

# Grammar



## A Parents' Guide

A guide to the new national curriculum's grammatical terms for those of us who weren't taught grammar at school.

[www.thepunctuationshow.com](http://www.thepunctuationshow.com)



Many parents were not taught grammar at school and therefore might not be confident with the topic.

The purpose of this guide is to help explain some of the terms, which your son or daughter is expected to know as part of the new national curriculum.

The following terms are covered:

**Year 1**

Words  
Letters vs. Capitals  
Punctuation  
Full Stops  
Exclamation Marks  
Singular vs. Plural  
Sentences

**Year 2**

Nouns  
Adjectives  
Verbs  
Tense  
Progressive  
Adverbs  
Noun Phrases  
Statements  
Questions  
Exclamations  
Commands  
Suffixes  
Apostrophes  
Commas  
Compound Sentences

**Year 3**

Consonants vs. Vowels  
Word Families  
Clauses  
Conjunctions  
Prefixes  
Perfect  
Prepositions  
Inverted Commas

**Year 4**

Articles  
Adverbials  
Determiners  
Pronouns  
Possessive Pronouns

**Year 5**

Ambiguity  
Auxiliary Verbs  
Modal Verbs  
Brackets  
Cohesion  
Relative Clauses  
Dashes  
Parenthesis

**Year 6**

Active and Passive Voice  
Synonyms and Antonyms  
Subject vs. Object  
Ellipsis  
Semicolons  
Colons  
Bullet Points  
Hyphens

# ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

YEAR 6

An action within a clause can be expressed in one of two ways: active or passive voice.

The active voice has the subject as the active part

The mouse ate the cheese.

In this example, the mouse is doing something. It is eating the cheese; the mouse is active.

The passive voice has the subject acted upon.

The cheese was eaten by the mouse.

In this example, the cheese is the subject, but it is passive. The mouse is still doing the eating and takes attention away from the subject.





# SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS

## YEAR 6

Synonyms are words that have similar meanings.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

big and large  
talk and speak  
small and tiny

Synonyms aren't always interchangeable, so make sure you understand a word's meaning.

Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

fat and thin  
helpful and unhelpful  
decent and indecent

We can often create antonyms by adding prefixes like 'un' and 'in'.



# SUBJECT VS. OBJECT

**YEAR 6**

The subject of a sentence will normally be a noun, pronoun or noun phrase.



We would normally expect a subject to go before a verb.

An object will also normally be a noun, pronoun or noun phrase.



We would normally expect an object to go after a verb.

**REMEMBER!**

The subject is what the sentence is about. It can affect the form of the verb.





# ELLIPSIS

YEAR 6

An ellipsis is used to show an omission of expected words.

Clever writers can use an ellipsis to create drama and tension. In this instance, we would use three dots.

FOR EXAMPLE

The man stopped...

In this example, the omission of any text after the statement makes us wonder why the man has stopped. However, we don't always need the dots.

John watched his mother and went over to help.

FOR EXAMPLE

The omission of the word 'he' before 'went' is an ellipsis, but doesn't require three dots.



# SEMICOLONS

## YEAR 6

A semicolon can be used to join closely connected main clauses.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

I really enjoy playing football; it's the best game in the world.

The clauses at either side of the semicolon could be short sentences. Semicolons can therefore sometimes replace conjunctions.

We can also use semicolons in lists where commas are already in use.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

The teams playing came from Harrogate, North Yorkshire; Hastings, East Sussex and Ipswich, East Anglia.





# COLONS

**YEAR 6**

A colon will introduce a list or an explanation.

It can be used in place of the following words/  
phrases:

Such as...

Include/including...

They are...

A colon shouldn't be used if it's not required.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

The ingredients include: jam, flour and soap.

The example is incorrect. We should use  
'include' OR the colon.

**REMEMBER!**

Colons are a rare  
punctuation mark.





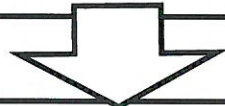
# BULLET POINTS

**YEAR 6**

Bullet points are used to highlight important pieces of information.



They will typically follow a colon.



We should use full stops and capital letters if the points form full sentences.

**REMEMBER!**

These suggestions are guidelines and not rules, but be consistent.



# HYPHENS

YEAR 6

Hyphens can be used in compound words, to join prefixes to other words and to show word breaks.

Hyphens can show that words have a combined meaning. This can help us to avoid ambiguity.

FOR EXAMPLE

A first-half goal  
(a goal scored in the first half)

VS.

A first half goal  
(the first time that part of a goal has been scored)

REMEMBER!

Don't confuse  
hyphens with dashes.

