

1

Punctuation

Punctuation is important because it helps your reader to understand your intended meaning. Think of punctuation as road rules that help you navigate the world of reading and writing.

When you use the correct punctuation, you help your reader reach your intended destination safely. When you use the wrong punctuation, you may end up sending your reader the wrong way.



Use punctuation to point your reader in the right direction.

Finding your way

Look at the following paragraph. How hard is it to read?

melissa hurried into the schoolyard certain that yet again she would be late for homeroom her teacher hated her she knew it she knew it with the same certainty that she knew that her friend laurel would be chewing gum this morning and that her mother would ring at exactly five minutes past four this afternoon to make certain that melissa was home alone and ready to do her chores she peered cautiously through the glass in the classroom door yep there she was old mean shrivelled and with breath from hell melissa could smell it from behind her clear glass shield from inside the room she heard the usual shrill discordant sound of her morning greeting get in here right now or you can go straight to the principals office

Melissa's story might be quite interesting or it might not. We will never know because we won't bother wading through such a mish-mash. The opportunity to tell the story is lost because the author has ignored the rules of punctuation and it is hard to work out what the story means—it is just a jumble of words.

Punctuation marks

So what are these punctuation marks? And what do they do? What makes them just as important as the words we write?

In the table on the following page, the most common punctuation marks are listed, along with the purpose of each and an example of how they are used. Study the table carefully; you will need to be able to use these directions for the rest of your life.

? DID YOU KNOW...

The rules of grammar and punctuation have changed over time. Originally, punctuation marks were written ways of showing how something sounded when it was read aloud and the marks indicated where, and for how long, a pause should take place.



Only three punctuation marks are appropriate to use as sentence endings—the **full stop**, the **question mark** and the **exclamation mark**.

Punctuation mark	What it looks like	What it does	Example of use
Full stop	.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ends a complete sentence Ends an abbreviation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have finished the book. etcetera = etc.
Exclamation mark	!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasises a strong feeling or emotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eureka! I have found it!
Question mark	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed at the end of a sentence to show that a question is being asked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What would you like for breakfast?
Comma	,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separates additional information in a sentence or list Separates words spoken in direct speech from the speaker Separates an introductory phrase, clause or word that comes before the main clause Comma plus a conjunction connects two independent clauses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The horse broke through the stable door, raced across the field, hurdled the hedge, bolted down the street and leapt into the river. Mr Zomer, the man with the camera by his side, is our next-door neighbour. Kenny said, 'This will be the last time that I lend you my CDs'. After paying for his meal, Omar left the restaurant. They lost the battle, but won the war.
Semi-colon	;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows the connection between two statements. Especially used before 'transition' words such as 'therefore', 'moreover', 'however', 'in fact' or 'consequently' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teresa had spaghetti for dinner; Charles had steak. Daniel bought a couch; however, he did not have a room to put it in.
Colon	:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces a list Introduces a summary or contrast Introduces the second part of a sentence that elaborates on the ideas in the first part of the sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Oscopy put the following items in his hospital bag: toothbrush, pyjamas, books and deodorant. The elephants' worst enemy is obvious: humans. The school camp was exactly as I expected: tiring, hilarious and exciting.
Apostrophe	'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicates a contraction—shows letters have been removed Indicates possession—denotes ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have = You've Who is = Who's He is = He's Belongs to John = John's Belongs to the girls = the girls'
Quotation marks	“ ”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show direct speech Emphasise specific words Show a short quote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I don't want to go to the gym,' said Joel. It is not 'cool' to smoke. The famous English author Emily Brontë wrote the line, 'No coward soul is mine'.
Brackets	()	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include extra information in a sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two girls (who both had dark hair) sat silently side by side.
Hyphen	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joins two words or parts of a word together; no spaces either side of it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> brother-in-law self-directed learning

QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

In Greek, the word *komma* means 'a piece cut off' and refers to a line of verse that can stand alone.

Capital letters

Capital letters are used in the following circumstances.

- at the start of a sentence:
It was a dark and stormy night.
- for people's names and titles:
Mr Mark Dupont
Ms Eleanor Smith
Sir Donald Bradman
- for the days of the week and months of the year:
Tuesday
June
- to identify geographical locations:
Bondi
Taiwan
- for the opening salutation of a letter or email:
Dear Ms Wright
My dearest beloved
- for the closing of a letter or email:
Yours sincerely
Yours truly
- for the titles of books and films (except articles, conjunctions and prepositions):
Great Expectations
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button
- for the personal pronoun 'I'
- at the start of the first word of a conversation:
She said, 'Can I ask you a question?'
- for the names of organisations, teams, institutions and government bodies:
Western Bulldogs Football Club
Ministry of Defence
- for the names of historical events, eras, special events and holidays:
Christmas
Bronze Age
Russian Revolution

- for the names of specific examples of transportation:

Boeing 747

The Ghan [train]

This last rule applies only to forms of transport that have been given 'names'.



The **Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check** method of learning words involves you looking at the word, then covering it, writing the word down, repeating it to yourself or another person, and then checking that you have remembered it correctly.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

- 1 Use the Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check method of remembering information to help you remember all the different types of punctuation marks. Repeat this exercise until you can repeat them (and write them out) without looking.
- 2 Make a set of posters for your classroom that show the punctuation marks clearly and explain, in your own words, the purpose of each.

Understanding

- 3 What are the two uses of an apostrophe?
- 4 Write a sentence explaining how and why you might use a semi-colon.


Applying

- 5 Add commas to the following sentences.
 - a I like to eat a sandwich an apple a piece of cheese and a slice of cake for lunch.
 - b After the baby eats his hands and his face should be washed.
 - c What you should do about this Mr Smith is very important.
 - d The bully the one with the tattoo and the earring is not from around here.
 - e Good workers are needed in the following occupations: nursing teaching bricklaying aromatherapy and medicine.

- 6 Place apostrophes in the following sentences.
- The mans coat hung on the hook.
 - Davids bike was parked outside the shop.
 - I borrowed my sisters dress without asking permission.
 - Theyre lucky to have so many friends to help them in their time of need.
 - Shes finally dumped him so now hes sulking and wont talk to anyone.
- 7 Rewrite each sentence with the required capital letters and punctuation marks.
- what kind of accident did alex have sue asked the ambulance driver
 - charles dickens wrote oliver twist great expectations and a tale of two cities
 - ouch who said that inoculations weren't meant to hurt
 - the dentist sadly explained you will need all your fillings removed and replaced with false teeth
 - on the lefthand side of the street is the gallery on the right is the war memorial
- 8 Rewrite the following passage using capital letters and punctuation marks where appropriate.

penelope waited every day for odysseus to return and as she waited she weaved the suitors who had come to live at the palace became more and more badly behaved they believed odysseus was dead and that one day soon penelope would have to marry one of them marrying penelope was considered a great thing among the suitors for not only was she beautiful she was also a queen if you married penelope you became king of ithaca a most prestigious role for any man penelope agreed that she would marry one of the suitors when she had finished weaving the cloth she was occupied with on her loom she knew the suitors were only after her title and so every night while they slept she undid all her weaving this meant that she never finished making the piece of cloth and she never had to decide who to marry for she did not believe that odysseus was really dead

- 9 Rewrite the story of Melissa on the first page of this chapter using appropriate capital letters and punctuation marks.



A **suitor** is a man who tries to convince a woman to marry him.
A **loom** is a tool for weaving yarn or thread into fabric.

Strands in action

Core task

In 1843, Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol*. It tells the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, who has lost the 'spirit of Christmas' and has become a mean, bitter man. One Christmas Eve, three ghosts—the Ghost of Christmas Past, the Ghost of Christmas Present and the Ghost of Christmas Future—come to visit him and each of them shows him a festive season.

In preparation for the Christmas holidays, the publishers have decided to print a new edition of Dickens' famous *A Christmas Carol*. Unfortunately, the new edition has become horribly confused on the editor's computer and there are now two or more punctuation marks where there should only be one. As the leading punctuation expert, you have been called in to help.

Your job is to choose which of the given options is the right choice. You will need to use your knowledge of punctuation to make the correct decision. Copy the text below, using the correct punctuation.

The Phantom slowly,; gravely,; silently approached. When it came near him,; Ssscrooge bent down upon his knee,; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.,;?

It was shrouded in a deep black garment,; which concealed its head., its face., its form.,; and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night,;! and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded?.

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him,; and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more,; for the Sspirit neither spoke nor moved.

'I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come!' said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not,; but pointed onward with its hand.?

'You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us!,' Scrooge pursued. 'Is that so!, Spirit?!'

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head.!

That was the only answer he received,;

Extra tasks

- 1 Film scripts use punctuation and formatting in a very specific way. Read *The Breakfast Club* extract. What comments can you make about the way punctuation is used in the dialogue?

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

By John Hughes

6. INT. LIBRARY-DAY

There are six tables in two rows of three.

Claire is sitting at the front table. Brian comes in and sits at the table behind her.

Andrew comes in and points at the chair next to Claire at the front table. She shrugs and he sits there.

In walks Bender, he touches everything on the checkout desk and takes a few things in the process.

He walks over to where Brian is sitting and points to the table on the opposite side of the library. Brian reluctantly gets up and moves.

Bender sits at the table where Brian was and puts his feet up.

Allison walks in. She walks all the way around the library and sits in the back corner table, just behind Brian.

Andrew and Claire look at each other and snicker.

Brian looks at her in confusion and then turns away.

Enter RICHARD VERNON, a teacher. He holds a stack of papers in his left hand. He addresses the group with such disrespect it makes you wonder how he ever got the job.

VERNON

Well... well. Here we are! I want to congratulate you for being on time...

Claire raises her hand.

CLAIRE

Excuse me, sir? I think there's been a mistake. I know it's detention, but... um... I don't think I belong in here...

Vernon doesn't care. He just continues to talk.

VERNON

It is now seven-oh-six. You have exactly eight hours and fifty-four minutes to think about why you're here. To ponder the error of your ways...

Bender spits into the air and catches the spit in his mouth again.

Claire looks like she is going to gag.

VERNON

...and you may not talk. You will not move from these seats.

He glances up at Bender and points at him.

VERNON

...and you...

Vernon pulls the chair out from under Bender's feet.

VERNON

...will not sleep. Alright people, we're gonna try something a little different today. We are going to write an essay-of no less than a thousand words-describing to me who you think you are.

BENDER

Is this a test?

Vernon passes out paper and pencils and takes no notice of Bender.

VERNON

And when I say essay...I mean essay. I do not mean a single word repeated a thousand times. Is that clear Mr. Bender?

Bender looks up.

BENDER

Crystal...

VERNON

Good. Maybe you'll learn a little something about yourself. Maybe you'll even decide whether or not you care to return.

Brian raises his hand and then stands.

2

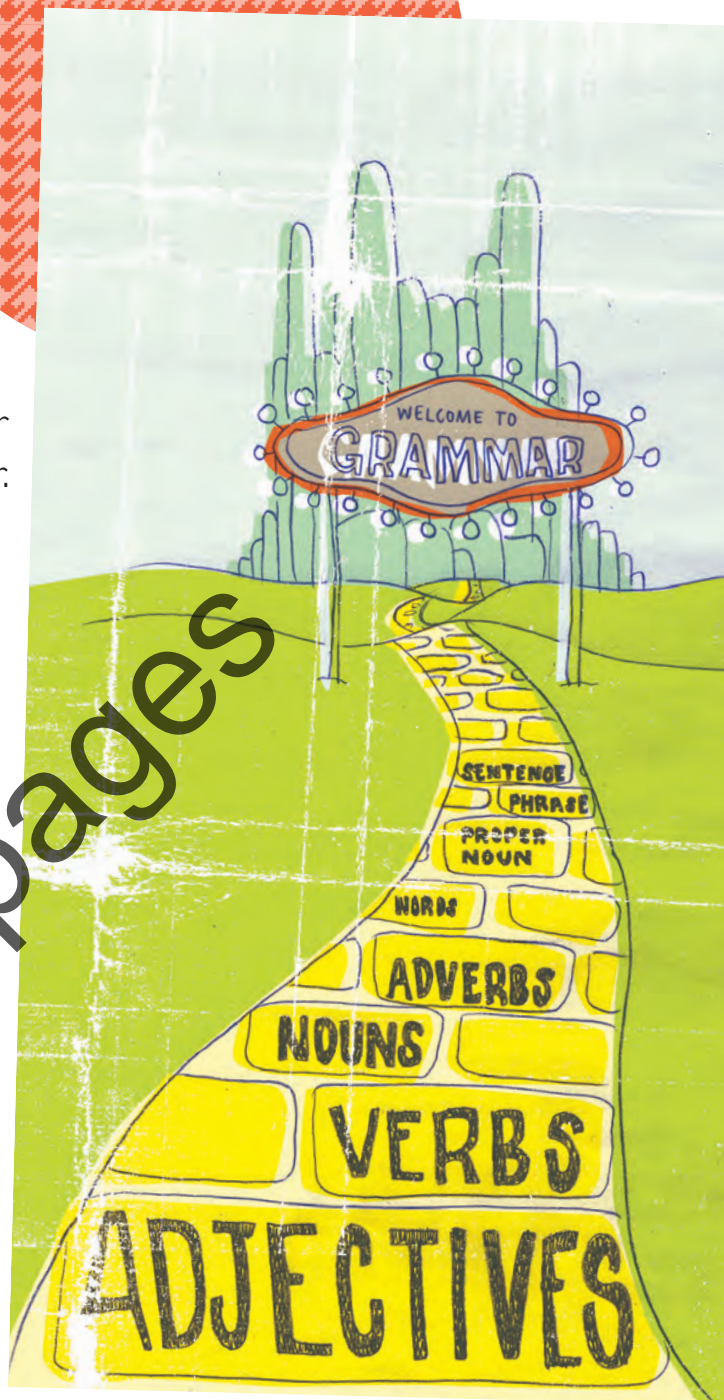
Grammar

Right! Now that you can use punctuation effectively, it's time to move on to the other great building block of language—grammar. Your teachers talk about this all the time; your parents tell you that you should be able to use it correctly; and your grandparents swear that they learnt all about it 'in their day'. But what actually is grammar? And why does everyone insist that you need to know it?

Grammar is the science or study of words and their relationships in the language. In English, we use the term 'grammar' to refer to the set of rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases and words. Each correct sentence is another clear road or path that your reader travels along. A clear sentence leads to another and together they form a paragraph that, ultimately, leads your reader to understanding.

? DID YOU KNOW...

English grammar is the set of rules about the language, and an English Grammar is a book written about those rules.



Nouns

Nouns are naming words. They name people, places, animals, objects, feelings and ideas. They are the most common words in the English language. Nouns are usually single words, but sometimes they might consist of more than one word, such as the term 'Southern Hemisphere'. There are five types of nouns and each one performs a specific function.

- **Common nouns** name a kind or type of people, animal, place or object.

- **Proper nouns** always begin with a capital letter and name particular people, places or things.
- **Collective nouns** name groups of people, animals or things.
- **Concrete nouns** name any tangible person, place or thing that you can detect by using your senses (sight, touch, smell, hearing, taste).
- **Abstract nouns** name intangible ideas, feelings and qualities that are unable to be detected by the senses.

Verbs

Verbs are words that express an action or a state of being. Every sentence, even the shortest, contains a verb. They are commonly called ‘doing words’.

Don *ran* towards his boss with her morning coffee.

Booth *drew* his gun and *shouted*, ‘Stop!’

‘Where is my file?’ *wondered* John.

Brennan *wrote* a book about crime.

Adjectives

Adjectives describe nouns. They tell you more about the noun and help to make your writing interesting.

Adjectives can tell you a range of things about the noun.

- They tell how many there are:

There were *twenty* children in the classroom.

- They tell what it is like:

It was a *small, blue* pebble.

Adjectives are also useful for making comparisons between things. An adjective in its simplest form is said to be positive. For example:

He had a *small* piece of pizza.

When we compare two things, we use the comparative form, usually by adding ‘-er’ to the adjective. For example:

He had a *smaller* piece of pizza.

When we compare three or more things we use the superlative form of the adjective, usually by adding ‘-est’ to the adjective. For example:

He had the *smallest* piece of pizza.

When an adjective has more than two syllables, rather than adding ‘-er’ or ‘-est’, we add the words ‘more’ and ‘most’ to make the comparative and superlative forms of the adjective. For example, for the adjective ‘impressive’:

It was a *more impressive* performance.
(Comparative)

It was the *most impressive* performance.
(Superlative)

Adverbs

An adverb modifies a verb; that is, it adds something to the verb in some way. It creates more meaning about the verb by telling us something extra.

Adverbs tell us more about verbs by indicating one of the following:

Type of adverb	What adverb shows	Key words	Examples
time	when something happened	immediately, never, occasionally, often, sometimes, soon, then, today, tomorrow, usually, yesterday	She <i>usually</i> goes to the gym in the morning.
place	where something happened	above, away, below, down, far, here, in, outside, there, up, within	The children ran <i>ahead of</i> their parents.
manner	how something happened	rapidly, swiftly, slowly, quickly, aggressively, greedily, suddenly, well, silently, noisily	He <i>tenderly</i> woke the sleeping baby. The girl ran <i>quickly</i> up the stairs to her classroom.
degree	to what extent something happened	almost, nearly, quite, just, too, enough, hardly, scarcely, completely, extremely, too, very, enough	I could <i>hardly</i> hear him. She ran <i>very</i> fast.

When you are trying to decide whether a word is an adverb or not, ask yourself the following questions. Is it modifying a verb? When is the verb occurring? Where is the verb occurring? How is the verb occurring? To what extent is the verb occurring?

Breakaway tasks

Tense

Tense means time. The tense of a verb tells us when an action occurs. In English, there are three simple tenses: past, present and future.

When an action has already taken place, we use the *past* tense form of the verb. For example:

Michael *worked* for the Department of Defence.

The past tense of a verb usually ends in ‘-ed’ or ‘-d’. The use of the word ‘was’ or ‘were’ indicates past continuous tense. In these situations, the verb has ‘-ing’ added to it. For example:

Michael *was working* for the Department of Defence.

For an action that is happening now, we use the *present* tense form of the verb. For example:

Michael *works* for the Department of Defence.

The present continuous tense indicates that an action is ongoing. For example:

Michael *is working* for the Department of Defence.

The use of the *future* tense of a verb indicates that something is yet to happen or will happen in the future. For example:

Michael *will work* for the Department of Defence.

The future tense of a verb can be identified by the presence of the words ‘will’, ‘shall’ or ‘is going to’.

The verb ‘to be’

The form of the verb ‘to be’ changes according to the tense that is being used and according to whether you are talking about one person or thing (the *singular* form of the word) or more than one person or thing (the *plural* form of the word).

Look at the ways in which the verb ‘to be’ changes in the chart below.

Tense	Singular	Plural
Present	I am You are He, she, it is	We are You are They are
Past	I was You were He, she, it was	We were You were They were
Future	I will be You will be He, she, it will be	We will be You will be They will be

This is called ‘conjugating the verb’.

Applying

- Place each of the nouns below in the table under its correct heading.

bird	kindness	justice	bouquet
<i>Herald Sun</i>	swarm	wisdom	India
eggs	ladder	congregation	clock
Mount Isa	honesty	Diet Coke	coffee
herd	kiosk	frustration	Wales
whales	peg	Peggy	bullet

Common nouns	Proper nouns	Collective nouns	Abstract nouns

- Match the occupation with the verb that describes what it does.

Occupation	Activity
angler	cobbles
ballerina	dances
barber	decides
comedian	fishes
judge	jokes
priest	operates
shoemaker	preaches
surgeon	shaves

- For each letter of the alphabet, find an occupation and a verb that describes the work. For example, an actor performs.

- 4 Complete the following table by filling in the comparative and superlative versions of the adjectives.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
soon		
brief		
early		
clear		
long		
bad		
ill		
quick		

- 5 A proverb is a popular saying. Each of the proverbs below has lost its adjective. Insert the correct adjective from the list provided. Then underline the nouns in each of the proverbs.

new dirty early every silver black

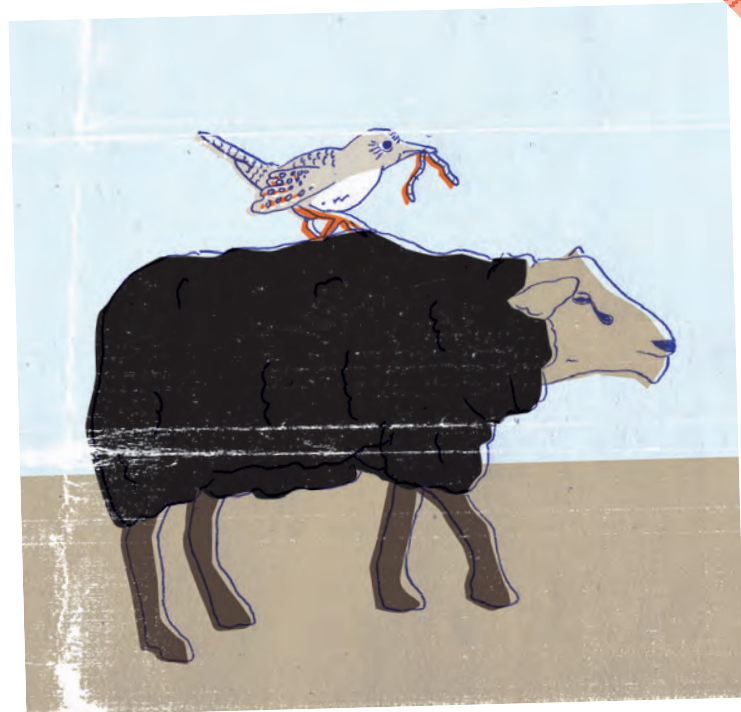
- a The _____ bird catches the worm.
 b A _____ broom sweeps clean.
 c There is a _____ sheep in every flock.
 d _____ cloud has a _____ lining.
 e Don't wash your _____ linen in public.
- 6 In the sentences below, circle the verbs and underline the adverbs.
- a The actress smiled ruefully at the probing questions from the interviewer.
 b The pirate viciously flogged his captive until he begged for mercy.
 c The naughty cat left suddenly as his owners came home.
 d Veronica's parents shouted frantically at her as the ladder began to fall away beneath her feet.
 e Sometimes it was easier simply to let her brother win the game.
 f The netball player thrust the ball aggressively towards the umpire's face.
 g Once the curtain lifted, the audience was entranced with the action on stage.
 h The gale-force winds that were expected tomorrow actually arrived earlier today.
 i Weeping bitterly, Susan swept from the room in a torrent of tears.
 j Even though his finger was only slightly cut, Malcolm's pride had suffered an extreme battering.

- 7 For each of the sentences below, decide whether it tells something that has happened already (past tense), something that is happening now (present tense) or something that will happen (future tense). Fill in the correct version of the verb to complete the sentence.
- a Harry _____ (to try) to swim the English Channel last year in record time.
 b Melissa's snoring _____ (to keep) the whole camp site awake last night.
 c I will _____ (to choose) which dress I will _____ (to wear) closer to the night of the party.
 d Peter sits on the barge, _____ (to strum) his guitar and _____ (to look) into the setting sun.
 e Rowena will _____ (to ride) her bike to school next year.
- 8 Change the following verbs from the present tense into the past tense.

eat know buy do knit give
 swim wind am trike hurry bandage

- 9 Change the following verbs from the past tense into the future tense.

slept drank threw took reached said
 melted shot froze worked annoyed



Making your writing interesting

Good drivers know how to handle all conditions—they know when to speed up, slow down, proceed with caution and deliver their passengers safely.

Good writers, likewise, know how to follow the rules, but they also know how to make the journey enjoyable. A bad driver might take a wrong turn, disobey road rules or cause their passengers to feel uncomfortable by using poor driving technique. A good driver, on the other hand, will confidently navigate the best possible route to reach their destination. Similarly, if you want to be a good writer, you need to choose the best words, phrases and literary devices to take your audience through a story to the desired outcome.

You can use description to give your writing detail; you can use similes and metaphors to put images in your readers' minds. But make sure that you use the right word or expression to convey exactly what you want to say. There's nothing worse than being trapped in a story that is overwritten and bores you to tears!

Writing techniques

One of the great challenges in writing is to make your writing interesting for your readers. Description is one of the most important ways that this can be achieved. It helps to bring your writing to life and allows readers to form clear pictures in their heads.

Each of the following writing techniques allows you to move from *telling* your reader what has happened to *showing* them.



Make your readers' journey as comfortable as possible.

Writing technique	What it does	Example
Simile	Comparison of one thing with another. Similes provide useful comparisons because they help the reader to imagine what is being described.	The teacher was like a storm thundering around the classroom. The reporter was as intrusive as a seagull at a picnic.
Metaphor	Comparison of one thing with another by claiming that one thing actually is another thing	The teacher was a storm thundering around the classroom.
Personification	Attribution of human qualities and characteristics to objects	The car coughed into life and shuddered in the cold.
Alliteration	Repetition of a consonant sound in a phrase or sentence	The soldiers stand silently before their sergeant.
Onomatopoeia	Use of words that imitate actual sounds	The bicycle wheels screeched as he hit the brakes.
Assonance	Repetition of vowel sounds	The mysterious silver ring glittered and shimmered in the mist.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

- 1 State which of the writing techniques outlined in the table above are used in the following sentences.
 - a Four fevered fowls fought for the feed.
 - b The tree creaked and groaned with each movement of the wind.
 - c Des was like a corpse roaming the corridors.
 - d The factories were old men smoking in the night.
 - e All that could be heard were the birds in the firs.

Understanding

- 2 Look around your classroom and describe five items to your partner using one of each of the writing techniques outlined above.
- 3 Make a set of posters for the classroom that explain each of the writing techniques. Use your examples from the previous task.

Applying

- 4 The following paragraphs describe what the author faced when she visited her grandmother's home after an absence of many years. Underline the writing techniques used in the piece.

On either side of the road the trees stared down at me in mute disapproval at my return. How dare I come back, they whispered, sighing as they gave me their message. The old building stood like a long-forgotten castle on the street corner. Around it, its compatriots had been demolished to make way for more modern buildings; but my grandmother's house stood defiantly against the encroaching modern architecture that now surrounded it. It was an orphan, abandoned by its parents.

I walked timidly up the creaking stairs towards the front door. The paint had blistered, blackened and bubbled. The knocker, formerly bronzed and glowing, now hung lifeless and rusting on the sole remaining screw. Lifting it gingerly, I let it thump back onto the brass plate. CLANG! In a moment there was a shuffling and the door began to slowly open, like a clam being prised apart to reveal its pearl.

- 5 The passage above sets a sombre mood. Imagine that you are looking forward to visiting your much loved grandmother. Write your own version of this story, using as many of the writing techniques as possible to create a more upbeat description.

Vocabulary

Spelling and word choice are two of the most important factors in making your reader's journey easier and more interesting. Making the right word choice and using the correct spelling enables you to negotiate the difficult terrain of a piece of writing and allows you to drive through different conditions.

Spelling

Some words are commonly misspelt and they really just need to be absorbed so that they become second nature to the good writer. Some of these words are listed below.

accommodation	already	arrangement	believe	committee
discipline	embarrassment	encourage	evidently	fashion
February	happiness	humorous	impostor	improvement
intelligent	interesting	interview	management	miscellaneous
moisture	mosquitoes	obeyed	occasionally	occupation
occurred	opposite	ordinary	possession	predict
preliminary	privilege	reasonable	recommend	relieved
rhythm	routine	Saturday	separate	submarine
suburbs	success	sufficient	summarise	technique
telescope	terrific	vacant	villain	whether

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

- 1 Use the Look, Cover, Write, Say, Check method to ensure that you can spell all the words in the table above.

Understanding

- 2 Write all the words in your notebook in alphabetical order.
- 3 Look up all the words in the dictionary. Write out their meanings in your notebook.

Applying

- 4 Using your dictionary, find out whether each word is a noun, a verb, an adjective or an adverb. You might discover that some words can be more than one type of speech, depending on their usage.
- 5 Write a paragraph on a subject of your own choice that uses at least five of these words.

Word choice

Choosing the right word is incredibly important in conveying your meaning correctly. The wrong word can change the meaning of your sentence or decrease the importance of what you are trying to say. Look at the examples below:

'I can't believe you just did that,' screamed Janice.

'I can't believe you just did that,' laughed Janice.

'I can't believe you just did that,' murmured Janice.

'I can't believe you just did that,' said Janice.

By changing just the one word that describes Janice's reaction, we have changed the whole tone of the sentence. Similarly, getting the most accurate word will help you achieve the best writing. Look at the examples below:

The players were jubilant at the end of the Grand Final.

The players were ecstatic at the end of the Grand Final.

The players were pleased at the end of the Grand Final.

❓ DID YOU KNOW...

The easiest way to create the mood that you are after is to use the right adjective.

Breakaway tasks

Understanding

- Listed below are twenty words that are commonly used as adjectives. Write them in your notebooks and, using a dictionary, write their definitions. Beside each word, make a list of three other words you could use in its place.

appropriate	agreeable	bewitching	desirable	gaseous
ghastly	honourable	illiterate	leisurely	illustrious
necessary	pretentious	religious	temporary	slimy
stealthy	superficial	tenuous	tyrannical	juvenile

- Below are words that can be used instead of the word 'said'. Write one line of dialogue using each word.

alleged	apologised	assumed	bellowed
bragged	confided	consented	held
moaned	objected	pleaded	praised
promised	screamed	supposed	thought
understood	whispered		



Strands in action

Bringing it all together

Now that you know all the rules and requirements associated with writing, it's time to get behind the wheel and head out on your own. When you write, you get to plan your own journey. You decide what you want your passengers to see, experience, know, enjoy or discover. When you have a vision of where you want to go and you know how you can get there, you will take your readers on a journey to remember.

1 Use the prompts below to inspire a piece of writing. Use all the skills and techniques that you have been shown in this chapter to dazzle your audience and take them on a journey that they will remember.

- The locked chest
- Footprints by the doorway
- I found gold in the ...
- There was a voice from under the stairs
- They called him the pocket rocket
- Someone had stolen my medal
- Why do they say, 'He who laughs last, laughs longest'?
- My mother says it's rude
- If I lived on a boat
- The PRANK
- She just pushed in
- The last tree
- Two parties on the same day
- The best gift I ever received
- The alien school
- What makes a good friend?
- The seed
- I wish everyone loved ...
- The potion wasn't meant to ...
- My big brother
- Where would you prefer to be right now?
- I hate my bike helmet
- An old lamp
- How the family picnic went wrong
- It was a dull evening until ...



2 Use one of the pictures above to explore one or more aspects of the following ideas:

- rich and poor
- big and small
- responsibility
- friendship
- the future
- your dreams.