

Word classes

Noun - a person (student), thing (book) or idea (knowledge)

Verb - an action (revise)

Adjective - describes a noun (clever)

Adverb - describes a verb (quickly)

Pronoun - replaces a noun (he /she)

Preposition - describes the relationship between two nouns / pronouns (after, in, on etc.)

Conjunction - connects clauses in a sentence (and)

Sentence structure

Main clause - A clause that contains a subject (e.g. cat) and a verb (e.g. sat) and makes sense on its own e.g. *The cat sat on the mat.*

Subordinate clause - A clause that adds information to a main clause. It cannot form a complete sentence on its own e.g. *The cat sat on the mat, licking its fur.*

Simple sentence—A sentence that is formed of one main clause e.g. *The cat sat on the mat.*

Compound sentences—Two main clauses joined together with a conjunction e.g. *The cat sat on the mat and it licked its fur.*

Complex sentences—A sentence that contains a subordinate clause:

The cat sat on the mat, licking its fur.

Licking its fur, the cat sat on the mat.

Common errors

Was – past tense of ‘be’, used when writing in 1st or 3rd person singular e.g. I was running down the street.

Were – past tense of ‘be’, used when writing in 2nd person e.g. we were running down the street.

Been – past participle of ‘be’, used to mean ‘visited’ or ‘travelled’ e.g. we have been to the shops.

Being – present participle of ‘be’ e.g. I don’t know why but John is being really difficult today.

Of – preposition, expressing the relationship between a part and a whole e.g. get out of bed.

Have – to possess or hold something e.g. I have a new car.
to undergo an experience e.g. I could have done that, if I’d wanted to.

Key terms

Fiction - a literature text that describes imaginary events and people

Non-fiction - a text written to be informative and factual, rather than fictional

Narrative - a spoken or written account of connected events: a story

Descriptive - a written text that has the main purpose of describing a person, place or thing in order to create a clear image in the reader’s mind

Protagonist: The main character in a story who creates the plot e.g. August

Setting: Where and when the story takes place e.g. America

Dialogue: Any speech or conversation which takes place between the characters

Theme: the big idea that dominates the story e.g. discrimination and prejudice