

Parent's Guide: Grammar Terms

Valley Primary School



This document aims to explain the key grammatical terms that are introduced in each year group.














The terms noted are the new focuses in each year group but presume understanding of the terms from the previous year groups. The document is therefore progressive across the school and children will experience terms from the Year groups below alongside the new terms and skills.

Glossary of Grammar Terms used in Year 1

In Year 1, the basic grammatical terms are introduced. These are embedded and we encourage mastery of previous skills through practical application as the children progress through the school. Children develop further each year by exploring new grammatical terminologies.


Grammar term	What does it mean?
Letter	A symbol from the alphabet that represents a sound. The English alphabet is made up of 26 Letters. Each letter has a letter name (Grapheme) and a sound (Phoneme). 'A' and 'Z' are the first and last letters of our alphabet, these should be known in order.
Word	A unit of language and a group of sounds joined together to form a word . Some words are common exception words and cannot be 'sounded out'. These are referred to as 'red words' in Read Write Inc.
Phoneme	A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that signals a distinct, contrasting meaning. There are around 44 phonemes in English; the exact number depends on regional accents. e.g. c-a-t has 3 phonemes and s-w-i-m has 4 phonemes.
Grapheme	You can use the alphabet to find the letter names for a phoneme . e.g. The graphemes for c-a-t are pronounced C (see) A (ay) T (tee) .
Digraph	A digraph has two letters that represent one sound (phoneme) These are called 'special friends' in Read Write Inc. Such as, ch ip, pl ay, qu ick, th in, gr een, co w.


	<p>Sometimes, these two letters are not next to one another; this is called a split-digraph.</p> <p>Such as, <u>oe</u> in <u>home</u>, <u>ie</u> in <u>ride</u>, <u>ae</u> in <u>ate</u>.</p>
Trigraph	<p>A type of grapheme where three letters represent one phoneme.</p> <p>Such as, <u>light</u>, <u>care</u>, <u>hear</u>.</p>
Noun	<p>A noun is a word that names a person, place or thing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person – Poppy, Jack, Chloe • A place – Solihull, Birmingham, London • An object/thing – table, chair, bike
Verb	<p>A verb is a ‘doing’, ‘movement’ or ‘action’ word.</p> <p>Such as, clap, sit, ride, jump, point, skip, walk, play, run.</p>
Adjective	<p>An adjective is a describing word. In Year 1 we mainly describe nouns.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An old table. • A black chair. • A shiny bike. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">    </div>
Sentences	<p>A collection of words joined together, beginning with a capital letter, leaving spaces between each word and ending with punctuation. Words can join together to build sentences by using nouns, verbs and adjectives.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you sit on the black chair? • I want to ride that shiny bike.
Conjunction	<p>A conjunction links two words or phrases together.</p> <p>E.g. I have an old table and a black chair. I want to ride that shiny bike because it looks really fast.</p>
Punctuation	<p>Punctuation marks are important because they show the reader where sentences start and end. They also help to change how the reader understands the writing. In Year one we focus on capital letters, full stops, exclamation marks and question marks.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">    </div>
Capital letter	<p>A capital letter is a letter from the alphabet. They are used at the beginning of a sentence and for proper nouns – person, place, personal pronoun ‘I’ or specific thing.</p> <p>e.g. <u>I</u> have an old table and a black chair.</p> <p><u>I</u> can see my friend <u>P</u>oppy in the playground.</p>

<p>Full stop</p>	<p>A full stop is used at the end of sentence. This tells the reader to take a pause. e.g. I have an old table and a black chair_ ← </p>
<p>Exclamation mark</p>	<p>An exclamation mark is used after a word or sentence to express a strong feeling or excitement or anger. e.g. “Wow! Look up there!” Tom shouted. “Ouch! That hurt!” Sam yelled as he sat on a pin.</p>
<p>Question mark</p>	<p>A question mark is used at the end of a sentence that asks a question. e.g. Can you sit on the black chair?</p>
<p>Suffix</p>	<p>A suffix can be added to the end of a root word. In Year 1 we teach suffixes that require no change to the root words. We add -ing, -ed, -er and -est. e.g. help<u>ing</u>, help<u>ed</u>, help<u>er</u></p>
<p>Prefix</p>	<p>A prefix is found at the beginning of a word. In Year 1 we teach the prefix un. For example, unkind, or undoing.</p>
<p>Singular</p>	<p>A word that refers to one person or thing.</p> <p>one <u>cat</u>. one <u>fox</u></p> <p> </p>
<p>Plural</p>	<p>A plural noun normally has a suffix -s or -es and means ‘more than one’.</p> <p>two <u>cats</u> three <u>foxes</u></p> <p> </p>
<p>Omitted Apostrophes</p>	<p>An apostrophe would be used in place of a missing letter. This is when two words have been joined together to create a shorter word, known as a contraction.</p> <p>For example; I + will = I’ll I + am = I’m we + will = we’ll</p>

Glossary of Grammar Terms used in Year 2



In Year 2, the grammatical terms taught in Year 1 are embedded and we encourage mastery of previous skills through practical application. We develop further by exploring new grammatical terminologies including: suffix, adverb, verb tense (past, present), noun phrase, apostrophe and commas.



Year 2	
Grammar term	What does it mean?
Suffix	<p>In Year 2 we teach how a letter or group of letters can be added to the end of a word to make a new word with a slightly different meaning.</p> <p>Adding -ment can change a verb into a noun. e.g. <u>enjoyment</u></p> <p>Adding -ful or -less can change a verb or noun into an adjective. e.g. <u>careful</u>, <u>careless</u></p> <p>Adding -ness can change an adjective into a noun. e.g. <u>sadness</u></p> <p>Adding the suffix -ly can change an adjective into an adverb. e.g. <u>proudly</u></p>
Adverb	<p>An adverb is a word that describes a verb, adjective or another adverb in a sentence. e.g. She can <u>sing beautifully</u>. A <u>very tall</u> giant stood in front of me.</p> 
Subordination	<p>Subordination is the process of connecting two sentences together to show that one part is more important than the other.</p> <p>The first part of the sentence can either be the main clause or the subordinating clause.</p> <p>main clause subordinating conjunction dependent clause</p> <p>↓ ↓ ↓</p> <p>My car needs a new coat of paint <u>because</u> it's very old.</p> <p>The subordinating conjunction can be any that shows an imbalance or contrast, e.g. that, because, when, after, if, etc. The last part of the sentence is the dependent clause - this is the part that's being compared.</p>

<p>Co-ordination</p>	<p>Coordination is when two clauses of the same value are added together using a coordinating conjunction such as, or, and, but.</p> <p>e.g. I had a sausage for dinner and a bottle of water.</p>
<p>Expanded noun phrases</p>	<p>In a sentence, an expanded noun phrase describes more information about the noun. If 'dog' is the noun, a noun phrase gives more information about the dog. The scruffy dog likes to play in the sand pit. There can be more than one noun phrase in a sentence. The scruffy dog likes to play in the deep sand pit.</p>
<p>Statement sentence</p>	<p>A sentence that includes a fact, opinion or idea. e.g. Ruth likes to play in the mud. All children at the primary school wear red jumpers.</p>
<p>Command sentence</p>	<p>A sentence that orders or instructs. e.g. Leave the building now.</p>
<p>Past/Present tense</p>	<p>A tense tells the reader when something happens. If it has already happened, it is in the past tense. e.g. The man kicked the ball. If it happening now, it is in the present tense. e.g. The man is kicking the ball.</p>
<p>Commas</p>	<p>Commas separate items in a list. e.g. At the farm we saw cows, pigs, sheep and chickens.</p> 
<p>Possessive Apostrophe</p>	<p>A possessive apostrophe is used to show a noun is owned by a single person. e.g. The man's dog. The girl's pen.</p>

Glossary of Grammar Terms used in Year 3

In Year 3, the grammatical terms taught throughout Key Stage 1 are embedded and we encourage mastery of previous skills through practical application. We develop further by exploring new grammatical terminologies including: inverted commas, prefixes, homophones and prepositions.


Year 3	
Grammar term	What does it mean?
Adjective	An adjective is a word that describes a noun or pronoun. the blue butterfly the tallest tower 
Apostrophe	A punctuation mark used to show possession. E.g. Katie's book bag. Peter's coat was found in the lost property box. It can also represent missing letters in a contracted form. E.g I + will = I'll I + am = I'm we + will = we'll
Adverb	An adverb is a word that describes a verb, adjective or another adverb in a sentence. You can describe the verb ; The boy jumped high . You can describe the adjective ; The dark green grass. You can describe the adverb ; The man walked very quickly. 
Clause	A clause is a phrase of two or more words. It has a verb as the key word. It's snowing. Amelia has four pets because she likes animals.
Conjunctions	Conjunctions are used to express a time, place or cause (for example, when, before, after, while, so, because). The dog was sick after he ate his food. The boy felt happy while he was on holiday.
Consonant	Any letter of the alphabet other than the vowels (a, e, i, o, u).
Homophones and near-homophones	Homophones and near-homophones are words that sound the same but have a different meaning. here and hear meat and meet

Inverted commas	<p>Direct speech is used to show the actual words a person says. Inverted commas go around the text to show where the speech starts and ends.</p> <p><u>“Do you like football or swimming?”</u> William asked Jack. <u>“I like football.”</u> Jack answered.</p>
Imperative verbs	<p>A verb that stands alone without a subject noun or pronoun in a command.</p> <p>First, <u>mix</u> the flour and sugar together. <u>Clean</u> your room!</p> <p>Also known as bossy verbs, it makes a sentence bossy. It gives an order or command and the sentences are direct and sharp.</p>
Prefix	<p>A letter or group of letters can be added to the beginning of a word to make a new word with a slightly different meaning.</p> <p><u>in</u> - <u>inactive</u> <u>il</u> - <u>illegal</u> <u>im</u> - <u>impossible</u> <u>re</u> - (means ‘again’ or ‘back’) <u>refresh</u> <u>sub</u>- (means ‘under’) <u>submarine</u> <u>inter</u>- (means ‘between’) <u>interact</u> <u>super</u>- (means ‘above’) <u>superstar</u> <u>anti</u>- (means ‘against’) <u>antiseptic</u> <u>auto</u>- (means ‘self’ or ‘own’) <u>autograph</u></p> <p>Some prefixes are used at the beginning of words to create a negative meaning.</p> <p><u>un</u> - <u>unlike</u> <u>dis</u> - <u>disagree</u></p> 
Preposition	<p>A preposition tells the reader when or where something happened, happens or will happen (for example, before, after, during, in, because of).</p> <p>Please put your pens <u>in</u> the pot.</p> <p>Dad read his book <u>during</u> the football match.</p> 
Present perfect tense	<p>A present perfect verb tells us when the action happened.</p> <p>He <u>has gone</u> out to play.</p>
Relative clause	<p>A relative clause is a type of subordinate clause. It is connected to the main clause by relative pronoun such as that, which, who, whom or whose.</p> <p>I enjoyed the film <u>that we saw last night</u>.</p>

Subordinate clause	<p>A subordinate clause is a clause that cannot stand alone. It 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.</p> <p>Here's the book <u>that I promised you.</u></p> <p><u>When I grow up,</u> I want to be a pilot.</p>
Suffix	<p>A letter or group of letters that can be added to the end of a word to make a new word with a slightly different meaning.</p> <p><u>-ly</u> - <u>sadly</u></p> <p><u>-ous</u> - <u>dangerous</u></p> <p>/shun/ sound spelt <u>-tion, -sion, -ssion</u> and <u>-cian</u> at the end of words.</p> <p><u>-ation</u> - <u>sensation</u></p> <p><u>-sion</u> - <u>extension</u></p> <p><u>-ssion</u> - <u>expression</u></p> <p><u>-cian</u> - <u>musician</u></p>
Vowel	<p>The letters <u>a, e, i, o</u> and <u>u</u>.</p>
Word family	<p>A group of words which may share a common root word or morphology. For example, <u>'happy', 'unhappy', 'happiness', 'happily', 'unhappiness', 'unhappily'</u>.</p>

Glossary of Grammar Terms used in Year 4

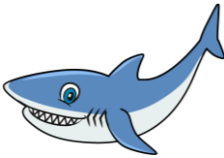

In Year 4, the grammatical terms taught throughout Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 are embedded and we encourage mastery of previous skills through practical application. We develop further by exploring new grammatical terminologies including: adverbial phrase, determiner, fronted adverbial and possessive pronouns.


Year 4	
Grammar term	What does it mean?
Adverbial phrase	<p>An adverbial phrase is a group of words that describes a verb, adjective or another adverb in a sentence.</p> <p><i>I walk to school during the week.</i></p> <p><i>The dog slept under the table.</i></p>
Articles	<p>Articles are common determiners ('a', 'an' and 'the'). An indefinite article is used when the writer is talking about a general version of the noun.</p> <p><i><u>A</u> cat is a good pet.</i></p> <p>A definite article is used when the writer is talking about a specific noun.</p> <p><i><u>The</u> dog is running very fast.</i></p> 
Comma	<p>A comma is used to break up a phrase or separate words in a list.</p> <p><i>Later that day, I heard good news.</i></p> <p><i>After school, I played with my friend.</i></p>
Determiner	<p>A determiner goes in front of a noun and its adjectives to help to tell you which person or thing the sentence is about, or how much or how many of them there are.</p> <p><i>The little green bird pecked <u>one</u> juicy apple and ate it as he sat on <u>a</u> branch.</i></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <p>The word the, an and a are called articles which are a type of determiner. Change a to an if the next word starts with a vowel.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; width: 30%;"> <p>The word one tells you how many apples the bird pecked.</p> </div> </div>
Expanded noun phrase	<p>A noun phrase that has been expanded to include a change of adjectives, nouns and preposition phrases.</p> <p><i>The strict English teacher with curly hair.</i></p>
Fronted adverbial	<p>Adverbials often appear at the end of the sentence, but sometimes they appear at the beginning. These are called</p>

	fronted adverbials. There is usually a comma after a fronted adverbial. <u>First thing in the morning,</u> I walked the children to school. <u>Next,</u> I have my lunch.
Pronoun	A pronoun can be used instead of a noun. Using a pronoun avoids repeating the noun again and again. Martin likes cheese. He likes to eat grapes after dinner. Sally and Bob play football together. They play every evening after school.
Possessive determiner	This is used in front of a noun to show possession. my your his her its our their
Possessive pronoun	A possessive pronoun tells you who something belongs to. This jacket is <u>mine!</u> More possessive pronouns: mine yours his hers ours theirs

Glossary of Grammar Terms used in Year 5

In Year 5, the grammatical terms taught throughout Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2 are embedded and we encourage mastery of previous skills through practical application. We develop further by exploring new grammatical terminologies including: ambiguity, cohesion, parenthesis and modal verbs.


Year 5	
Grammar term	What does it mean?
Ambiguity	<p>A sentence contains ambiguity if it could be open to more than one meaning. Pupils are taught to use hyphens to avoid ambiguity; for example, the sentence:</p> <p><i>Jaws is about a man eating shark.</i></p> <p>could be ambiguous, but with the insertion of a hyphen becomes much clearer:</p> <p><i>Jaws is about a man-eating shark.</i></p> 
Bracket ()	<p>A punctuation mark used to set a non-essential section of a sentence apart. Also known as parenthesis. For example,</p> <p><i>My friend Isabella (who is six months older than me) is coming to my house tonight.</i></p>  <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>If you remove the words or text between the brackets, then the sentence should still make sense on its own.</p> </div>
Cohesive device	<p>A text which has cohesion fits logically together. The reader can see how one part moves on to another or how the end links to the beginning. To achieve cohesion, we use cohesive devices such as connective phrases and determiners. A writer may also use repetition of word or phrase, adverbials or ellipsis to build on writing.</p> <p>E.g. <i>The day was <u>fun, fun, fun.</u></i></p> <p><i>I love chocolate cake but on the other hand, I like strawberry cake.</i></p> <p><i>The iron man walked to the edge of the cliff...</i></p>
Colon :	<p>A colon : can be used to introduce a list.</p> <p><i>My favourite fruits are: strawberries, grapes and bananas.</i></p>
Dash -	<p>A dash can introduce further information and can be used instead of a colon or a comma. After the dash there may be a list or a main or subordinate clause. For example:</p>

	The fire spread rapidly and the trees <u>were engulfed – I was petrified.</u>
Hyphen -	A hyphen is used to join two or more words that should be read as a single unit. A hyphen is shorter than a dash. long-legged twenty-seven brother-in-law
Modal verb	Modal verbs change or affect other verbs in a sentence. They are used to show the level of possibility – certain, possible or impossible. For example: My keys <u>must</u> be in the house. Modal verbs also talk about ability, <u>to ask permission</u> , make requests or offers . <u>May</u> I ask a question? <u>Could</u> I have some tea, please? Other examples include: will would can might shall should ought to
Parenthesis	Brackets commas and dashes can all be used to separate a word or phrase that has been added to a sentence as an explanation. The word or phrase inside the brackets, commas or dashes is called a parenthesis . I miss seeing Toby (<u>my best friend from primary school</u>) every day. I miss seeing Toby, <u>my best friend from primary school</u> , every day. I miss seeing Toby <u>– my best friend from primary school –</u> every day. <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;">If you remove the words or text between the brackets, commas and dashes then the sentence should still make sense on its own.</div>
Relative pronoun	Relative Pronouns (<u>who, which, where, that, when</u>) introduce a relative clause . They refer back to a noun or clause what we already know. The gymnast, <u>who</u> won the competition, trained hard. Where did you buy the dress <u>that</u> you wore last week? 

<p>Relative clause</p>	<p>A relative clause is a special type of subordinate clause which adds extra information to another noun or clause. A relative clause uses a relative pronoun such as; <u>'who'</u>, <u>'that'</u> or <u>'which'</u>. The extra information is embedded in a sentence with commas.</p> <p>Oliver, <u>who never does his homework</u>, is very lazy.</p> <p>All the apple crumble was gone by the time I got to lunch, <u>which really annoyed me.</u></p>
<p>Semi-colon ;</p>	<p>A semi-colon ; can be used between two main clauses. (A main clause can work on its own in a sentence).</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>The movie was brilliant; I had a fantastic time.</p> <p>My car is white; my friend's car is blue.</p>

Glossary of Grammar Terms used in Year 6

In Year 6, the grammatical terms taught throughout Key Stage 1 and 2 are embedded and we encourage mastery of previous skills through practical application. We develop further by exploring new grammatical terminologies including: antonym, ellipses, passive synonym, formal and informal language.

Year 6	
Grammar term	What does it mean?
Antonym	<p>An antonym is a word or phrase with the opposite /meaning.</p> <p>young – old soft – hard full – empty</p> 
Bullet points	<p>Bullet points can be used to break up complicated information, make the text easier to read or turn it into a list. A colon must be used before a list.</p> <p>I need to buy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pizza • toothpaste • bananas
Ellipses	<p>Three dots which are used to show missing words or to create a pause for effect. For example,</p> <p>So...tell me what happened.</p>
Formal and informal language	<p>Formal language uses unabbreviated words and an appropriate choice of vocabulary and grammar whereas informal language uses relative clauses with no relative pronouns and contractions. It is important to select the correct language for writing.</p> <p>find out – discover ask for – request go in – enter</p>
Object	<p>The object is the person, noun, pronoun or thing which usually comes directly after the verb.</p> <p>Thursday is my favourite day. Kai's mum is picking me up today. Are you coming to the sleepover?</p>
Passive and active voices	<p>A voice describes whether the subject of a clause performs or receives the action of the verb. If a clause is in an active voice, the subject of the sentence is performing the verb.</p>

	<p>Active – <u>Tommy broke</u> the vase. In this sentence, Tommy is the subject of the sentence who is performing the verb (broke).</p> <p>When a clause is in the passive voice, the verb is being done to the subject.</p> <p>Passive – <u>The vase</u> was broken by Tommy. In this sentence, the vase is the subject of the sentence but the verb is being performed on it (was broken). The vase didn't break itself.</p>
Semi-colon	<p>A semi-colon joins two independent clauses without using a conjunction such as 'and'.</p> <p><u>We can go to the park in the morning; Mondays are usually quiet.</u></p> <p>A semi-colon may be used in a list to divide the items where commas are already used to avoid ambiguity.</p> <p><u>I have been to Birmingham, England; Paris, France; New York, USA; and Moscow, Russia.</u></p>
Subject	<p>The subject is the person, noun phrase, pronoun or thing which does the verb in a clause.</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> is my favourite day. <u>Kai's mum</u> is picking me up today. Are <u>you</u> coming to the sleepover?</p>
Synonym	<p>A synonym is a word or phrase with the same or similar meaning to another. You can find synonyms in a thesaurus.</p> <p>Talk = <u>speak = mention</u> nice = <u>enjoyable = pleasant = delightful</u></p>