



## Language Structure Word Classes

It is important that children begin to think carefully about the vocabulary that they choose and the effect that it has on the reader. We promote the use of “WOW” words in writing. These are words that are ambitious for the children to use; they can ‘upgrade’ their nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs:

### TERM DEFINITION

**Noun** - A noun is a ‘naming’ word: a word used for naming an animal, a person, a place or a thing: giraffe, telephone, Rachel...

Nouns can be further subdivided. Here are some types of noun: Proper noun This is a noun used to name particular people and places: Jim, Betty, London... and some ‘times’: Monday, April, Easter... It always begins with a capital letter. Common noun A common noun is a noun that is used to name everyday things (nonspecific): cars, toothbrushes, trees... and kinds of people: man, woman, child... Collective noun This is a noun that describes a group or collection of people or things: army, bunch, team, swarm... Abstract noun An abstract noun describes things that cannot actually be seen, heard, smelt, felt or tasted: sleep, honesty, boredom, freedom, power, love...

**Adjective** – An adjective is a ‘describing’ word: it is a word used to describe (or tell you more about) a noun. The burglar was wearing a black jacket, a furry hat and a large mask over his face. (The words in pink tell us more about the noun that follows) An adjective usually comes before a noun but sometimes it can be separated from its noun and come afterwards: Ben looked frightened; the dog was very fierce. Adjectives can be further subdivided. Here are some types of adjective: Interrogative (‘asking’) adjectives These are used to ask questions about a noun: What? Which?... Which hat do you prefer?

Possessive adjectives: Possessive adjectives show ownership: my, our, their, his, your... Sue never brushes her hair.

Adjectives of number or quantity: These answer the question: How much? much, more, most, little, some, any, enough... She invited five friends for breakfast; she did not have any food left.

Demonstrative ('pointing out') adjectives: Demonstrative adjectives answer the question: Which? This, that, these, those... Those apples and these pears are bad; That man stole this handbag.

**Verb** - A verb is a word, or a group of words, that tells you what a person or thing is being or doing. It is often called a 'doing' word: running, eating, sitting... All sentences have a subject and a verb. The subject is the person or thing doing the action: Cats purr (Cats is the subject and purr is the verb).

Auxiliary verb: A verb is often made up of more than one word. The actual verb-word is helped out by parts of the special verbs: the verb to be and the verb to have. These 'helping' verbs are called auxiliary verbs and can help us to form tenses. Auxiliary verbs for 'to be' include: am, are, is, was, were.

Auxiliary verbs for 'to have' include: have, had, hasn't, has, will have, will not have... I have arrived ('arrived' is the main verb and 'have' is the auxiliary verb) We are waiting ('waiting' is the main verb and 'are' is the auxiliary verb)

**Adverb** - An adverb tells you more about the verb (it 'adds' to the verb). It nearly always answers the questions: How? When? Where? Why? Most adverbs in English end in -ly and come from adjectives: soft – softly; slow – slowly

**Adverb or Adjective?** Some words can be either adverbs or adjectives depending on what they do in a sentence, e.g. fast, hard.... If they answer the questions: How? When? Where? or Why? – they are adverbs. If they answer the question: "What is it like?" - they are adjectives, and will be telling you more about a specific noun. Life is hard. (adjective) Kim works hard. (adverb) I took an early train. (adjective) The train arrived early. (adverb)

**Pronoun** - Sometimes you refer to a person or a thing not by its actual name, but by another word which stands for it. The word you use to stand for a noun

is called a pronoun (which means 'for a noun') We use pronouns so that we do not have to repeat the same nouns over again: When Barnaby stroked the cat and listened to it purring softly, he felt calm and peaceful.

Pronouns can be further subdivided. Here are some types of pronoun: Singular pronouns Singular pronouns are used to refer to one person or thing: e.g. I, you, me, he, she, it, you, him, her, mine, yours, his, hers, its Plural pronouns Plural pronouns are used to refer to more than one person or thing: e.g. we, they, us, them, ours, yours, theirs

There are lots of different types of pronoun. For more information, please visit: <http://www.english-grammar-revolution.com/list-of-pronouns.html>

**Article** - An article is always used with and gives some information about a noun. There are three articles: a, an and the e.g. the chair; a table; an elephant

\*There is sometimes confusion about whether to use a or an. The sound of a word's first letter helps us to know which to use: If a word begins with a vowel sound, you should use an; if a word begins with a consonant sound, you should use a.

**Prepositions** - Prepositions are words which show the relationship of one thing to another. It can be information such as time, location or direction: up, after, across, into, past, under, below, above ... e.g. Tom jumped over the cat. The monkey is in the tree. These words tell you where one thing is in relation to something else.

**Connectives/Conjunctions** - Connective is the name for any word that links clauses or sentences together.

There are two main groups of connectives: Conjunctions and Connecting Adverbs

**Conjunctions:** Conjunctions are words that are used to link clauses within a sentence. There are two main kinds: Co-ordinating conjunctions – link two main clauses to make compound sentences. The acronym 'FANBOYS' can help children to remember coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so e.g. I was angry but I didn't say anything.

**Subordinating conjunctions** - go at the start of a subordinate clause so they work to link the subordinating clause to the main clause: when, while, before, after, since, until, if, because, although, that... e.g. We were hungry when we got home. Because it was raining, we stayed inside.

**Connecting adverbs** Connecting adverbs link the ideas in two sentences together but the two sentences still remain separate.

Connecting adverbs link ideas in several different ways: Addition – also, furthermore, moreover... Opposition – however, nevertheless, on the other hand... Reinforcing – besides, anyway, after all... Explaining – for example, in other words, that is to say... Listing – first(ly), first of all, finally... Indicating result – therefore, consequently, as a result... Indicating time – just then, meanwhile, later...

e.g. I was angry. However, I didn't say anything. Commas are often used to mark off connecting adverbs.

### **Features of sentences**

**Statement** These are sentences that state facts. (Declarative - e.g. It is hot. sentence) The butter is in the fridge.

**Question** These are sentences that ask for an answer. (Interrogative- e.g. Are you hot? sentence) Where is the butter?

**Command** These are sentences that give orders or requests. (Imperative – e.g. Play the movie. sentence) Give me a dinosaur for my birthday.

**Exclamation** Exclamatory sentences (exclamations) are sentences which express a strong (Exclamatory - feeling of emotion. sentence) e.g. My goodness, it's hot! I absolutely love this movie!

**Complex sentences**

**Phrase** - A group of words that work together. e.g. a big dog five minutes ago  
**NB** A phrase doesn't make complete sense on its own. As it doesn't have a verb, it can't be a complete sentence.

**Clause** - There are two kinds of clause: **Main clause** A clause that makes complete sense on its own. e.g. she bought a new dress A main clause can be a sentence on its own.

**Subordinate clause** - A clause that doesn't make sense on its own – it needs to be joined onto a main clause. e.g. when she went shopping A subordinate clause cannot be a sentence on its own. Often a subordinate clause will start with a subordinating conjunction (see above) e.g. When she went shopping, she bought a new dress

## **Vocabulary/Language strategies**

Synonyms - These are words that have a similar meaning to another word. We use synonyms to make our writing more interesting. Synonyms for: Bad - awful, terrible, horrible

Happy - content, joyful, pleased Look - watch, stare, gaze Walk - stroll, crawl, tread

Antonyms - These are words with the opposite meaning to another word. The antonym of up is down The antonym of tall is short The antonym of add is subtract

Word groups/ families - These are groups of words that have a common feature or pattern - they have some of the same combinations of letters in them and a similar sound.

e.g. at, cat, hat and fat are a family of words with the "at" sound and letter combination in common. bike, hike, like, spike and strike are a family of words with the "ike" sound and letter combination in common. blame, came, fame, flame and game are a family of words with the "ame" sound and letter combination in common.

Prefix - Prefixes are letters added to the beginning of an existing word in order to create a new word with a different meaning.

Adding 'un' to happy – unhappy Adding 'dis' to appear – disappear Adding 're' to try – retry

Suffix - Suffixes are letters added to the end of an existing word to create a new word with a different meaning. Adding 'ish' to child – childish Adding 'able' to like – likeable Adding 'ion' to act – action

Root words - Root words are words that have a meaning of their own but can be added to either with a prefix (before the root) or a suffix (after the root) to change the meaning of the word. Root words can often be helpful in finding out what a word means or where it is 'derived' from. help is a root word

It can grow into: helps helpful helped helping helpless unhelpful

Singular - A singular noun names one person, place or thing (a single item).  
One bike, One mango, One dress, One fly, One turkey, One half

Plural - Plurals name more than one person, place or thing. Most nouns are made into plurals by adding –s: Three bikes

Some nouns ending in –o are made into plurals by adding –es: Two mangoes

Most nouns ending in hissing, shushing or buzzing sounds are made into plurals by adding –es: Ten dresses

For words ending in a vowel and then –y, just add –s: Eight turkeys

For words ending in a consonant and then –y, change -y to -i and add –es: Five flies

Most nouns ending in -f or-fe change to -ves in the plural: Six halves