



English Core Knowledge

Year 8

This booklet contains the core knowledge students will need to become confident readers and writers.

The key areas we study in Year 8 are:

- A Shakespeare Play
- The Modern Novel
- Comparative Short Stories
- Travel Writing
- Nineteenth Century Fiction
- Descriptive Writing

Grammar, spelling, sentences and punctuation run through every area of study to ensure technical accuracy.

- Students are expected to learn a selection of this core knowledge independently and for homework to ensure they don't have gaps in their knowledge.
- Teachers will carry out regular mini-tests and quizzes to check pupil progress.
- We suggest that students work together with friends and family to help them to achieve the milestones along the journey of success.
- To assist students in their preparation for assessments and the end of year exam, we have developed a website for students and parents to access from home. Here you will find a digital copy of this booklet, suggested reading lists, spelling quizzes, helpful linked websites and other resources teachers may suggest to support our students through their second year at Aylsham High School.
- All of this knowledge feeds in to the AQA English Language and English Literature GCSEs. For further details, please follow these links.
- Language: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700/specification-at-a-glance>
- Literature: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702/specification-at-a-glance>

Shakespeare Play - *Much Ado About Nothing*

Much Ado About Nothing was written around 1599 as Elizabeth I was on the throne. Is this the reason why Shakespeare presents his heroine, Beatrice, as a strong-willed woman? It is one of Shakespeare's best comedies because it combines hilarious pranks with serious comments on love and honour, which we will explore this term.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1 | What does the title of the play mean? | It could mean that a great fuss has been made out of nothing or that there is nothing worth noting – it's just gossip. | In the play the innocent character of Hero is claimed to be unfaithful to her fiancé but these rumours prove to be untrue. |
| 2 | What was the context of the play? | It is set in Sicily. Shakespeare shows how the need to marry for social betterment can distract lovers from the fun of being in love. | <i>“Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.”</i> Leonato shows how people expected wealthy young women to find a suitable husband. |
| 3 | How did the rules of Elizabethan theatre affect the play? | Boys playing the roles of women, added to the comedy. At a time when homosexuality was punishable by death, Shakespeare produces a play showing two sets of boys flirting. | <i>“and with that I will kiss you.”</i> Benedick to Beatrice, who would have been played by a boy. |
| 4 | How does the play follow the rules of the comic genre ? | It has lots of confusion, fun lowly characters, witty conversations, and a double marriage at the end – all typical of the genre <u>at the time</u> . | The comic witty conversations between Benedick and Beatrice. <i>“A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours”</i> . A quick retort from Beatrice. |
| 5 | How is prose used in a Shakespeare play? | Prose is generally spoken by the commoners to show the more realistic side of life. | <i>“Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together”</i> A matter of fact command from Dogberry, a commoner. |
| 6 | How is verse used in a Shakespeare play? | Shakespeare uses blank verse to show the more romantic side of life. It is generally saved for the gentility. | <i>“My love is thine to teach; teach it but how,”</i> Don Pedro, a noble character, he talks about the romantic theme of love. |
| 7 | What is blank verse ? | Blank verse is a verse without rhyme which has 10 syllables per line. 5 are stressed and 5 are unstressed. | <i>“My <u>liege</u>, your <u>Highness may now do me good.</u>”</i> The underlined syllable is the stressed syllable. |
| 8 | What can a soliloquy add the telling of the story? | A soliloquy is a speech from a single character, who often stands on the stage alone. We can trust what a character says in soliloquy; we are listening to their inner thoughts. | <i>“When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.”</i> Benedick's reaction to hearing the rumour that Beatrice loves. Him. |
| 9 | Why do writers construct a character? | Characters are inventions and therefore should not be discussed as real people. They are constructed by the writer to represent a viewpoint on the play's central themes. | <i>“I'm amazed that a man, after watching romance turn another man into a fool and laughing at that man, can turn right around and become the thing he's scorned.”</i> Benedick's views on Claudio's view on love. |
| 10 | Why does Shakespeare use so much patterning in his language? | Patterning (lists, repetitions, verbal echoes, rhymes, discourse markers) was used as a response to the noisy theatre but also to guide the actors to remember and deliver the lines clearly. | <i>“<u>Benedick</u> once put up a public notice in Messina challenging <u>Cupid</u> to an archery match. My uncle's jester accepted the contest on <u>Cupid's</u> behalf but used toy <u>arrows</u> at the shooting match.”</i> Beatrice emphasises how Benedick is a love fool. |

The Modern Novel – *The Giver*

The genre of the modern novel we are studying is called the ‘dystopic novel’ or sometimes the ‘dystopian novel’. *The Giver* was written by Lois Lowry as part of a quartet. Take time to read *The Giver*, *Gathering Blue*, *Messenger* and *Son*. Lowry came up with the idea of a scary, sterile world where people take drugs to suppress their memories after her own father lost his memory after he was given drugs in a nursing home.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
|----|--|---|--|
| 1 | What is dystopic fiction ? | Novels which are set in an oppressed world but they give the impression that everything appears to be perfect. | “Destroying things is much easier than making them.” ‘The Hunger Games’ by Suzanne Collins |
| 2 | What is the dystopic novel movement ? | A 20 th century (1930s-) movement. It criticized science as the answer to poverty and inequality. | In ‘1984’, George Orwell challenged the scientific development of TV and the power of totalitarian leaders like Hitler through his character Big Brother. |
| 3 | Who were the dystopian writers of the time? | Aldous Huxley – <i>Brave New World</i> , George Orwell – <i>1984</i> and <i>Animal Farm</i> and William Golding – <i>Lord of the Flies</i> . | “War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.” (1984). Here Orwell challenges everything we have come to learn as truth. |
| 4 | What is a ‘utopia’ ? | ‘Utopia’, literally means ‘good place’. Utopian fiction presents a perfect ideal world usually set in the future. | In <i>‘A Modern Utopia’</i> , HG Wells presents a perfect world where workers have more leisure time. Think Pandora in the opening of <i>‘Avatar’</i> . |
| 5 | How is a novel different from a short story? | Novels have time to explore themes and their characters’ reactions to events in detail. | ‘My father’s family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip ... I called myself Pip.’ Dickens traces Pip’s character throughout <i>Great Expectations</i> . |
| 6 | How can an extended metaphor be used by novelists? | An extended metaphor can continue over an entire novel to help readers understand new ideas by comparing them to familiar things. | The community in <i>The Giver</i> is a metaphor for restriction; it limits an individual’s choices until they have none left, removing the joy from life. |
| 7 | What can we learn from Lois Lowry’s use language ? | She uses euphemism to hide the truth but more so to emphasise the control of the community . | The euphemism of ‘pass away’ masks death and ‘release’ replaces killing, to stop the people questioning. |
| 8 | What can we learn from Lois Lowry’s plot structure ? | One important technique that Lowry uses is her open-ended plot structure to allow readers the freedom to interpret the ending in their own way, | Lowry’s ending: ‘Behind him, across vast distances of space and time, from the place he had left, he thought he heard music too. But perhaps it was only an echo.’ |
| 9 | How do writers create impressions of character? | They can use techniques like questioning, opinions, the 1 st person and modifiers. | Lowry uses a question “But why can’t everyone have the memories?” to give the impression Jonas is wise. |
| 10 | What can we learn from Lois Lowry’s narrative style ? | Lowry uses a straightforward style that is almost journalistic — one episode logically follows another. We could do the same. | Lowry uses clear descriptive details to show everyday life <i>before</i> she deliberately reveals the dystopia. Withholding details gets the reader not just reading but thinking too. |

Comparative Short Stories – *The Gulf* and *The Open Window*

This unit allows us to compare how the mystery story genre is treated differently across time. *The Gulf* was written in the twenty-first century and *The Open Window* was written at the beginning of the twentieth century. How would you compare the attitudes of the time?

| | Question | Answer | Example |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1 | What impact does time have on a short story? | It can create a specific mood of the time. It can either highlight or question beliefs people held then. | In <i>The Open Window</i> Saki writes a mischievous story that plays with a man's superstitions. It was a criticism of Edwardian values of the time. |
| 2 | How is a short story different from a novel? | Short stories are structured around one main event and are usually about one character. | ' <i>Framton Nuttel endeavoured to say the correct something</i> '. Saki concentrates on Mr Nuttel and his difficulty in polite conversation. |
| 3 | How can writers use structure to build tension? | Writers can choose to lay down hints, false trails or to withhold details to keep the reader guessing. | In <i>The Gulf</i> , we don't know why the children were ' <i>rubbing a twist of grass</i> ', only later do we realise its significance. |
| 4 | When can foreshadowing be useful? | When writers want to give a hint of what is to come, they foreshadow. | " <i>Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day</i> " foreshadows the reaction of the aunt later in the story. |
| 5 | When can flashback be used in a story? | When the writer wants to interrupt the sequence of events with a scene which adds context or detail. | Mr. Lockwood has a troubling dream about a dead girl called Cathy. A flashback can be a dream or memory. |
| 6 | Why do writers use ambiguity ? | Ambiguity is when a word or phrase which has more than one meaning. It encourages different interpretations. | John went to the bank . 'Bank' could mean a financial place or the side of the river. |
| 7 | What kinds of effects can writers create through character ? | Writers can create pathos; a feeling of pity, disgust for Mr Nuttel's foolishness by his actions or admiration for Vera's sneaky trick. | McCaughreane uses the simile ' <i>his voice dropped into the ravine like a rockfall</i> ' to allow the reader to share Juan's hopelessness and feel pathos for him. |
| 8 | What is the power of the single-line paragraph ? | They can make the reader stop, think and fill in the gaps with their own imagination. They can be shocking or funny. | In <i>The Gulf</i> the simple statement ' He reached the gulf. ' as a 1-line paragraph makes the reader stop, just like Juan. He can't go further. |
| 9 | How can writers use language to create tension? | Writers can strip out the modifiers to withhold information or they can deliberately choose adjectives to build the mood. | Adjectives 'cold' and 'thin' create a tense atmosphere whereas the adjective 'magical' gives a positive impression to contrast with the rest of the story's dark mood. |
| 10 | How can writers involve their readers in the action? | Writers directly talk to their reader, cut their clauses short, ask questions or connotation to make their readers think. | Saki uses connotation as Vera's name suggests honesty as it comes from the Latin word for truth, <i>veritas</i> . It leads the reader to trust Vera as we believe she is telling the truth. |

Travel Writing - Bill Bryson's *Notes From a Small Island*

Travel writing records the accounts of people on the move. It is writing about the liminal space that a writer occupies when they visit a new place temporarily.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
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| 1 | What is liminality ? | Liminality is the space between. It is about being on the threshold of somewhere but not yet participating in it. | Bill Bryson has a liminal experience when he visits the UK. He <i>“put a pair of flannel boxer shorts on .. [his] ... head as a kind of desperate headwarmer”</i> . He slides into a state where the rules temporarily don't apply to him. |
| 2 | What is a rite of passage ? | Events marking important stages in the transition from childhood to adulthood e.g. getting your GCSEs or passing your driving test. | Travel is perhaps the best rite of passage because it is like an initiation into the big wide world. We can become a new person. |
| 3 | Why is voice so important in travel writing? | Readers are less interested in a place than the experience the narrator has of that place. The thoughts and feelings are the voice . | Bill Bryson has a strong voice; <i>“You might want to take them pants off your head before you go in”</i> , he uses humour to share his experience of England. |
| 4 | Why is satire a common feature of travel writing? | Writers encounter many strange things while travelling, which leaves description open to satire: an attack on the absurd by using humour. | When Michael Palin encounters two ostriches he satirically describes it as 'a soap': <i>“in another episode of the Masai Mara soap opera, a male ostrich is doing his best to attract the ladies”</i> . |
| 5 | How can we use the rule of three to create humour? | We can pair two similar ideas in a list and then add a third unexpected idea. | <i>“Losing weight is simple: Eat less, exercise more and pay someone to eat for you.”</i> |
| 6 | How do writers use exaggeration to create humour? | Travel writers bring a gentle smile to the reader by over-stating the attributes of a person or an object. | The cars 'just <u>flew</u> around <u>wildly, barely in contact with the floor</u> '. Did they? Did they really fly? |
| 7 | How do writers use under-statement to create humour? | It aims to create a contrast between what the reader expects and what is actually experienced. | Under-statement downplays something to the point it is funny. Bryson lists the strict rules of a guest house then writes <i>“This was like joining the Army.”</i> |
| 8 | How do we use comparison to create humour? | We can simply brainstorm metaphors and then choose the one that is funniest. | <i>“Giving up FIFA is like teaching a baby to do a 900 triple front flip!”</i> |
| 9 | How do writers use cliché to create humour? | What better way to create comedy than to use a phrase your readers already know? | Some writers adapt the cliché: <i>“Breath-taking!”</i> could become <i>“Breath-taking! It was when I fell off the blinking horse.”</i> |
| 10 | How do writers use irony in travel writing? | This is where the writer plays on meaning which is the exact opposite of what is written. | Bryson <i>“waited patiently for death's sweet kiss”</i> , not literally but preferring to be anywhere else than on the cold bench he is lying on. |

Nineteenth Century Novels – *Nicholas Nickelby* by Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens, the first great urban novelist in England, writes passionately about the plight of the vulnerable against the system. If you take time to read several of novels about children (*Oliver Twist*, *Little Dorrit*, *David Copperfield*), you will understand why Dickens is one of the most important social commentators who used fiction effectively to criticize economic, social, and moral abuses in the Victorian era.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
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| 1 | When was Charles Dickens writing? | 1830s-1860s. It was a time of great change. With the Industrial Revolution came great poverty. | Charles Dickens said 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times'. |
| 2 | What inspired Charles Dickens to write? | Dickens was a writer of social justice; he wrote about the poverty he saw on the streets of London in order to raise awareness. | 'A day wasted on others is not wasted on one's self.' He felt passionately about showing the struggle of the vulnerable against the system. |
| | How did the time affect Dickens' writing? | Dickens' writing was serialised in newspapers and magazines, which gives his style its quality of episodes. | Publishing his novels in serial form expanded Dickens's readership, as more people could afford to buy fiction on the instalment plan. |
| 3 | What is particular about Dickens' writing style? | Short stories are structured around one main event and are usually about one character. | "A Rose For Emily," centres on the discovery of the main character's dead, body in her home. The rest of the story is just build up and explanation. |
| 4 | Why did Dickens write so many stories about children? | A story relates the events in order. A narrative more interestingly shuffles the events. | 'I'm Manchester United and I've got the ball and everything is good.' This story is about a war - we later find out. |
| 5 | Why do writers choose a particular narrative voice? | The 1 st person makes the narrator a character in the story – it's more personal. The 3 rd person, provides an omniscient narrator to give authority. | 'And I like large parties. They're so intimate.' (1 st person shares thoughts.) "He is just what a young man ought to be," (3 rd person shares speech). |
| 6 | Why do writers choose a narrative perspective? | They want to create an effect e.g. a child's view can be touching, a villain's view can be chilling | Ted Hughes: 'I kill where I please because it is all mine' . Told from the viewpoint of a hawk – a bird of prey. |
| 7 | Why is a narrator useful? | It provides the author with a person to voice ideas aloud. | 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.' Jane Austen examines this belief. |
| 8 | Why do writers develop different characters? | Writers like to create characters which readers can connect with and can rub them up the wrong way. | 'dreadfully nervous I had been and am, but why will you say I am mad?' By the villain in 'The Tell Tale Heart'. |
| 9 | Why do writers construct a protagonist? | They like to create a leading figure for the reader to connect with. Sometimes called the hero. | Superman: 'You're much stronger than you think you are. Trust me.' |
| 10 | Why do writers construct an antagonist? | Antagonists act as an opposing character to the protagonist to emphasise the hero's positive ideas. | The Joker: 'We stopped checking for monsters under the bed when we realised they are inside us.' |

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| | They can also make us question ideas. | |
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Descriptive Writing – Exam

Description can convey a scene, person, object or moment in life. It celebrates the writer’s ability to enchant the reader by creating a strong picture in the mind’s eye.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
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| 1 | What is the effect of descriptive writing? | To describe a person, place, or thing in such vivid detail that the reader can easily form a mental picture of what is being written about. | “one canary-yellow cotton jacket on a cloakroom floor,” . Can you picture the scene Simon Armitage describes in his poem ‘Homecoming?’ |
| 2 | How can we use a picture as a stimulus to describe? | When describing a scene, we can describe both inside and just outside of the picture’s frame. | We may describe a cathedral in the picture but there could be pigeons beyond it on the square, which create sounds and atmosphere. |
| 3 | Which techniques do writers use to engage their readers? | They choose their focus (e.g. the fire) then carefully choose their words (e.g. incandescent to mean a passionate, strong light). | “The fire burned brightly, and the soft radiance of the incandescent lights in the lilies of silver caught the bubbles that flashed and passed in our glasses” . HG Wells describes fire in The Time Machine. |
| 4 | What is engaging detail ? | A specific description which brings alive the scene. You could use the five senses or a simile. | “The sea tickled the shore with a foaming wave” . A past student personifies the sea by using ‘tickled’ . |
| 5 | How can we play with vocabulary to create effects? | We can repeat words, rhyme them, use words which start with the same letters or use synonyms/antonyms. | “The waves <u>wrapped</u> themselves <u>around</u> him” . A past student repeats the ‘r’ sound to mimic the movement of the sea. |
| 6 | How can writers build atmosphere in description? | Atmosphere is the mood of a place. It can be created by using sounds to make us feel we are present in the writer’s scene. | “Sweet dreams, form a <u>shade</u> o’er my lovely infant’s <u>s</u> head.” The sibilance represents the child’s breathing. William Blake’s A Cradle Song. |
| 7 | Why do successful descriptive writers limit modifiers ? | Writers try to cut down on their modifiers because they can confuse a thought. Instead, they find the verb that perfectly portrays the image they’re aiming for. | ‘They <u>arrived</u> at the house just behind the fire trucks, the street <u>alive</u> in a glow of lights and sirens, their house <u>ablaze</u>. The verbs make the scene seem exciting, and they create a clear picture. |
| 8 | Why do writers describe specific details ? | Writers avoid summary in description because they want to offer concrete information to engage their readers on a moment-by-moment basis. | The heat is oppressive, sweltering and exhausting, it sticks to the skin and makes ovens out of parking lots. Here the details of the heat and its effect on the people are shared. |
| 9 | Why do writers love to use figurative language ? | Figurative language is using figures of speech, like metaphor, simile and personification. It gives the writer a chance to pull apart a scene and recast it into something familiar. | There was an <u>orange burn</u> where the sun had been, and the <u>mutilated animal shapes</u> of cloud lay scattered in the tear of dusk. The reader can imagine the sun as the familiar smudge of a burn. |
| 10 | How do we avoid over-describing ? | Writing is a relationship between the writer and the reader. We can leave out details to give the reader a | The silence echoed – its return smacked into the boy’s ears. |

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| | chance to imagine for themselves. A little description can go a long way. | A dash is used to help the reader to pause to hear the same silence as the boy. |
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Grammar

Grammar is the nuts and bolts which connect parts of a sentence together. It is the study of the way words are used to make sentences.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
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| 1 | Why are nouns an important part of a sentence? | They name what the sentence is about: a person , object or a place . (POP) | Mr Spalding (person) Laptop (object) Woods (place) |
| 2 | What job does an adjective do? | It modifies the meaning of a noun, or a verb. | Their work was good . (After the verb 'was'). |
| 3 | What does a verb do? | It is the muscle in a sentence. It gives us physical actions, mental actions or a state of being. | She walked . (physical action) I think it will be OK. (mental action) I am here. (state of being) |
| 4 | When can we use modal verbs ? | When we want to suggest possibilities or obligations. | Maybe the writer wants to show jealousy. You must think about using commas. |
| 5 | What can an adverb add to a sentence? | It can explain how to do something and it can build in details e.g to a verb, adverb, adjective or a clause. | The match was really close. We don't get to play sport very often. Fortunately , it didn't rain. |
| 6 | What is the job of a conjunction ? | It marks the junction where one clause ends and another begins. | She watched her friend go and she waved goodbye. And, but, for, nor, or, yet, so. |
| 7 | Can conjunctions be subordinating ? | Yes, they can introduce a subordinate clause. | He was happy until he had to do the washing up. Because she had a passion for horses, she liked to ride. |
| 8 | How is a connective different from a conjunction? | Conjunctions join ideas within the same sentence. Whereas a connective connects ideas between sentences. | She watched her friend go. However , he was only gone for a day before his return. Although, then, therefore. |
| 9 | Why do writers use prepositions ? | They want to show the position between words like nouns, pronouns or phrases. | The cat sat on the mat. It sat near the mat. The hairy cat sat on the mat. |
| 10 | When do writers use a pronoun ? | In the place of a noun when they want to withhold details or when they have already used the noun. | I, you, he, she, we, they, one, it. Cathy was in love with Heathcliff, she enjoyed his company on the moors. |
| 11 | How can writers use the first person pronoun ? | They can use them to refer to the speaker personally or about themselves. | I, me, we, us. I can remember you child. We want, we shouted. |
| 12 | Why might writers use the second person pronoun ? | They want to directly address their readers to engage them in the topic. It's a great way to persuade. | You, your, yours. Have you thought about how energy drinks are damaging your health? |
| 13 | Why do writers use third person pronouns ? | These pronouns are helpful as they refer to people or things other than the speaker. | He, she, it, him, her, they, them. She kept an antique shop. |
| 14 | When can impersonal pronouns be used? | These are good if you want to talk about people in general. | One, they, you. You can see they are right. |
| 15 | What can possessive pronouns do? | They can show that something belongs to someone. | My, mine, yours, your, his, him, her, hers our, ours, their, theirs, one's, its. It was their last chance to win the cup. |

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| 16 | Why do writers use the definite article ? | The definite article is the . Its effect is much more specific. | This is the car I want for my birthday. I only want this one specific car (please!) |
| 17 | When can you use the indefinite article ? | If you want to refer to any place, object or person. | It was a car that I wanted for my birthday. I would like an apple please. |
| 18 | Why do we need determiners ? | They help us to determine the amount of something we want. | There were three cars. He ate some of the cake. All of the students learned it. |

Spelling

If you are like most people, chances are at some point you will have been confused by the spelling of a word. Spelling can be challenging because there are so many rules. Learn some of this core knowledge and it will help you to reduce some of the challenges.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1 | What is a vowel ? | A sound which is made without being blocked by the tongue, teeth or lips. | a, e, i, o, u and occasionally y as in sky or fly . |
| 2 | What is a consonant ? | A letter in the alphabet which is not a vowel. | b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, z. |
| 3 | Why do we need to know the root word first? | So we know the original meaning of a word before we change it with suffixes and prefixes. | e.g. mobile without the prefix auto- as in automobile or the suffix -ity as in mobility. |
| 4 | Why is a prefix useful to know? | It can be attached to the front of a word to modify its meaning. We can see how words can be built up to form new words. | Dis- before the verb 'infect' becomes the verb disinfect . 'Dis-' means to reverse something. |
| 5 | Why is a suffix useful to know? | It can be attached to the end of a word to modify its meaning. It helps us to understand spellings and word meanings. | 'ment' after the verb 'install' becomes the noun instalment , the result of installing something. |
| 6 | Why is it helpful to know what a word family ? | To understand how words can be grouped and share common spellings and meanings. | Work is the head of the family of working, worked, worker, workmanship. |
| 7 | How do writers show tense ? | They decide whether to write in the past, present or future tense. They change verb endings. | She studies . Yesterday she studied . He may study tomorrow. |
| 8 | When is standard English used? | When writers want to appeal to a wide audience, be clear or authoritative. | Some people claim exercise can damage health in the place of <i>exercise can play havoc with your health</i> . |
| 9 | When is non-standard English used? | When writers want to reflect the way people speak in a region of England. To be authentic. | I done it in place of 'I did it'. We had a mardle at the gate in place of we had a chat by the gate. |
| 10 | Why should we learn homophones? | To help us to remember the different spellings of words which sound alike. | Our and are Their, they're and there |
| 11 | How is a homograph different from a homophone? | These words are spelt the same but have different meanings. | Lead as in 'to lead the way' (Verb). Lead as in the metal. (Noun). Lead as in the dog leash. (Noun). |
| 12 | How can synonyms be useful? | They can help us to choose different words which have the same meaning. We can sound more sophisticated and precise. | The girl was happy becomes the girl was elated . |
| 13 | Why do we need antonyms ? | They are good for comparisons because they have almost opposite meanings. | I love playing out in the rain becomes I hate playing out in the rain. |

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| 14 | When do writers use the contracted form ? | When they want to shorten words to show a letter has been left out in informal or personal writing. | I am becomes <i>I'm</i> Do not becomes <i>don't</i> |
| 15 | Why do writers use word blends ? | Blends mix two words together to form a new word. They are quick and relevant to new experiences. | In the 19 th century the nouns smoke and fog were mixed to form <i>'smog'</i> to describe the air caused by coal fires. |

Punctuation

Punctuation shows us where ideas start and finish. It helps us to make our writing clear for our readers. Punctuation within sentences can help writers to emphasise certain ideas, change the tone or to play with the reader's response.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
|----|--|--|--|
| 1 | What is a full stop used for? | It marks the end of one idea. It always ends a statement. | A recent survey confirmed that young people are wiser than older people. |
| 2 | What is a question mark used for? | It can be used to directly involve the reader or to cause them to question an idea. | <i>Why would you</i> want to sit through a whole James Bond movie? |
| 3 | Why do writers choose to use an exclamation mark ? | They indicate strong feelings or high volume (shouting). | That's wonderful news! Come back here right away! |
| 4 | What job do commas do in a sentence? | Commas separate items in a list, and relative clauses in a sentence. | You can go to the cinema, swim, play tennis or eat out in Norwich. |
| 5 | What are parenthetical commas used for? | They keep a word, phrase or clause separate from the rest of a sentence by using commas. | Mrs Davis, <i>the music teacher</i> , had won an award for being the best teacher. |
| 6 | What are speech marks used for? | Speech marks wrap around speech – at the beginning and end. | "I saw your mum in Tesco's last week" said Jack, "she looked really well." |
| 7 | What is the difference between speech marks and quotation marks ? | Quotation marks AKA single inverted commas wrap around quoted words. | I always remembered what she told me: 'Your mind is a powerful thing when you fill it with positive thoughts'. |
| 8 | What is a semi-colon used for? | It links two independent clauses which are closely related. | Dad is going bald; his hair is getting thinner and thinner. 'bald' and 'hair' are linked. |
| 9 | What does a colon do? | It introduces a clause that gives detail or introduces a list, a quotation or speech in a script. | He got what he worked for: <i>he really earned that promotion.</i> This phrase adds detail. |
| 10 | What is ellipsis used for? | Punctuation to show missing text. It allows the reader to fill in the gaps. | 'And I remember ... I was afraid'. |
| 11 | Why is a hyphen used? | It links two or more words together or shows a word is incomplete at the end of a line. | User – friendly part-time back-to back |
| 12 | What is the difference between the hyphen and the dash ? | Whereas the hyphen links compound words, the dash is used to separate two parts of a sentence to create emphasis. | <i>Paul sang his song terribly – <i>and he thought he was brilliant!</i></i> |
| 13 | What are parenthetical brackets used for? | They wrap around the non-essential information in a sentence. If you took the parenthesis away, the sentence would still make sense. | <i>He finally answered <i>(after taking five minutes to think)</i> that he did not understand the question.</i> |

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| 14 | What is an apostrophe used for? | An apostrophe is used to show letters have been left out or that something belongs to someone. | Should not = <i>shouldn't</i> . 'o' has been left out. The cars belonging to the one boy = the <i>boy's</i> cars. |
| 15 | What is the punctuation of direct speech ? | Speech marks encompass the speech. Start a new speech on a new line. Use punctuation to separate speech from the rest of the sentence. | <i>"No ice thank you," Billy concluded.</i> |

Sentences

Sentences are like a piece of string: they can be twisted, cut up and stuck back together again in a different order. All of these approaches are taken to create particular effects for the reader.

| | Question | Answer | Example |
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| 1 | Can I remember what a clause is? | A clause is a group of related words containing a subject and a verb. It can stand on its own. | <i>The girls enjoy riding their horses.</i> |
| 2 | What is the difference between a clause and a phrase ? | A phrase is a group of words that work together as a unit but can't stand on its own. | <i>Racing across the fields,</i> the girls enjoy riding their horses. |
| 3 | What is the effect of a simple sentence ? | It expresses a single complete thought. It can create a statement, shock or a summary. | <i>I like to read Sophie McKensie novels.</i> |
| 4 | When do writers choose to use a compound sentence ? | When they want to develop an idea by joining two independent clauses together. | I like to read in the library <i>and</i> my friend likes to read at home. |
| 5 | Why do writers enjoy using complex sentences ? | They want one idea to seem more important than another part. They want to add details such as facts or added opinions. | Since I was going to the prom, for the first time, <i>I thought I should buy a new dress.</i> |
| 6 | What is a main clause ? | This is the main part of the sentence which can stand on its own. | Since I was going to the prom, <i>I thought I should buy a new dress.</i> |
| 7 | What is a dependent clause ? | The part of the sentence which depends on the main clause to make sense. | <i>Since I was going to the prom,</i> I thought I should buy a new dress. |
| 8 | What does an adverbial phrase do? | Like adverbs, this phrase modifies the verb, adjective or adverb. | He was <i>unexpectedly</i> kind. <i>Unexpectedly</i> modifies the way he was <i>kind</i> . |
| 9 | Can you place adverbials in different places in a sentence? | Yes. Fronted adverbials can be placed at the front to hold back details before the main clause. | <i>Even though he was slow,</i> he managed to complete the relay. |
| 10 | When do writers use noun phrases ? | When they want to build details around the person, object or place. | Charles Dickens does this to describe a desk: ' <i>There were a couple of old rickety desks, cut and notched...</i> ' |
| 11 | How can verb phrases be used? | A verb phrase can act differently in different parts of a sentence but it always contains a verb. | <i>Even though it was Sunday, she was walking quickly to the school.</i> |
| 12 | How can adjectival phrases be used? | It can tell us something about the noun it is modifying . | These <i>unbelievably expensive</i> shoes. The 'unbelievably expensive' describes the shoes. |
| 13 | What can a preposition phrase add to a sentence? | It can add context to tell us the position of something. It's a good way to extend sentences. | The cat jumped and pounced. (What did the cat jump off? What did the cat pounce on?) <i>The cat jumped off the stove and pounced on the gerbil.</i> |

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| 14 | When is the passive voice used? | When the writer wants to show how the subject is having something done to it. A formal sentence. | <i>The entire stretch of road was paved by the crew.</i> The road had no choice to be paved – it was passive. |
| 15 | When is the active voice used? | It is more informal than the passive. The subject carries out the action. | <i>The crew paved the entire stretch of the road.</i> The crew had a choice, they actively paved the road. |