



## English Core Knowledge – Spelling, punctuation and grammar

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

14	When can <b>impersonal pronouns</b> be used?	These are good if you want to talk about people in general.	One, they, you. <b>You</b> can see <b>they</b> are right.
15	What can <b>possessive pronouns</b> do?	They can show that something belongs to someone.	<b>My, mine, yours, your, his, him, her, hers our, ours, their, theirs, one's, its.</b> <i>It was <b>their</b> last chance to win the cup.</i>
16	Why do writers use <b>the definite article</b> ?	The definite article is <b>the</b> . Its effect is much more specific.	This is <b>the</b> car I want for my birthday. I only want this one specific car (please!)
17	When can you use the <b>indefinite article</b> ?	If you want to refer to any place, object or person.	It was <b>a</b> car that I wanted for my birthday. I would like <b>an</b> apple please.
18	Why do we need <b>determiners</b> ?	They help us to determine the amount of something we want.	There were <b>three</b> cars. He ate <b>some</b> of the cake. <b>All</b> 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 <b>vowel</b> ?	A sound which is made without being blocked by the tongue, teeth or lips.	<b>a,e,i,o,u</b> and occasionally <b>y</b> as in <b>sky</b> or <b>fly</b> .
2	What is a <b>consonant</b> ?	A letter in the alphabet which is not a vowel.	<b>b,c,d,f,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,p,q,r,s,t,v,w,x,z.</b>
3	Why do we need to know the <b>root word</b> first?	So we know the original meaning of a word before we change it with suffixes and prefixes.	e.g. <b>mobile</b> without the prefix auto- as in automobile or the suffix -ity as in mobility.
4	Why is a <b>prefix</b> 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 <b>disinfect</b> . 'Dis-' means to reverse something.
5	Why is a <b>suffix</b> 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 <b>instalment</b> , the result of installing something.
6	Why is it helpful to know what a <b>word family</b> ?	To understand how words can be grouped and share common spellings and meanings.	<b>Work</b> is the head of the family of <b>working, worked, worker, workmanship.</b>
7	How do writers show <b>tense</b> ?	They decide whether to write in the past, present or future tense. They change verb endings.	She <b>studies</b> . Yesterday she <b>studied</b> . He may <b>study</b> tomorrow.
8	When is <b>standard English</b> used?	When writers want to appeal to a wide audience, be clear or authoritative.	<b>Some people claim exercise can damage health</b> in the place of <i>exercise can play havoc with your health.</i>
9	When is <b>non-standard English</b> used?	When writers want to reflect the way people speak in a region of England. To be authentic.	<b>I done it</b> in place of 'I did it'. <b>We had a mardle at the gate</b> 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.	<b>Our</b> and <b>are</b> <b>Their, they're and there</b>

11	How is a <b>homograph</b> different from a homophone?	These words are spelt the same but have different meanings.	<b>Lead</b> as in 'to lead the way' (Verb). <b>Lead</b> as in the metal. (Noun). <b>Lead</b> as in the dog leash. (Noun).
12	How can <b>synonyms</b> be useful?	They can help us to choose different words which have the same meaning. We can sound more sophisticated and precise.	<i>The girl was <b>happy</b> becomes the girl was <b>elated</b>.</i>
13	Why do we need <b>antonyms</b> ?	They are good for comparisons because they have almost opposite meanings.	<i>I <b>love</b> playing out in the rain becomes I <b>hate</b> playing out in the rain.</i>
14	When do writers use the <b>contracted form</b> ?	When they want to shorten words to show a letter has been left out in informal or personal writing.	I am becomes <b>I'm</b> Do not becomes <b>don't</b>
15	Why do writers use <b>word blends</b> ?	Blends mix two words together to form a new word. They are quick and relevant to new experiences.	In the 19 <sup>th</sup> century the nouns smoke and fog were mixed to form ' <b>smog</b> ' 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 <b>full stop</b> 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 <b>question mark</b> used for?	It can be used to directly involve the reader or to cause them to question an idea.	<b>Why would you</b> want to sit through a whole James Bond movie?
3	Why do writers choose to use an <b>exclamation mark</b> ?	They indicate strong feelings or high volume (shouting).	That's wonderful news! Come back here right away!
4	What job do <b>commas</b> do in a sentence?	Commas separate items in a list, and relative clauses in a sentence.	You can go to the <b>cinema, swim, play tennis</b> or eat out in Norwich.
5	What are <b>parenthetical commas</b> used for?	They keep a word, phrase or clause separate from the rest of a sentence by using commas.	Mrs Davis, <b>the music teacher</b> , had won an award for being the best teacher.
6	What are <b>speech marks</b> 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 <b>quotation marks</b> ?	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 <b>semi-colon</b> 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 <b>colon</b> 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: <b>he really earned that promotion</b> . This phrase adds detail.
10	What is <b>ellipsis</b> 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 <b>hyphen</b> 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 <b>dash</b> ?	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 – <u>and he thought he was brilliant!</u></i>
13	What are <b>parenthetic brackets</b> 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 <u>(after taking five minutes to think)</u> that he did not understand the question.</i>
14	What is an <b>apostrophe</b> used for?	An apostrophe is used to show letters have been left out or that something belongs to someone.	Should not = <b><i>shouldn't</i></b> . 'o' has been left out. The cars belonging to the one boy = the <b><i>boy's</i></b> cars.
15	What is the punctuation of <b>direct speech</b> ?	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
1	Can I remember what a <b>clause</b> is?	A clause is a group of related words containing a subject and a verb. It can stand on its own.	<b><u>The girls enjoy riding their horses.</u></b>
2	What is the difference between a clause and a <b>phrase</b> ?	A phrase is a group of words that work together as a unit but can't stand on its own.	<b><u>Racing across the fields,</u></b> the girls enjoy riding their horses.
3	What is the effect of a <b>simple sentence</b> ?	It expresses a single complete thought. It can create a statement, shock or a summary.	<b><u>I like to read Sophie McKensie novels.</u></b>
4	When do writers choose to use a compound <b>sentence</b> ?	When they want to develop an idea by joining two independent clauses together.	I like to read in the library <b><u>and</u></b> my friend likes to read at home.
5	Why do writers enjoy using <b>complex sentences</b> ?	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, <b><u>I thought I should buy a new dress.</u></b>
6	What is a <b>main clause</b> ?	This is the main part of the sentence which can stand on its own.	Since I was going to the prom, <b><u>I thought I should buy a new dress.</u></b>
7	What is a <b>dependent clause</b> ?	The part of the sentence which depends on the main clause to make sense.	<b><u>Since I was going to the prom,</u></b> I thought I should buy a new dress.
8	What does an <b>adverbial phrase</b> do?	Like adverbs, this phrase modifies the verb, adjective or adverb.	He was <b><u>unexpectedly</u></b> kind. <b><u>Unexpectedly</u></b> modifies the way he was <b><i>kind</i></b> .
9	Can you place <b>adverbials</b> in different places in a sentence?	Yes. <b>Fronted adverbials</b> can be placed at the front to hold back details before the main clause.	<b><u>Even though he was slow,</u></b> he managed to complete the relay.

10	When do writers use <b>noun phrases</b> ?	When they want to build details around the person, object or place.	Charles Dickens does this to describe a desk: ' <i><b>There were a couple of old rickety desks, cut and notched...</b></i> '
11	How can <b>verb phrases</b> 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, <b>she was walking quickly to the school.</b></i>
12	How can <b>adjectival phrases</b> be used?	It can tell us something about the noun it is modifying.	These <b>unbelievably expensive</b> shoes. The 'unbelievably expensive' describes the shoes.
13	What can a <b>preposition phrase</b> 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 <b>off the stove</b> and pounced <b>on the gerbil.</b></i>
14	When is the <b>passive voice</b> 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 <b>was paved</b> by the crew.</i> The road had no choice to be paved – it was passive.
15	When is the <b>active voice</b> used?	It is more informal than the passive. The subject carries out the action.	<i><b>The crew paved</b> the entire stretch of the road.</i> The crew had a choice, they actively paved the road.