

Hall Green Primary School

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) Terminology Guide

This guide outlines the key terminology children are taught in line with the **National Curriculum for English**. It supports pupils in developing accurate and confident use of spoken and written language.

Basic Language Concepts

Letter

A symbol used to represent sounds in written language.

Capital Letter

Used at the start of sentences, for proper nouns and for the pronoun *I*.

Word

A unit of meaning made up of letters.

Root Word

A base word with no prefix or suffix added (e.g. *play*).

Prefix

Letters added to the beginning of a word to change meaning (e.g. *unhappy*).

Suffix

Letters added to the end of a word to change meaning (e.g. *helpful*).

Singular / Plural

Singular = one (e.g. *cat*)

Plural = more than one (e.g. *cats*)

Sentence Structure

Sentence

A group of words that expresses a complete idea.

Statement

A sentence that gives information.

Example: The sky is blue.

Question

A sentence that asks something.

Example: Is it raining?

Command

A sentence that tells someone to do something.

Example: Sit down.

Exclamation

A sentence showing strong feeling.

Example: What a fantastic day!

Word Classes

Noun

Names a person, place, thing or idea.

- *Common noun*: dog, city
- *Proper noun*: London, Sarah

Abstract Noun

Names ideas or feelings (e.g. *happiness*).

Pronoun

Replaces a noun (e.g. *he, she, they*).

Verb

A doing, being or having word (e.g. *run, is, have*).

Adjective

Describes a noun (e.g. *bright, tall*).

Adverb

Adverbs describe a verb, adjective or whole sentence. They often tell us more about how, when, where or how often something happens.

Types of Adverbs

Adverbs of Manner

Describe *how* something happens.

Example: quickly, carefully, loudly

Adverbs of Time

Describe *when* something happens.

Example: yesterday, soon, later

Adverbs of Place

Describe *where* something happens.

Example: here, outside, everywhere

Adverbs of Frequency

Describe *how often* something happens.

Example: always, often, rarely

Adverbs of Degree (Intensity)

Describe *how much* or *how strongly*.

Example: very, quite, extremely

Sentence Adverbs

Modify the whole sentence and often express viewpoint.

Example: Fortunately, we arrived on time.

Determiner

Introduces a noun (e.g. *a, the, some, my*).

Preposition

Shows position or relationship (e.g. *under, over, between*).

Conjunction

Joins words or clauses (e.g. *and, but, because*).

Modal Verb

Shows possibility or certainty (e.g. *could, should, must*).

Phrases and Clauses

Phrase

A group of words without a verb.

Clause

A group of words containing a verb.

Main Clause

Makes sense on its own.

Subordinate Clause

Does not make sense on its own.

Relative Clause

Adds extra information using *who, which, that*.

Noun Phrase

A group of words built around a noun.

Pre-modifier

Words placed before a noun to add detail.

Example: the small, fluffy dog

Post-modifier

Words placed after a noun to add extra information.

Example: the dog with the wagging tail

Prepositional Phrase

Begins with a preposition (e.g. *under the table*).

Adverbial Phrase

Describes when, where or how (e.g. *in the morning*).

Fronted Adverbial

An adverbial at the start of a sentence, usually followed by a comma.

Example: Later that day, we went home.

Sentence Types

Simple Sentence

Contains one clause.

Compound Sentence

Two main clauses joined by a conjunction.

Complex Sentence

A main clause with one or more subordinate clauses.

Tense

Present Tense

Describes actions happening now.

Past Tense

Describes actions that have already happened.

Progressive Tense

Shows ongoing action (e.g. *was running*).

Perfect Tense

Shows completed action (e.g. *has finished*).

Punctuation

Full Stop (.) – Ends a sentence

Capital Letters – Start sentences and proper nouns

Comma (,) – Separates items or clauses

Question Mark (?) – Indicates a question

Exclamation Mark (!) – Shows strong feeling

Apostrophe (') – Shows possession or missing letters

Speech Marks (" ") – Show direct speech

Colon (:) – Introduces a list or explanation

Semi-colon (;) – Links related clauses

Dash (—) – Adds extra information

Brackets () – Include additional detail

Hyphen (-) – Joins words

Ellipsis (...) – Shows a pause or omission

Grammar Concepts

Active Voice

The subject performs the action.

Example: The boy kicked the ball.

Passive Voice

The action happens to the subject.

Example: The ball was kicked.

Subject

The doer of the action.

Object

Receives the action.

Cohesion

How ideas are linked across sentences and paragraphs.

Standard English

Formal, correct English used in writing and speech.

Subjunctive

Used for wishes or possibilities.

Example: *If I were taller...*

Vocabulary

Synonym

Words with similar meanings (e.g. *happy* / *joyful*).

Antonym

Words with opposite meanings (e.g. *hot* / *cold*).

Homophone

Words that sound the same but differ in meaning or spelling (e.g. *there* / *their*).

Phonics

Vowel

a, e, i, o, u

Consonant

All other letters

Year Group Expectations for Grammar and Terminology (SPaG)

Year 1

- Letter, capital letter
- Word, sentence
- Singular and plural
- Noun, verb, adjective
- Prefix (e.g. *un-*)
- Full stops, capital letters, question marks, exclamation marks

Year 2

- Noun phrase
- Adverb (introduction)
- Past and present tense
- Apostrophes (possession and contraction)
- Commas in lists
- Sentence types (statement, question, command, exclamation)

Year 3

- Prepositions

- Conjunctions
- Adverbs and adverbial phrases
- Direct speech (introduction)
- Paragraphs

Year 4

- Fronted adverbials
- Apostrophes for plural possession
- Expanded noun phrases (including pre- and post-modifiers)
- Standard English

Year 5

- Modal verbs
- Relative clauses
- Parenthesis (brackets, dashes, commas)
- Adverbs of possibility
- Cohesion within paragraphs

Year 6

- Active and passive voice
- Subject and object
- Formal and informal language
- Subjunctive form
- Ellipsis and hyphens
- Cohesion across paragraphs

Adverbs and Adverbials Progression

- **Year 2:** Introduction to adverbs
 - **Year 3:** Adverbs and adverbial phrases
 - **Year 4:** Fronted adverbials
 - **Year 5–6:** Wider range (frequency, degree, possibility, sentence adverbs)
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Our Aim

At Hall Green Primary School, we aim for all pupils to:

- Understand how language works
 - Use accurate grammatical terminology
 - Apply their knowledge confidently in writing
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