

Grammar overview Years 1-6

| Year | Topic | Examples | Terminology |
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| 1 | Using full stops and capital letters to demarcate sentences | We sailed to the land where the wild things are. | Sentence Word Letter Capital letter Full stop |
| | Use capital letters for proper names | My name is Rosie and I have a dog called Woof. | Name Capital letter |
| | Using 'and' to join sentences | <i>The wild things waved their terrible claws and I told them to be quiet.</i> | Joining words |
| | Using a question mark at the end of a sentence to indicate a question | <i>Why did Max want to come home?</i> | Question Question mark |
| | Using an exclamation mark at the end of a sentence to indicate an exclamation | <i>There was a terrible mess!</i> | Exclamation Exclamation mark |

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| 2 | Demarcate sentences using capital letters at the start and full stops, exclamation or question marks at the end. | <i>The doorbell rang. Who could it be? Mummy answered the door and got a surprise. There was a tiger!</i> | Sentence Capital letter Full stop Question mark Exclamation mark |
| | Use commas in making lists | <i>The endangered animals we are looking at are: tigers, pandas, whales and cheetahs.</i> | Comma |
| | Use adjectives to describe nouns | <i>The wild tiger, the black bear and the swimming whale.</i> | Noun Adjective |
| | Use conjunctions to join ideas in longer sentences Co-ordination: using 'and', 'or' and 'but' (Compound) Subordination: using 'when', 'where', 'if', 'that' and 'because' (Complex) | Children need to start using compound and complex sentences in their writing: <u>When</u> the tiger came to tea, he ate up all the food <u>and</u> drank up all the water. <u>If</u> another tiger comes to tea, we have some tins of tiger-food. | None |
| | Use and distinguish past and present text | In a story it is often past tense: <i>The tiger went to the cupboard and took out all the tins. He drank up all the water in the tap.</i> In a description of something which is true now, it is present tense. <i>My favourite colour is red. I like playing princesses and magic games best.</i> | Verb Tense Past Present |
| | Use adjectival phrases to describe nouns | The tiger who came to tea was lovely and gentle. | |

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| | Use apostrophes for contracted forms – relate this to differences between spoken & written English | Encourage children to write speech in a realistic way, e.g. I don't want to come home! | Apostrophe |
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| 3 | Recognise simple sentences and begin to recognise compound and complex sentences | Encourage children to extend their sentences using joining words (conjunctions). They can join simple sentences (clauses) <i>The boat arrived late <u>and</u> the man walked down the gangway.</i> They can add a subordinate clause to a sentence <i><u>When</u> the rain stopped, the girls went back to the playground.</i> | Sentence Conjunction |
| | Use and recognise nouns, adjectives and adjectival phrases | Explain what a noun is, and how an adjective or adjectival phrase can modify the noun: <i>Mrs Coles' house was <u>noisy, loud and messy</u>. Peter and Poppy, <u>who were my age</u>, looked after me very nicely.</i> | Noun Adjective |
| | Use powerful verbs Introduce the idea of a verb | Explain the concept of a verb and encourage children to use powerful verbs in their writing Not: <i>I <u>went</u> out of the room</i> but <i>I <u>stormed</u> out of the room ...</i> or <i>I <u>plodded</u> out of the room</i> <i>I <u>crept</u> out of the room...</i> | Verb |
| | Introduce the idea of tense in verbs | Explain the concept of a verb and help children to recognise these. They also relate the tense of verbs used to the type of writing. E.g. narrative is usually past tense, description can be present tense. <i>She <u>ran</u> along the road and <u>saw</u> the robber vanishing down a trapdoor.</i> <i>My friend <u>has</u> red hair, blue eyes and <u>is</u> always telling jokes.</i> | Verb Past tense Present tense |
| | Use dialogue in narrative or in drama | | |

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| | | Start by relating speech bubbles to speech marks. Make sure what is inside the speech bubble (marks) is what we or the characters SAY. <i>"I'm hungry!" yelled the big, bad wolf. "Give me some FOOD!"</i> | Inverted commas or speech marks Direct speech |
| | Extend the range of sentences with more than one clause. Co-ordination: using 'and', 'or' and 'but' (compound) Subordination: using a wider range of conjunctions to add subordinate clauses (complex). | Extend children's use of longer sentences in their writing, so they frequently use sentences with at least one subordinate clause. Use joining words (conjunctions) such as: and, or, but, if, when, where, because, so, although, etc. | Conjunction Clause |
| 4 | Use adverbs to modify verbs | Children need to understand that we can not only say <u>that</u> something is done or happened, but also HOW. <i>She went off <u>happily</u> to see her granny.</i> <i>He kicked the ball <u>furiously</u> into the wall.</i> | Adverb |
| | Use conjunctions to express time or cause | Extend children's use of complex sentences by encouraging them to think about how, when, where or why something was done or happened. <i>Dad tripped on the stairs <u>because</u> the cat was lying there.</i> <i><u>When</u> the film was over, we all went and had a meal.</i> <i>He was certainly still angry <u>so</u> the dogs thought it best to keep out of his sight for a while.</i> | Conjunction Clause Sentence Subordinate clause |
| | Use prepositions to express time and place | Help children make their writing more interesting by using prepositional phrases. <i><u>With a heavy heart</u>, the princess put the frog back in the pond.</i> <i>He kicked the ball right <u>over the wall</u>.</i> | Preposition Phrase |
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Grammar overview Years 1-6

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| | Person – understanding that writing can be third or first person | Children need to become aware that writing can be ‘She did this...’ or ‘I did this...’. We can write in the 3 rd or the 1 st person. <i>The dog wandered down the street looking for cats and food.</i> <i>I wandered down the street looking for my dog.</i> | Verb |
| | Use adverbs and adverbials (prepositional phrases which act as adverbs) | Extend children’s understanding of adverbs, showing them how to use a phrase to say HOW something is done or HOW it happened. <i>He spoke <u>crossly</u> and <u>in a loud voice</u> to all the children.</i> <i>The dog ran <u>with the lead in its mouth</u>, <u>down the street</u>.</i> | Adverb |
| | Use commas after or before phrases and clauses | Introduce the idea of a ‘short pause’ which does not merit a new sentence but does require a comma. Show chn how we can use commas before or after phrases or clauses. <i>After the door slammed, the class sat in total silence.</i> <i>As light as a bird, the glider disappeared into the clouds.</i> | Comma |
| 4 | Pronouns – using pronouns to avoid repetition or ambiguity and to add clarity and cohesion | Encourage children to use pronouns to help them <u>make sense</u> and <u>be clear</u> : 1. Avoid repetition: <i>While Sam watched the TV programme. Sam finished making his Lego spaceship.</i> 2. Avoid ambiguity: <i>Mary wanted to help her granny and she was feeling very tired.</i> 3. Add to the cohesion: <i>When she went to bed, Mog was feeling rather full of milk and cat food.</i> | Pronoun |
| | Use dialogue in narrative or in drama, emphasising the differences between spoken and written speech. | Extend children’s use of dialogue, consolidating the use of speech punctuation and ensuring that what is in the speech marks is what is SAID, not what might be written. E.g. We can use contracted forms, and we can use slang... | Inverted commas or speech marks |

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| | | <p><i>"Give me a break," sneered Tom, "You can't expect me to believe that!"</i></p> <p><i>"Ger'off, you're hurting me," Sam told his younger brother.</i></p> | Direct speech |
| | Use the possessive apostrophe | <p>Use for singular and plural nouns.</p> <p><i>Joanna's temper was rising fast.</i></p> <p><i>He really wanted his brother's football shirt.</i></p> <p><i>All the dogs' dinners had been stolen.</i></p> | Apostrophe |
| | Use fronted adverbials | <p>Extend children's use of adverbs by encouraging them to start their sentences with an adverbial.</p> <p><i><u>In total silence</u>, the children tiptoed along the corridor.</i></p> <p><i><u>Without blinking</u>, Max stared into all their yellow eyes.</i></p> | Adverbial Phrase |

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| 5 | Use a wide range of conjunctions to create compound and complex sentences | Consolidate children's use of 'and', 'but' and 'or' to write compound sentences and their use of other conjunctions to create complex sentences with subordinate clauses. | Conjunction Complex sentence Compound sentence |
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| | Use relative clauses beginning with 'who', 'which', 'where', 'why' or 'whose'. | Extend children's use and knowledge of subordinate clauses. | Relative clause Relative pronoun |
| | Use commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity | Encourage children to read their work for sense and meaning, and to punctuate short pauses with commas. | Comma |
| | Use adverbials of time, place and number to link ideas across paragraphs | Encourage children to use paragraphs to break up their writing and to link ideas using words such as 'Earlier...' or 'Nearby...' or 'Secondly...'. They can also use phrases in the same way: 'Later on...' or 'Far away...'. | Adverbial |
| | Use brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis | Help children to see that brackets, dashes and commas can all be used to indicate parenthesis <i>In the museum, the toys (always the most popular exhibit) are on display as you enter the hall.</i> <i>In the museum, the dinosaur – first seen from the stairs – is the largest exhibit they possess.</i> <i>In the museum, the fossils, never easy to display, have lights behind them.</i> | Bracket Dash Comma Parenthesis |
| | Recognise the difference between direct and indirect speech and relate to differences between informal and formal speech structures | Chn need to turn direct speech into indirect speech and recognise how the writing becomes more formal. <i>"I'll never admit that you're better than Arsenal," Fred growled as the Man U supporter tightened the headlock.</i> Turns into: <i>Fred refused to admit that Arsenal was inferior to Manchester United, even though the supporter had him in a headlock.</i> | |

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| | Use apostrophes correctly | <p>Consolidate correct use of apostrophes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To indicate possession in singular or plural nouns: <i>The dog's tail, cats' eyes, ..</i> 2. To indicate a contraction – taking the place of missing letter(s) <i>I'm, don't, ...</i> | Apostrophe Contraction |
| | Use modal verbs to indicate degrees of possibility | <p>Show children how we can have a hierarchy of possibility using modal verbs:</p> <p><i>I may go to my granny's.</i> <i>I might go to my granny's.</i> <i>I should go to my granny's.</i> <i>I will go to my granny's.</i> <i>I must go to my granny's.</i></p> | Modal verb |
| | Y5/Y6 Use dialogue, recognise differences between spoken and written speech (contractions) | <p>Consolidate children's use of dialogue, including use of speech punctuation Stress differences between spoken and written speech. E.g. Contracted forms, and slang...</p> <p><i>"Give me a break," sneered Tom, "You can't expect me to believe that!"</i> <i>"Ger'off, you're hurting me," Sam told his younger brother.</i></p> | Inverted commas or speech marks Direct speech |

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| 6 | Use a wide range of conjunctions to create compound and complex sentences | Consolidate children's use of 'and', 'but' and 'or' to write compound sentences and their use of other conjunctions to create complex sentences with subordinate clauses. | Conjunction Complex sentence Compound sentence |
| | Use full stops, commas, exclamation marks, speech marks and question marks to punctuate sentences correctly. | Help children use punctuation correctly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full stops, question marks for questions and exclamation marks for exclamations. • Speech marks for dialogue, with capital letters and full stops or exclamation/question marks as appropriate. • commas for pauses within sentences. | Full stop Comma Exclamation mark Question mark |
| | Use a wide range of adjectives and adjectival phrases, adverbs, adverbials and prepositional phrases to add description and elaboration to writing. | Consolidate children's use of description to enable them to express themselves in interesting ways. | Noun Adjective Verb Adverb Phrase Preposition |
| | Use expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely | <i>The blue and white salts <u>left in the basin</u> can be placed in a jar for safe-keeping.</i> <i>The herd of deer we saw <u>earlier</u> have returned to the hillside.</i> (A good test of a noun phrase is that the whole thing can be replaced by a pronoun.) | Noun |

Grammar overview Years 1-6

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| | | | Phrase |
| | Use semi-colons or dashes | <p>Show children how we can use a semi-colon to indicate a pause longer than a comma and we can use a dash to indicate a further thought.</p> <p><i>The woolly mammoth was thought to have died out after the ice-age; the weather became too hot for them to survive.</i></p> <p><i>Simon absolutely refused to apologise – he was convinced he had done nothing wrong.</i></p> | Semi-colon Dash |
| 6 | Distinguish between informal and formal vocabulary and sentence structures (?incl. subjunctive?) | <p>Encourage chn to see how we can use speech structures in informal writing and appropriate structures such as the subjunctive in formal writing. E.g.</p> <p><i>He really gave that his best shot <u>didn't he</u>?</i> [Informal speech structure]</p> <p><i>She is really not going to change her mind, <u>is she</u>?</i> [Informal speech structure]</p> <p><i><u>If I were you</u>, I would go and say sorry to Jimmy.</i> [Subjunctive]</p> <p><i><u>If the planet were to warm</u> more than 3°, scientists think that much of the UK would be under the sea.</i> [Subjunctive]</p> | |
| | Use bullet points and punctuate correctly Use colons and semi-colons in punctuating bullet points | <p>Encourage children to use bullet points in non-fiction writing.</p> <p>New playground rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No running in the quiet area; • No football except on the pitch • Hoops, skipping ropes and Frisbees to be returned to the big basket; and • No food in the sitting area. | Bullet points Semi-colon Colon |

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| | Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity | <p>Help children to see that a hyphen can change the meaning: <i>'man-eating shark'</i> is different from <i>'man eating shark'</i> <i>'cat-hating woman'</i> is different from <i>'cat hating woman'</i> <i>'re-cover'</i> is different from <i>'recover'</i></p> | Hyphen |
| | Use passive voice to present information in an objective way | <p>Demonstrate to children how we can describe an incident without saying who did it! Show children how the passive voice helps us to report something without allocating responsibility. <i>The window <u>was broken by a football being kicked through it.</u></i> <i>The kittens <u>were placed on the doorstep of the orphanage.</u></i> <i>John <u>was punched in the chest.</u></i></p> | Passive voice |