

What does my child need to know?

Sentence Types

Grammatical Term	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Main clause						
Subordinate clause						
Relative clause						
Simple sentence						
Compound sentence						
Complex sentence						
Noun phrase						
Verb phrase						
Adjectival phrase						
Adverbial phrase						
Prepositional phrase						
Active and passive voice						

Sentences, phrases and clauses

What is a sentence?

A sentence is a group of words that make complete sense, It must contain a main verb and begin with a capital letter. It ends in a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

Examples:

- Sam likes to play tennis.
- Layla likes acting on stage.
- Aliyah walked down the hill and into town.

Almost all of the work we do in school will be written in sentences.

Breaking rules for effect

Sometimes in your writing you might find the need to break the rules to get an interesting effect in your work.

Examples:

- The room was a complete bomb site! UTTER CHAOS!
- This was a soldier. A machine. A unit of fear!
- It was a steady beating...thud, thud, thud! The rhythm of a heart.

It should always be clear that this is being done for effect and not an error in your work.

What is a clause?

A clause is a group of words containing a verb, which makes up part of a sentence.

Examples:

- **They arrived early because everyone was really excited.** = 2 clauses: 1. 'They arrived early' 2. 'because everyone was really excited.'
- **The man wanted to sneeze so he got his handkerchief out.** = 2 clauses: 1. 'The man wanted to sneeze' 2. 'so he got his handkerchief out.'

Types of clause

Clauses can be put into two types:

Main clause – these make sense on their own and have a subject and verb in them.

Subordinate clause – these need another part of the sentence in order to make sense. They start with a subordinating conjunction.

Relative clause – adds information directly linked to a noun using a relative pronoun (which, who)

Examples:

1. Main clauses

- It was hot.
- I eat a lot of bread.
- This tree is very old.

2. Subordinate clauses

- Because of the amount of rain we've had
- Even though they were keen to start
- While we waited at the station

3. Relative clauses

- Which had been hers from the start
- Who lived just outside Tamworth

Types of sentences

We classify sentences according to the number and types of clauses that are present. There are three types of sentences.

1. **Simple sentences:** These contain just a main clause.

- The shops are open today.
- We often go to France.

2. **Compound sentences:** These have two or more main clauses that are linked by coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS).

- The rain has been heavy and we have decided not to go out.
- There is a performance at the Town Hall tonight but I am not really interested.

3. **Complex sentences:** These have two or more clauses in them and are a mixture of main and subordinate clauses.

- If you would like to learn to play guitar this term, you will need to sign up for lessons with Mr Smith.
- While we were standing on the field, we saw the brightest rainbow- a blend of beautiful colours.

Phrases

A phrase is a small group of words that forms a meaningful part of a clause. There are several different types:

Noun phrases – a collection of relevant words built around a single noun. It includes the determiner.

- A vase of red roses
- A book about the Ancient Egyptians
- The red jumper with the cat on the front

Verb phrases – the words used to create the verb aspect of a clause.

- Had been living
- Will be going
- Has had
- Will have been running

Adjectival phrase – A phrase that is built around an adjective.

- Very interesting
- Almost empty
- Really keen
- Quite upset

Adverbial phrase – A phrase that is built around an adverb

- With a skip and a jump
- After dinner
- In the blink of an eye
- Without hesitation

Prepositional phrase- the phrase starts with a preposition

- Near the sea
- Under the table
- Down the road
- To the park

Active and passive voice

Active voice – most of the time, we talk and write in the active voice. In this case the subject of the sentence is carrying out the verb.

The boys broke the window. Active because the boys are doing the breaking.

Passive voice – in this case the object is carrying out the verb and it is often used to create an effect for the reader.

The man was carried away by the soldiers. Passive as the soldiers are doing the carrying.

You can use the test of seeing whether you can add 'by' after the verb to see if it is written in the passive voice.