Grammar Glossary for Parents

Please find below a glossary of the terminology that children are expected to know by the end of Year 6.

As you can see it does get rather technical, so please do not worry about coming to ask for further clarification if required.

Active Voice

When the subject of the sentence is doing something the verb is active.

e.g. **the police caught** the thief

Adjective

A word that describes a noun

e.g. the cat is very **happy**

Adverb

A word that describes a verb, an adjective or another adverb

e.g. the cat is **extremely** small / the cat moved **stealthily**

Ambiguity

Ambiguity means to have more than one meaning – e.g. *"I know a man with a dog who has fleas"* it is unclear - ambiguous - whether it is the man or the dog who has fleas. It is the syntax not the meaning of the words which is unclear.

Antonym

A word opposite in meaning to another, e.g. hot/cold, fast/slow

Bracket

Brackets are used to enclose an aside or to add information or ideas which are not essential. You should be able to remove the brackets and their contents and be left with a sentence which makes sense **e.g.** The shoes (made of patent leather) were all scuffed and

dirty.

Bullet Points

Capitalise the start of every bullet point

Be consistent, information next to bullet points should either be written in full sentences or in fragments but not a mixture of both.

Clause

A clause is a building block for sentences. It helps to develop and expand the sentence as necessary.A clause can be a sentence in its own right (main clause), but can also be just a part of the sentence.

Cohesion

Cohesion is the term used to describe the grammatical means by which sentences and paragraphed are linked and relationships between them established. In English, the principal means of establishing cohesion are through the use of pronouns, determiners and conjunctions.

Colon

The colon has two main uses.

1) To introduce an idea that is an explanation or continuation of the one that comes before the colon, e.g. Africa is facing a terrifying problem: perpetual drought. The colon can be considered as a gateway inviting the reader to go on.

2) The second main use of the colon is to introduce a list. You need to take care; many people assume that a colon *always* precedes a list. This is not the case. Again it is important to remember that the clause that precedes the colon must make complete sense on its own.

E.g. The potion contained some exotic ingredients: snails' eyes, bats' tongues and garlic.

Conditional tense

What **could/would** happen

Conjunction/Connective

A word that joins a group of words   e.g. and / or

Consonant

The letters: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z

Dash

The single dash is normally a feature of informal English and is used, especially in narrative, to create suspense or to indicate that what follows is an afterthought or something to be emphasised.

e.g. There is was again, that creak on the staircase. Pamela sat upright in bed, eyes wide open in the darkness. Just Marmalade her cat, she thought – or was it?

Definite article

The

Indefinite article

A or an

Demonstrative Adjective

This, that, these, those

Determiner

A determiner is used to modify a noun. It indicates reference to something specific or something of a particular type. There are different types of determiners: articles (*a, an, the*), demonstratives (***this, that, these and those***), possessives (***my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their, mine, his, hers, yours, ours***) and quantifiers (*some, any, few, little, more, much, many, each, every, both, all, enough, half, little, whole, less etc*).

Direct Speech

Direct speech where the exact words spoken are put into speech marks.

Ellipses

An **ellipsis** (plural: **ellipses**) is a punctuation mark consisting of three dots. Ellipses can express hesitation, changes of mood, suspense, or thoughts trailing off. Writers also use ellipses to indicate a pause.

Fronted Adverbial

A fronted adverbial goes at the beginning of a sentence. It describes the verb in the sentence. It describes where, when or how. E.g **As soon as he could,** Tom jumped off the train.

Future tense

What will happen in the **future**

Hyphen

Hyphens are used to make new words out of two existing words or parts of words. It's worth noting that, nowadays, the hyphens in many words are just missed out. Head-ache is now headache, and city-centre is now city centre.

Infinitive

The basic form of the verb, as it is found in the dictionary (nothing has been added or taken away).
e.g. to drink / to sleep

Imperative verb

A bossy verb, used in instructions/directions
e.g. Take that road.

Inverted commas

Inverted commas can be single - 'x' - or double - ''x''.
They are also known as **quotation marks**, **speech marks**, or **quote marks**.

Irregular verb

Verbs that don't follow a set pattern of rules.
e.g. take becomes took rather than 'taked'

Main clause

A sentence that functions independently

e.g. I'll feed the dog.

Modal verb

Modal verbs are used to express ideas such as possibility, intention, obligation and necessity.

CAN, COULD, WILL, WOULD, SHALL, SHOULD, OUGHT TO, DARE and NEED are some examples.

Noun

A naming word (person, place or thing)

e.g. giraffe / telephone

Object

The subject of a sentence does something to an **object**. The object is the thing or person which is affected by the subject and the verb. E.g. *Patricia ate the cake.*

The subject of this sentence is *Patricia*. She is the 'star actor'. The verb is *ate* and this tells us what she does. The object of the sentence is *the cake*.

Parenthesis

Parenthesis is the addition of extra information to an already formed sentence. A parenthesis can be separated from the sentence with dashes, commas or brackets, and these are known as parentheses.

When the parenthesis is removed from the sentence, it should still be grammatically correct. So, to make sure that you have included a parenthesis correctly, reread the sentence to see if it makes sense without it. If it does, then you have successfully added a parenthesis.

Passive Voice

When the object of the sentence is having something done to it, the verb is passive.

e.g. the thief **was caught by the police**

Past tense

Says what happened in the **past**

Plural

More than one thing

Pronoun

Pronouns are short words like 'it', 'she', 'he', 'you', 'we', 'they', 'us', 'them'. They are used instead of names.

Personal pronoun

Refers to people

e.g. I / you / he / she / we / you / they

Possessive adjective

Indicates possession

e.g. mine / yours / his

Possessive pronoun

Mine, **yours**, **his**, **hers**, **its**, **ours**, **theirs** are the ***possessive**pronouns*** used to substitute a noun and to show possession or ownership.

Prefix

Prefixes are groups of letters that can be placed before a word to modify its meaning.

e.g: **im**possible (the prefix **im**- modifies the meaning to produce a negative sense)

Preposition

A word that gives information, such as time, location or direction

E.g on, at, between

Present tense

What is happening **now**

Pronoun

A word that replaces a noun

e.g he / she / it

Reflexive pronoun

Myself / yourself / himself

Relative clause

An important type of subordinate clause is the **RELATIVE CLAUSE**. Here are some examples:

The man [*who lives beside us*] is ill

The video [*which you recommended*] was terrific

Relative clauses are generally introduced by a relative pronoun, such as *who*, or *which*.

Relative pronoun

Relative pronouns, such as **That, Who, Which, Whose** and **Whom** can be used to introduce

clauses in sentences:

*The woman **who** interviewed me was very friendly.*

*I can't stand dogs **that** bark loudly.*

Semi-colon

The **semicolon (;)** has only one major use. It is used to join two **complete** sentences into a

single written sentence when all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The two sentences are felt to be too closely related to be separated by a full

stop;

(2) There is no connecting word which would require a comma, such as *and* or *but*;

(3) The special conditions requiring a colon are absent.

Singular

One thing

Subject

The person doing the action

e.g. **the monkey** eats banana

Subordinate clause

A part of the sentence that is dependent upon another part

e.g. I'll feed the dog [main clause] **when he barks** [subordinate clause]!

Synonym

Synonyms are words with the same or nearly the same meaning as another word in the language. E.g. pupil and student.

Verb

An action word

Vowel

The letters: a, e, i, o, u

Word family

Groups of words that follow the same spelling pattern or root word.