

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Passive voice	A sentence is written in the passive voice when the subject is having something done to it.	The mouse was chased by the cat.
Past continuous tense	See past progressive tense .	
Past perfect tense	A tense used to describe actions that were completed by a certain time in the past.	'Yesterday I was late because I had walked to school.'
Past progressive tense	Also known as past continuous tense, a form of the past tense where something goes on for a period of time in the past.	'I was walking in the park.' Usually formed by adding the suffix 'ing' to a verb.
Past tense	Any one of a set of verb tenses which describe action that took place in the past. See also progressive tense , past perfect tense .	
Phonics	A way of teaching reading and writing which focusses on hearing and learning the sounds in words, and how these are written down. Children are taught to blend sounds together to read words and to segment sounds in words they hear, in order to write down the correct GPCs .	
Phrase	A small group of words that does not contain a verb .	
Plural	More than one. Using plurals can affect the nouns and verbs in a sentence .	birds, beaches, mice
Phoneme	A sound which makes up all or part of a word.	The word 'light' is made up of the phonemes /l/, /igh/, /t/.
Personal pronoun	A pronoun which replaces a person, place or thing.	I, you, he, she, we, they, it, me, him, her, us, them
Possessive apostrophe	An apostrophe used before the letter s to show ownership.	'This is Sally's coat.'
Possessive pronoun	A pronoun which is used to show ownership. Some can be used on their own ('mine', 'yours', 'his', 'hers', 'ours', 'theirs'), whilst others need to be attached to a noun ('my', 'your', 'her', 'our', 'their', 'whose').	
Prefix	Letters that go in front of a root word and change its meaning.	'un-' (happy/unhappy), 'dis-' (appear/disappear), 're-' (act/react)

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Preposition	A linking word in a sentence, used to show where things are in time or space.	under, after, next, behind
Prepositional phrase	A phrase which contains a preposition.	'under the carpet', 'behind the door', 'after school'
Present perfect tense	The tense which describes actions that are completed at an unspecified time before this moment.	'I have cycled two miles already.'
Present progressive tense	A tense which describes an action which began in the past and is still going on now.	'I am learning to speak French'.
Present tense	Any one of a set of tenses that describe actions which are happening now. See also present perfect tense and present progressive tense .	
Pronoun	Any word which can be used to replace a noun. See personal pronoun , possessive pronoun .	
Proper noun	A noun which names a particular person, place or thing.	'John', 'London', 'France', 'Monday', 'December'
Punctuation mark	A symbol used to create and support meaning within a sentence or within a word.	Full stop, comma, question mark, colon, speech marks
Question	A type of sentence which asks a question. It either begins with one of the question words (who, what, where, when, how, why) or reverses the (pro)noun/verb order in a statement.	'Sarah is washing the dishes' becomes, 'Is Sarah washing the dishes?'.
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 (who, that or which).	He ate too many cakes, which made him feel ill.
Relative pronoun	A pronoun used in a relative clause (who, that, which).	
Reported speech	See indirect speech .	

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Root word	A basic word with no prefix or suffix added to it. Adding prefixes and suffixes can change the meaning of a root word.	Learn is the root word for learner, learning, relearn and learned. Play is the root word for playful, playing, replay and playground.
Second person	Second person describes text that is written as if speaking to the reader, using second person pronouns like 'you' and 'your'.	You can take your paintbrush and begin adding spots of paint to your canvas.
Semi-colon ;	A punctuation mark used in a sentence to separate major sentence elements. A semi-colon can be used between two closely related independent clauses, provided they are not already joined by a coordinating conjunction.	'My car is red; my friend's car is blue.'
Sentence	One word or a group of words that makes sense by itself (a grammatical unit). Begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop , question mark or exclamation mark . Usually contains a subject and always contains a verb .	
Simple sentence	Has a subject and one verb . See also compound sentence and complex sentence .	
Singular	Referring to only one. Use of the singular may affect the nouns , pronouns and verbs in a sentence .	apple, mouse, child
Speech marks " "	Punctuation marks used to demarcate direct speech in a sentence.	"My team won!" exclaimed Peter.
Split digraph	A digraph that is split by a consonant.	Usually represent long vowel sounds 'a-e' (for example, 'cake'), 'i-e' (five), 'o-e' (code) and 'u-e' (rule).
Statement	A sentence that conveys a simple piece of information.	It is a sunny day today.
Subject	The subject of a sentence is the thing or person carrying out the main action.	The cow ate the grass.
Subordinate clause	A clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence, but is linked to a main clause using a subordinating conjunction. It does not express a complete thought, and if read on its own it requires additional information. Subordinate clauses contain a subject noun and a verb.	'I take my dog to the park every day, even though sometimes it is raining .'

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Subordinating conjunction	A conjunction that connects a main clause to a subordinating clause.	because, until, when, as, since, whereas, even, though
Subordination	The joining of clauses and phrases in a way that links a main clause to a subordinate clause that does not stand alone.	
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 used to compare one object to all others in its class. Usually formed by adding the suffix '-est' or the word 'most'. See also comparative .	'Mia ran fastest on Sports Day.' 'I am hungry, you are hungrier than me, but he is the hungriest of all.'
Syllable	A sequence of speech sounds in a word. The number of syllables in a word sounds like the 'beats' in the word, and breaking a word into syllables can help with spelling.	One-syllable words include words such as 'dog', 'cat', 'walk' and 'bath'; two-syllable words include 'teacher' and 'Christmas'; three-syllable words include 'beautiful' and 'manager'.
Synonym	A word which has exactly or nearly the same meaning as another word.	big/large, small/tiny
Third person	A sentence is written in the third person if it is written from the point of view of a person being spoken about – in other words, using the pronouns 'he', 'she', 'it' or 'they'.	
Time connective	Words or phrases which tell the reader when something is happening.	'After dinner you must do your homework. Then you can read your book.'
Trigraph	A string of three letters which make a single sound.	'igh' - sigh, bright 'tch' – catch, batch 'ear' – beard, hear
Verb	A word used to describe an action, occurrence or state. An essential part of a sentence .	
Vowel	The letters a, e, i, o and u.	
Word family	A group of words which may share a common root word or morphology.	'happy', 'unhappy', 'happiness', 'happily', 'unhappiness', 'unhappily'

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