

Year 4



Grammar Guide

A guide to the key grammar skills and terminology that your child will be learning this year with examples and practice questions to help you support them at home.

The Basics

Here are some of the most important things that Year 3 children need to know and remember from previous years:

Nouns: These are often known as “naming” words. They name people, animals, places or things.

Examples: Lucy cat beach table teacher.

Pronouns: To avoid repetition in our writing we need to use pronouns. A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun or noun phrase. Pronouns refer to nouns that have already been mentioned or are about to be mentioned.

Examples:

The school teacher spoke at the special assembly in the hall.

She also asked some students to speak.

Adjectives: Describe or give more information about a noun

Examples: bright tired dangerous useless hungry.

Verbs: These are often known as “action” words. They describe what a person or thing is doing or being.

Examples: climb bounce write hope is was.

Adverbs: Add information about a verb (and sometimes an adjective or another adverb). They provide information about **how**, **when**, **where**, **why** or **how often** something is happening.

Examples: carefully (how) immediately (when) downstairs (where) therefore (why) always (how often) secondly Perhaps.

Sentence Example:

Adjective Noun Verb Adverb

Practice Question: Label the nouns (a), adjective (b), verb © and adverb (d) in the following sentence:

The tired farmer slowly walked home.

More on verbs

Verbs are also ‘being words’ like I am, was, were or are.

Example: I am tired.

Verb inflections

An inflection is a change in the form of a word to show a grammatical function such as change in tense.

Often an inflection is the change in the ending of a word.

Example: Kicked is an inflection of the verb kick.

Some words change completely when inflected.

Example: Went is an inflection of go.

Sometimes when you speak, you may use the locally-spoken/non-standard forms of verb inflections. However, when you are writing down the verb inflections, you should always use standard English. Standard English is often considered the ‘correct’ form of English, because it is grammatically correct and does not use any slang or dialect.

Standard English is used in formal situations, by public officials, and traditionally by the media.

Non-standard English	Standard English
We was	We were
I done	I did

Verb inflections

Singular or plural?

A verb can be singular or plural, but it must match the subject to which it relates.

Rule

To help with correct verb agreement, the basic rule is:

If the subject is singular (one) the verb must be singular;

If the subject is plural (more than one) the verb must be plural.

Identifying the subject

The subject of a verb is normally the noun, noun phrase or pronoun that names the 'do-er' or 'be-er'.

Can you identify the subject in these sentences?

Can you identify the verb in these sentences?

Examples of correct subject-verb agreement

1. He drives 50 miles everyday. (singular subject; singular verb)
2. They ride the school bus in the afternoon. (plural subject; plural verb)

Rule

To help with correct verb agreement, the basic rule is:

If the subject is singular (one) the verb must be singular.

If the subject is plural (more than one) the verb must be plural.

To form the plural of a verb in present tense, you should remove the **s** from the singular form.

Prepositions

Prepositions are words that show the relationship of a noun, pronoun or noun phrase to another part of a sentence. Prepositions often describe locations or movements but they can describe time too.

before, with, about, of, in, after, because, of, during, for

I went for a long walk after lunch.

She wrote a story about a strange world.

During the long film, Mavis fell asleep.

Examples:

Location: above, behind, below, beside, between, by, in, inside, near, on, over, through.


Time: after, before, by, during, from, on, past, since, through, to, until, upon.

Movement: against, along, down, from, into, off, on, onto, out of, toward, up, upon.

Preposition phrases

Example:

Behind the loud drums.



A preposition phrase is made up of a preposition, along with the noun, pronoun or noun phrase that follows it.

Expanding noun phrases

Nouns can be extended by adding more information to them such as adjectives, nouns and prepositions.

Example:

The teacher.

The *strict* teacher. (an adjective has been added)

The strict *maths* teacher. (a further noun has been added)

The strict maths teacher sat *behind his desk*. (a preposition has been added)

Practice Question: Identify the prepositional phrase.

Joseph hid inside the shop.

Identify the adjective added to expand the noun.

The lucky boy won first prize.

Identify the noun added to expand the noun phrase.

It is a picnic table.

That's the office chair.

Fronted adverbials

fronted adverbials are words or phrases at the beginning of a sentence, used to describe the action that follows. A comma is used after a fronted adverbial.

Fronted adverbials tell the reader about the time, frequency, place, manner or the extent that the action is happening.

Time	Frequency	Place	Manner	Extent/ Degree
Afterwards,	Often,	Here,	Sadly,	Obviously angry,
Soon,	Regularly,	Outside,	As fast as he could,	Barely alive,
Later,	Every second,	Above the bed,	Nervously,	Totally over- whelmed,
After a while,	Sometimes,	In the distance,		

Practice Question: Identify the fronted adverbial.

In the distance, a boat had entered the sea.

Add a fronted adverbial to show manner.

_____ he rushed towards his house.

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are used to connect two or more parts of a sentence.

There are two types of conjunctions: co-ordinating and subordinating

Co-ordinating Conjunctions are used to link words, phrases and clauses that are as important as each other (equally important).

Here are some examples: **and but or so yet**

Example 1: Linking words

I saw my auntie and uncle at the weekend.

The 'and' links the nouns auntie and uncle together.

Example 2: Linking phrases

I will tidy my room, but not the whole house.

The 'but' links the main clause to the phrase 'not the whole house'.

Example 3: Linking main clauses

The artist finished her painting but she wasn't happy with the picture.

The 'but' links the **main clause** 'The artist finished her painting' with a second **main clause** 'she wasn't happy with the picture'.

The two main clauses in Example 3 are equally important.

Practice Question (read both pages first)

Circle the conjunction in each sentence below.

Is it a **co-ordinating** or **subordinating conjunction**?

1. Tom ran home, but I stayed at the park.

Conjunctions continued...

A main clause makes complete sense by itself and it could be a sentence on its own. It will include a subject and a verb.

A subordinate clause doesn't make sense by itself and depends on being linked to a main clause for it to have meaning. A subordinate clause adds extra information to a main clause by explaining **when, where or why something** is happening.

Subordinating Conjunctions are used to link subordinate clauses to main clauses. They show that the two parts of the sentence are not equal. Here are some examples:

when before after if because whilst since

Example 4: You can have your pocket money if you complete your homework.

The **subordinating conjunction** 'if' links the main clause, 'You can have your pocket money' with the subordinate clause, 'If you complete your homework'

Subordinating conjunctions can also be used at the start of a sentence.

Example 5: Before eating her dinner, Katie washed her hands.

The **subordinating conjunction** 'before' links the main clause, 'Katie washed her hands' with the subordinate clause, which explains when she washed her hands.

Using paragraphs as a way to group related material

A **paragraph is a section of writing** consisting of one or more sentences grouped together and discussing one main subject.

New paragraphs are either signalled by an indent (where the text starts some way into the line) or by leaving a line blank.

Paragraphs help to structure text; **every new paragraph starts on a new line**. We start a new paragraph to signal that the person, place, time or topic of the sentences has changed.

Headings and sub-headings to aid presentation

Headings and subheadings are used to tell us what a paragraph is about.

The heading is the main title for a text and the subheading is a heading for one of many paragraphs in a text.

They are helpful because they help the reader find information quickly.

Year 4 Punctuation

Apostrophes ‘

There are two reasons to use apostrophes:

1. To show possession (something belongs to it)
2. To show omission (replaces missing letters in a word)

Apostrophes to show possession (belonging)

The **girl's** hat (the hat belongs to the girl)

Apostrophes to show omission

We're –short for ‘we are’ - the apostrophe replaces the ‘a’

Apostrophes for plural possession

Apostrophes can be used to show something belongs to someone or something (possession). When we are talking about more than one thing we call this plural. For example, a pack of wolves or countries. If the noun is plural, ends with an ‘s’ and we need to attach an apostrophe to show possession, then we put the apostrophe after the s.

Examples:

The wolves' prey was a deer.

The girls' bathroom was flooded.

Inverted Commas "" (speech marks)

Inverted commas, also known as speech marks, are used to show what is being said in a sentence.

Examples:

“I wouldn't do that if I were you.” warned the teacher.

Sam asked, “Do you want to come with me?”

The start of speech always needs a capital letter.

There should always be punctuation (. ! ?) before you close the inverted commas (speech marks).

Terminology for children.

(In addition to terminology taught in previous years)

Adverbial

Pronoun

Possessive pronoun

Brackets

Common nouns

Proper nouns

Collective nouns

Determiner (e.g. *a, the, my, their*)