

5th Grade ELA 2016 GEORGIA MILESTONES STUDY GUIDE

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READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

Reading Comprehension

Being a good reader is a lot like being a good detective. You have to be aware and look for clues. You then have to put these clues together to "crack the case" or understand the story or article. Below are some tips that will help you become a better reader.



Search for the answer in the story.

- After you read a story or article, you might want to go back to it—especially if you have a question over a certain part. Sometimes the answer is written word-for-word in the passage. Just one sentence or one word can answer a question. You just have to search and dig! Be patient!

Never skip a word.

- You can often figure out the meaning of words you don't know by using other words as clues. Also, use what you know about root words, prefixes, and suffixes to help you figure out meanings! Each word of the passage is very important. If you skip even one word, you might miss a big part of the story!

Order is important!

- Always pay attention to the order in which things happen. Be sure to notice words like **first**, **next**, **then**, and **finally**. It may help to read the story again and write short notes on each event as it happens. This way you will have a list of the things that happen in their correct order!

Outside of the text, you will find more information.

- Sometimes answers are not written out word-for-word in the story or article. You have to think outside of the words. What does that mean?! It means making smart guesses! Think about what the passage **does** say and then go further. For example, a reading selection about the life of Abraham Lincoln may only list the good things he did as President. Even though the selection does not say it word-for-word, you can make a smart guess that many people liked President Lincoln. In other words, there isn't a sentence in the selection that says "many people liked Lincoln," but you can believe it because of the many good things that Lincoln did.

Pay attention to purpose.

- Think about the reasons someone might write the passage you are reading. Does the writer want you to learn something? Does the author want to entertain you? Or maybe the writer is trying to get you to think like he or she thinks (persuade or convince)? Be aware of what the author is trying to make you feel and think.

Inferences and Conclusions

Inferences and conclusions are special kinds of guesses. To make inferences and conclusions, you have to come up with your own ideas, answers, and thoughts about what you have read. Good readers can make inferences and conclusions based on what a passage says.

The author of a passage may not tell you everything directly. Some authors may "show" something by using special details. As the reader, you have to look carefully and find clues in the story. Then, you have to use your knowledge of real life to make guesses about what the clues mean.

Look for clues in a story like a detective.

To make inferences and conclusions . . .

1. Read a passage carefully.
2. Look for details about what a person does. What do the person's actions tell you?
3. Look for details that describe a place or event. Based on real life, what do those details tell you?
4. Make a guess (inference or conclusion) about a character or item in the passage.
5. Check to see if you can find a detail or sentence that led to your guess. If you cannot find something to support your guess, then your guess might be wrong.

There are two ways to answer inference and conclusion questions. You can **make a guess** or **support a guess**.

Examples:

Landon was excited about his mother's birthday. He asked his older brother, Hunter, to take him to the store to buy a present.

"Sure, I'll take you to the store anytime. Tell me what you would like to get, and I'll take you to a store that sells it."

"I want to get her flowers. She loves them," Landon said.

"Great. I'll take you to the florist. How much money do you have?" Hunter asked.

Landon frowned. "None. Can I borrow some from you?"

"Sorry, little brother," Hunter said. "My money's gone. I would give you some if I had any."

Landon sat down at the kitchen table and put his chin on his hands. He looked out the window and tried not to cry. What could he do? Then he knew. Through the kitchen window he saw wildflowers in bloom. He saw pink, white, and some tiny blue splashes. He would just make a bouquet of flowers on his own. He could put the flowers in a jar and paint hearts on it. He felt better when he thought of how much his mom would love her present. He got to work.

Make a guess:

Use details from the passage to make an inference or conclusion.

Question: From information in the story, what can the reader conclude about Landon?

Think: Look for details in the story about Landon. He has a problem in the story because he does not

have money for a gift. Then, he comes up with a way to solve his problem. He does not need anyone's help in the end. He thinks of a special gift for his mom.

Answer: Landon can solve problems on his own.

Support a guess:

The question below gives an inference or conclusion. You have to show that it is correct.

Question: How can the reader tell that Landon and Hunter have a good relationship?

Think: Look in the story for details about Landon and Hunter's relationship. When Landon asks Hunter to take him to the store, Hunter agrees. Hunter also says that he would give Landon money if he had any. You know from real life that people want to help others if they have a good relationship with them.

Answer: Hunter is willing to help Landon get a present.

Summarizing

*When you **summarize** a story, you retell it in a much shorter way. A summary tells only the most important details or events in a passage. It does not include all of the details or descriptions of a passage. Read the passage and its summary below.*

Celebrating Arbor Day

Americans have a strong love of trees that is always growing. Each year, the United States celebrates Arbor Day. This national holiday was started in Nebraska.

The holiday's founder was Julius Sterling Morton. He once said of Arbor Day, "Other holidays are about the past; Arbor Day deals with the future."

Morton came west to plant trees, just like Johnny Appleseed. He planted trees in Nebraska. These would help block mighty winds on the plains. They would also help to keep the soil moist. The trees gave people shade, lumber, fuel, and food. Morton asked others to grow trees with him. He suggested that one day a year be set aside to honor tree-planting. His idea caught on quickly.

In 1872, the first celebration of Arbor Day took place in Nebraska. Over a million trees were planted that day. Arbor Day became a state holiday in Nebraska on April 22, 1885. It is also Morton's birthday. Arbor Day is celebrated on different dates in some states. It depends on the best time to plant trees in each state.

Summary

Arbor Day celebrates the future by planting trees in the U.S. The holiday was founded by Julius Morton in Nebraska in 1872 and is celebrated in all of the states across the U.S. today.

Theme

*The **theme** is the most important idea or message in a story. The theme will say something about life or human nature. Sometimes the theme is a **moral** or short lesson about life. The theme is often repeated in the story. Sometimes the author does not tell you the theme. Instead, you have to figure it out from the text.*

The Tortoise and the Hare

There once lived a tortoise and a hare. The hare bragged that he was so fast he could beat anyone. The tortoise said he would race him. The hare started out way ahead. He thought it would take the tortoise a long time to catch up with him. He decided to take a little nap. The tortoise did not stop. He kept moving, slowly but surely. When the hare woke up, he saw that the tortoise was about to cross the finish line. He tried to catch up, but the tortoise beat him.

Question: What is the theme in this story?

Answer: Slow and steady wins the race.

Explanation: The author did not tell you what the theme is in this story. You have to figure it out. The tortoise was very slow, yet he kept going at a steady pace and won the race. The theme is, "Slow and steady wins the race."

Character Analysis

*A **character** is a person, animal, or object that an author uses in telling a story. Characters can be real or make-believe. Just like you, characters have problems, wants, feelings, and thoughts. To learn about the characters in a story, pay attention to what they say and do. Ask yourself the following questions:*

What traits does the character have?

- A **trait** is an interesting thing about a character. It makes a character special. A trait could be the way a character looks or acts. Words like "funny," "fast," "strong," or "smart" describe traits.
- **Example:** Freddie is a tall boy with black hair. He likes to eat ice cream.

What relationships does the character have?

- A **relationship** is a connection between people. This can mean characters are friends, family, or schoolmates.
- **Example:** Bea and Carolina are sisters. They are also best friends. They always do everything together.

Why does the character do something?

- It is important to know why characters do things. Characters sometimes do things because of how they feel.
- **Example:** Joe Bear kicked the skateboard because he was angry.

Who is telling the story?

- The **narrator** is the person telling the story. The **point of view** is the view of the narrator. He or she can change how the reader sees things. In the example below, the narrator is a big sister. She makes the reader think that the baby does not like her.

- **Example:** My new baby sister does not like me. She always cries when I try to hold her.

What problem does the character have?

- Most stories are about how characters solve a problem. Look for what characters in a story are having trouble with. How do they solve their problems?
- **Example:** Joey's bike has flat tires. He solves his problem by putting more air in them.

How does the character change?

- Sometimes, characters change in a story. Another character in the story may change how the main character acts.
- **Example:** George did not like his neighbor Kate. She never said hi to him. One day, Kate tripped and hurt her ankle. George asked Kate if she was okay and helped her get up. Now, George and Kate are best friends.

Dialogue

*When characters in a story talk to each other, this is called **dialogue**. Dialogue is an important part of a story because dialogue helps the reader learn more about the characters and the story.*

Important things to remember about dialogue:

- The words a character speaks are set apart by quotation marks " ".
- The dialogue within quotation marks follows the same rules as regular sentences. The first letter in the sentence should be capitalized, and proper nouns, names, and words like "I" should also be capitalized.

example: "I love hot chocolate!" Marsha told Ronald.
(*I love hot chocolate* are the words that Marsha said out loud.)

- Words like "said," "called," or "replied" let the reader know who is speaking in a story. It is important to pay attention to what each character says, especially when there is more than one character talking.

example: "You hurt my feelings when you yelled at me," said Tony. "I'm sorry!" Marcus told him. "I did not mean to hurt you." "Great!" said Paul. "Now we can all be friends again."

- Words spoken by a character in a story are not always in complete sentences.

example: "What's up?" Mario asked his friend. "Oh, nothing," replied Tomas.

- Slanted letters (called *italic* letters) in dialogue can mean a variety of things. Usually, the character spends more time saying these words. Sometimes writers use slanted letters to show a word's importance. Readers can figure out why a word is slanted by paying close attention to the story.

example: "My sister is *always* on the phone," groaned Hector.

- Writers sometimes repeat words and/or letters. Repeating words shows the importance of what is being said. Repeating letters shows that a character is stuttering. Stuttering can be a clue to the character's feelings.

example: "Why do you look so frightened?" the spider asked Maria. "I'm just saying hello."
"S-s-s-spiders aren't supposed to talk!" Maria cried. "You shouldn't be able to talk!"

- Sometimes writers use a line of dots (. . .) to show that the characters are pausing longer than they should between words.

example: "I think . . . I'll take a little nap," yawned Sleepy Bear.

- Large dashes (—) can also appear in dialogue. They usually mean that a character suddenly stops talking for some reason.

example: "I am running out of snowballs!" Rita told her brother. "Wait—okay, here are more snowballs for you," he replied.

Plot and Setting

Setting and **plot** are two very important parts of a story. The **setting** tells when and where the story happens. The **plot** is what happens in the story. All plots include some sort of **conflict** or problem. If there is no problem to solve, there is no story. Think about your favorite stories or books, and ask yourself, "What is the conflict?"

Setting

Setting is the time and place in which a story occurs. For example, the **setting** of *The Little Mermaid* is the sea.

Plot

The events of a story are called the plot. Plot is also the order in which the author puts the events in a story. For example, here is the **plot** of "The Three Little Pigs":

- Three pigs left their home to find their fortune. They each built a house, because they had to have a place to live. A wolf came and scared each pig. The wolf blew down the first two houses because the pigs had not done a good job of building them. The wolf could not blow down the third pig's house because the pig was a hard worker and built the house to be strong. The third pig lived happily ever after because he was hard-working.

Conflict

The conflict is the problem in the story. What is the conflict in "The Three Little Pigs"? The wolf and the pigs are in **conflict** because the wolf chases the pigs. The conflict is resolved once the pigs gather in the safe, strong house.

Resolution

The resolution is how a problem or conflict is **solved** in a story. The story usually ends after the main conflict is solved.

examples:

- A teenager does not have the money he needs to buy the car he wants (**conflict**), so he gets a job at a restaurant and saves until he finally has enough (**resolution**).
- A young girl is failing her math class (**conflict**), so her grandfather tutors her until she passes her class (**resolution**).

Cause and Effect

Cause and effect takes place when one thing makes something else happen. The thing that happens is the **effect**, and the reason it happens is the **cause**. Without cause and effect, things would happen in stories for no reason at all, and the events would not make sense.

examples:

- A group of hikers get caught in a blizzard (**cause**), so they have to build a shelter to wait out the storm (**effect**).
- Eliza is hungry (**cause**), so she makes herself a sandwich to eat (**effect**).

Imagery

Imagery is what an author uses to paint a picture for the reader to imagine. The words the author uses create images that help the reader get a better idea of what the author is trying to say.

Read the sentence in the box below. Think about the pictures it puts in your mind.

The smoky hiss from the boiler room's steam valve squealed and grabbed Eugene's attention.

It would have been easy for the author to write, "The noise from the steam valve scared Eugene." However, this does not tell the reader how loud the valve is. By saying that it squeals and that the room is "smoky," the writer paints a spooky picture for the reader. It lets the reader see how creepy the boiler room is for Eugene.

Simile and Metaphor

Similes and metaphors are used in writing to compare and contrast. This means they tell how things are the same or different. They make you think of pictures in your mind.

Simile

A **simile** is when two things are compared because they have something in common. The word **AS** or **LIKE** is used to compare the two words.

examples:

The cars stuck in traffic were AS straight AS an army of ants slowly marching.

The river's dangerous current bent LIKE a curved snake.

Metaphor

A **metaphor** also compares two things, but it does it more directly. It **does not** use the words "as" or "like."

examples:

The house's windows ARE open mouths speaking to the world.

The bull WAS a brick wall blocking our view.

Drama

Not all stories are written for people to read. Some stories are written for people to watch. Stories that people watch are called plays. Plays are also called dramas. A drama is a story told by characters talking to each other. Just like stories, plays have a plot, tell a story, and have characters. As the characters talk, the story moves on. Even though plays are meant to be acted out, plays can also be read silently from the page. They just look different than stories.

Drama Terms

act An act is a big chunk of a play. It is like a chapter in a book. Most of Shakespeare's plays have five acts.

cast/characters	A play will list the names of the characters needed. Some lists will even give a little description of each role. The list of characters, or "cast," is shown at the top of the play.
dialogue	Dialogue is the words spoken by characters in a play.
monologue	A long speech by a character in a play, spoken either to others or as if the character is alone.
offstage	Off the stage; out of view of the audience. When a character talks offstage, the audience can hear but not see the character.
onstage	On the stage; in the view of the audience. In most plays, the characters will not be onstage the whole time. Look for clues in the stage directions to see when certain characters enter onstage.
playwright	People who write plays are called playwrights. The most famous playwright of all time is William Shakespeare.
scene	A scene is a small chunk of a play. A scene usually has just one event, like a conversation or a fight. An act is made up of many scenes.
stage directions	Stage directions tell actors how to move and speak. Most stage directions are in parentheses () and/or in <i>italics</i> (slanted words). They can also tell you where the play is taking place.
stage set	Describes how the stage should look. It gives the director an idea for designing the set. It gives the audience a better idea of where the play takes place.

Example of a Drama

Summer Break

CHARACTERS:

Phil, *leader of the group*

Shannon, *whiny, hard to please*

Janet, *very smart and wise*

Les, *fun-loving*

Stage set: State park campsite

Act I

Scene I

PHIL: Let's hike up to the top of the cliffs.

SHANNON: (*Whining*) It's too far. (*Fanning herself with her baseball cap*) It's also too hot.

PHIL: What do you think, Janet?

JANET: (*Looking off into the distance and shading her eyes with her hand*) We need more water if we are going to hike all the way up there.

LES: Let's go swimming in the lake. It will be more fun, and it will cool us off.

PHIL: (*Patting Les on the back*) Great idea!

SHANNON: I hope the water is not too cold. Swimming does sound better than hiking, though.

JANET: I'm all for it!

Poetry: Stanza, Meter, and Rhythm

A **poem** is a type of writing designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way. Poems are characterized by literary techniques such as **meter** and **rhythm**. These, and other terms, are defined below.

Stanza

A stanza is a division of a poem made by arranging the lines into units separated by a space, usually of a corresponding number of lines, and a recurrent pattern of meter and rhyme. A poem with such divisions is described as having a stanzaic form. Stanzas can also be called **verses**.

Meter

Meter is the rhythmic pattern of a stanza, determined by the kind and number of lines. The number of syllables in each line of a stanza can determine the meter.

Rhythm

Rhythm is the regular or progressive pattern of recurrent accents in the flow of a poem.

Example

The poem below is a rhymed poem with two stanzas. The rhyming words are in **bold**, and the text in **red** represents one of the two stanzas.

My Feet Are Too Big

by D.U. Derino

My feet are much too big,

My feet are much too **long**,

All the other kids' feet are normal

Mine just do not **belong**.

Mom says when I am older,

I will grow into my **feet**,

Then maybe I will be the tallest kid;

that would be super **sweet**!

Rhyme Schemes

Rhyming words are words that sound the same at the ends, such as cat / hat, or jumping /bumping. When a poem has rhyming words at the ends of lines, these are called “end rhymes.” Here is an example of end rhyme:

My cat is nice.

My cat likes mice.

A “rhyme scheme” is a way of describing the pattern of end rhymes in a poem. Each new sound at the end of a line is given a letter, starting with “A,” then “B,” and so on. If an end sound repeats the end sound of an earlier line, it gets the same letter as the earlier line.

Here are three slightly different cat poems, each with a different rhyme scheme. The first is AABB, the second is ABAB, and the third is ABCB):

My cat is <u>nice</u> .	A
My cat likes <u>mice</u> .	A
My cat is <u>fat</u> .	B
I like my <u>cat</u> .	B

My cat is <u>nice</u> .	A
My cat is <u>fat</u> .	B
My cat likes <u>mice</u> .	A
I like my <u>cat</u> .	B

My cat is <u>gray</u> .	A
My cat is <u>fat</u> .	B
My cat is <u>cute</u> .	C
I like my <u>cat</u> .	B

Genres

*There are many different ways a writer can tell a story. These different kinds of writing are called **genres**. When you read a piece of writing, look for clues that tell you what kind of writing it is.*

Fiction

Fictional stories are made up by a writer. These stories are usually written in sentences and paragraphs. Since they are made up by the writer, many fiction stories have events or characters that could not happen in real life. For example, a talking dog would be a good clue that the story you are reading is fictional!

There are many different kinds of fiction stories. Fables, fairy tales, tall tales, and folktales are some examples of fiction stories. Poems and dramas are kinds of writing that can be either fiction or nonfiction.

- A **myth** is a story people made up to explain a belief or something in nature. For example, a myth might try to explain why the sky is blue through an interesting story.
- A **novel** is a fictional story written in prose that is of considerable length. Its great length allows it to have multiple characters, plot lines, and shifts in points of view. A novel is often broken up by chapters, which is why it is also known as a chapter book. One type of novel is a young adult novel, which is aimed at people between the age of 13 and 18.
- A **short story** is written in sentences and paragraphs. It usually has fewer than 10,000 words. Its short length allows it to be read in one sitting.
- **Historical fiction** is a fictional story that is based on a time, event, or series of events that have taken place in history. The players or characters in the story are either entirely fictional, or they are based on a real person or persons in history. The novel *Johnny Tremain* is an example of historical fiction because it is about a young boy who gets caught up in the American Revolution.
- A **mystery/suspense** story puts the character in charge of solving a crime or figuring out what's going on. The old Sherlock Holmes series is an example of mystery/suspense.
- **Science fiction** is a story about the future, based on guesses of how the author thinks the future will be. Most science-fiction stories focus on themes like outer space, technology, and time travel.
- **Fables** are short, moral stories that try to teach a lesson. Fables often have animals as characters.

example:

The king was always mean to the dragon. One day, the king got lost. The dragon helped him get home. The king learned not to be mean to others.

- **Folktales** are stories that use made-up events to explain why or how something happened. These stories are usually handed down from earlier times, and they cannot be proved true or untrue. Sometimes, a folktale is also called a legend.

example:

The horse did not always have a long nose. One day, a horse sneezed so hard, his nose grew very long. Ever since that day, horses have very long noses.

- **Legends** are semi-true stories, that have been passed on from person to person and have important meaning or symbolism for the culture in which they originate. A legend usually includes an element of truth, or is based on historic facts, but with "mythical qualities." Legends usually involve heroic characters or fantastic places and often encompass the spiritual beliefs of the culture in which they originate.

example:

Atlantis is a lost continent. It sank beneath the Atlantic Ocean thousands of years ago.
Atlantis is full of treasure and riches.

Poetry

Poetry looks different than other kinds of writing. Poetry is often written in short lines. The lines in a poem often rhyme. Sometimes every line begins with a capital letter.

example:

Teddy Bear

by J. Robbins

I have a teddy bear named Pooh;
We stick together just like glue;
I play with Pooh Bear in the park;
He helps me sleep when it is dark.

Drama

Dramas are written for people to act out. Plays and skits are two examples of dramas. Dramas look different from other kinds of writing. The character's names are written out, and the words they speak are written beside them. Dramas also have special instructions that tell you what the stage looks like and how the characters should look or act.

Nonfiction

Nonfiction is a kind of writing that gives facts and true information. Nonfiction tells you about something that really happened. Biographies are examples of nonfiction writing.

- An **autobiography** is a piece of writing that a person writes about his or her own life. Autobiographies are written using words like "I," "me," "us," and "we." If you wrote a story about your own life, you would be writing an autobiography.

A **biography** is a piece of writing about a real person's life. A biography is written by someone other than the

person whose life is being described. If you were to write a book about the life of Abraham Lincoln, you would be writing a biography.

- An **essay** is a short piece of informational writing on a single subject. It usually presents a personal view of the author. Essays can be personal or persuasive (show an opinion).

Author's Attitude

*An author's **attitude** is the opinion a writer has about a topic or idea. It is what the writer thinks about something. A reader can find out what the writer thinks by looking for opinions while reading.*

A reader can find out what a writer thinks by looking for opinions.

Most writers choose words that will help the readers know what they think. To find out what the writer thinks about something, look for opinions from the writer.

Here are some words and phrases to look for:

- I think . . .
- I feel . . .
- I believe . . .
- should
- best
- worst
- ought to
- in my opinion

example:

Scottish Terriers

Scottish terriers are the cutest dogs in the world! I think everyone should own a Scottish terrier. Some people call them "Scotties" for short. Scotties are smart animals that learn easily. They are easy to take care of. Some U.S. presidents have owned them. If presidents have owned them, then they must be good dogs. That is good enough for me!

Question 1: Which of the following sentences would the writer **most likely** agree with?

- Scotties love people.
- Scotties are very ugly.
- Scotties make good pets.
- Scotties are friendly.

Explanation: The paragraph says that if presidents have owned Scotties, then they must be good dogs. This makes the writer feel Scotties make good pets. The correct answer is C.

Author Bias

When reading a passage, it is important to keep the writer's point of view in mind. Everyone has certain biases, opinions, or prejudices. These things affect the meaning and language of an author's writing.

Bias is preferring something or playing favorites. The opposite of being biased is being **objective**. A person who is being objective is not influenced by prejudice or bias. Being objective includes the way the person relates to other people. Think about how a family member might describe you. Now think about how your teacher, a friend, or a stranger might describe you. They will all have different things to say based on their outlook.

example:

- Your mom or dad might say, "My kid is the smartest kid in school and the best kid in sports."

We must also think about **beliefs and ages**.

example:

- A mother might not like a movie because it had too much action and explosions, but her son might love it. If each person were to describe the movie to you, the son would probably use words like "exciting" and "awesome." The mother might say it was "disturbing" or "inappropriate." Think about their ages and outlooks and how they might affect their opinions.

People constantly offer their opinions, even when readers might not realize it. Just by describing a scene or an event a certain way, people can affect the way others see things. Can you think of times you might have done this by exaggerating?

examples:

- The test was so unfair. I studied forever and still only got a C.
- Dad, do I have to go to the dentist? It is so scary there! The machines are big enough to fill our house, and the doctor is mean. And I think the toothpaste they use tastes like sand.

Narrator and Speaker

The speaker or narrator is who tells a story or poem. In many cases, the speaker tells or recalls the events. The speaker shows the actions of the characters in the story or poem to the reader.

To identify and describe the speaker or narrator, a reader must find out who is telling the story. The speaker is the voice that "talks" to the reader. He or she is not necessarily the author of a story or poem. It could be a character that the author made up to tell the story. It also could be simply an all-knowing speaker that relates the story to the reader.

The narrator as a character: The speaker can be someone in the story who tells the story from his or her point of view. When the narrator is a character in the story, sometimes another character says the speaker's name. The speaker usually uses words like "I," "me," and "we" to show that a person from the story is personally experiencing the action. When the author has one of the characters in the story narrate the events, it gives the reader a close connection to the events.

The unnamed narrator: Sometimes, the narrator won't be named in the stories you read. When this

happens, it may be because the story or poem is told from the point of view of someone all-knowing. He or she knows all of the characters' thoughts and actions. The speaker can be a part of the story or poem, or the speaker can just tell the story.

When the speaker doesn't act or speak to the other characters, the speaker is a voice outside of the story action. He or she usually uses words like "he," "she," "it," and "they."

Point of View

Point of view is the view from which the story is told. Sometimes the author is the narrator, the person who tells the story. Sometimes one of the characters is the narrator. Sometimes the narrator knows about everyone and everything in the story. Sometimes the narrator is limited in her or his knowledge and outlook. Check out the examples for point of view below.

First Person

First person point of view uses **I** or **we**. First person is often used when someone is stating an opinion or sharing a feeling.

example:

I jumped for joy when **I** got a new bike for my birthday!

Second Person

Second person point of view uses the word **you**. Second person is a good choice when giving directions or anytime you are speaking directly to someone. Second person is almost never used to tell a story.

example:

You need to bring a notebook and a pencil to class.

Third Person

Third person point of view uses **he**, **she**, or **they**. Sometimes **it** is used when talking about a thing instead of a person.

example:

Jamal sang the most beautiful song at the talent show, and **he** won first place.

Illustrations

Folktales, fairy tales, and most children's books are illustrated in some way. Sometimes, the images are so good that they help to show parts of the story that a reader might not understand. Sometimes, they are shown to help the reader become more connected to the story.

Here are some questions to think about when you read from a book or story that includes illustrations, drawings, pictures, or images:

- Why was this picture chosen to illustrate the story?
- What do you think of when you see it?
- Does it make the story better? Does it make the story worse?
- What colors are there in the picture? Do the colors show that the story is a happy story or a sad story? How do the colors make you feel? Are they bright and cheerful or dark and gloomy?
- Have you seen the picture before somewhere else? If you have, what do you remember about it?
- Which parts from the story are illustrated?
- How detailed is the picture compared to the story? Did the artist leave out anything the author tried to make important?

example:

In the following illustration, a bear runs away from a group of bees. The illustrator shows that the bear is angry. The bear's eyebrows point down, and the mouth is turned down like a frown. An illustration helps the reader picture what happens in the story.

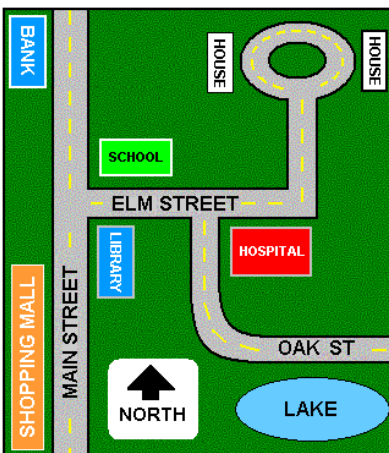
Graphics

Graphics are figures that give information through pictures and shapes. Graphics include maps, diagrams, charts, tables, and graphs. Bar graphs and picture graphs are two kinds of graphs. Venn diagrams and web diagrams are two kinds of diagrams. Examples of these graphics are shown below.

Road Maps

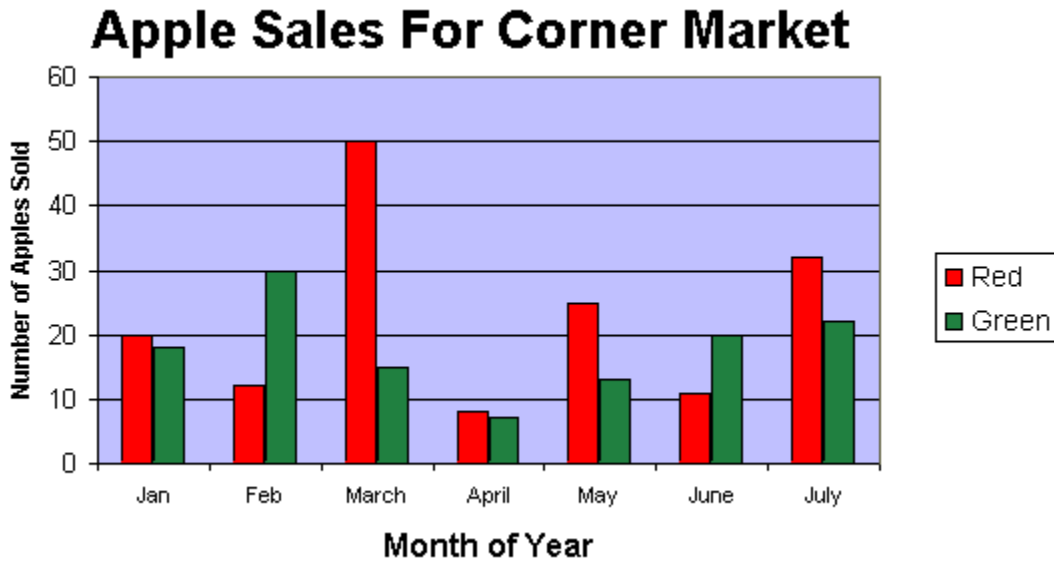
A **road map** help travelers find their way from one place to another. Some road maps show only main highways. Others show smaller roads.

Downtown Friendlyville



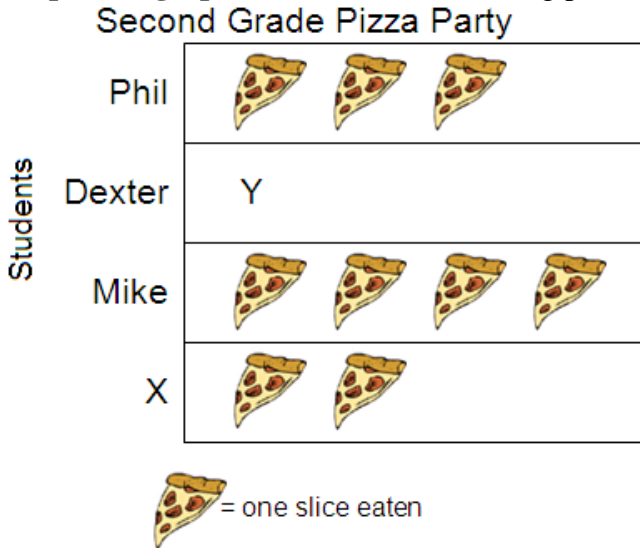
Bar Graphs

A **bar graph** shows information using bars.



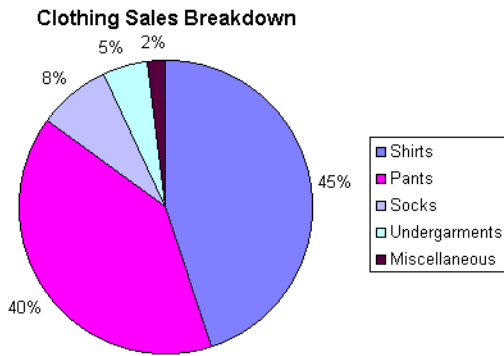
Picture Graphs

A **picture graph** shows information using pictures.



Pie Graphs

A **pie graph** shows how the sizes of the parts compare to each other and the whole.



Tables

A **table** is a way to organize information in boxes using rows and columns. The first column is the main subject of the table. The other columns give more information about the subject in the first column. Each row has all the information for one subject. See an example of a table below. It gives information about different students in a class.

Facts About Students in Mr. Ryan's Class			
Name	Age	Favorite Subject	Favorite Sport
Ben	9	Science	Whirlyball
Yancy	10	Math	Basketball
Monique	10	English	Hockey
Camille	11	Art	Rugby

Schedules

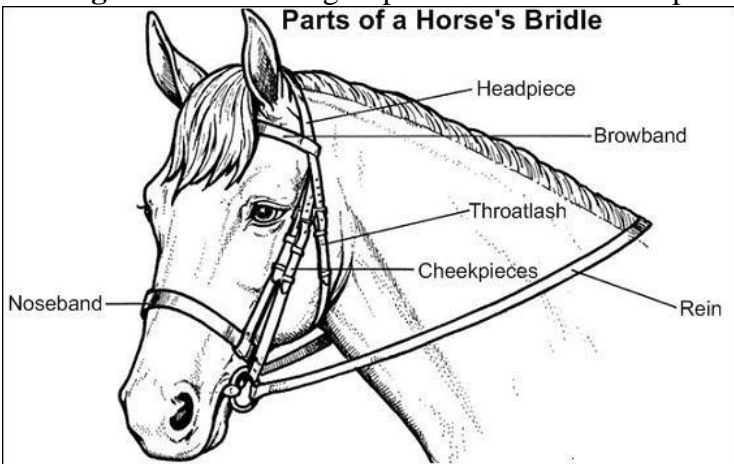
A **schedules** shows what is going to happen or what needs to happen at a certain time.

Dance Day Schedule	
Event	Time
Breakfast	8:00 - 9:00 am
Beginning Salsa Dance	9:15 -10:25 am
Contras Dance Band Workshop	10:40 - 11:50 am

Dance Day Schedule	
Round-up (news, fun and games)	12:00 - 12:45 pm
Lunch	12:45 - 1:30 pm
Swimming	1:30 - 2:30 pm
Dance Party	3:00 - 6:00 pm
Dinner	6:05 - 7:00 pm

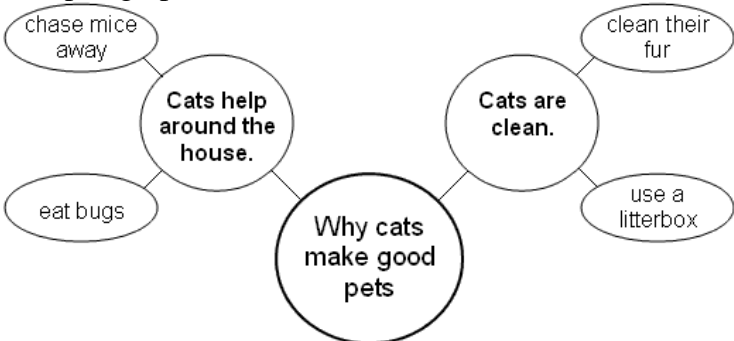
Diagrams

A **diagram** is a drawing or plan. It outlines and explains the parts of something.



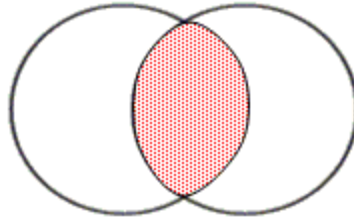
Web Diagrams

A **web diagram** is helpful when you want to see what the main ideas and details of a paragraph are. Writers also use web diagrams to help them arrange their ideas. In a web diagram, the center circle tells the topic of the paragraph. The circles connected to the center circle give details about the topic.



Venn Diagrams

A **Venn diagram** is made up of overlapping circles. In this example, the shaded area is where the circles overlap. Each circle is labeled on the outside with a topic. Inside each circle, facts are listed for the topics. Facts are true statements about a topic. When a fact is listed in the overlapping area of the circles, this means the fact is true for both topics. See example below.



Compare and Contrast

*To **compare** two things is to show **similarities** between them. To **contrast** two things is to show the **differences** between two things.*



Question: How are the things in these pictures alike and different?

Answer: The hats both have black ribbons. The dogs are different colors.

Compare = Similarities

Look for words like . . .

- similar
- in the same way
- likewise
- just like
- as well
- in addition

Contrast = Differences

Look for words like . . .

- different
- in contrast

- on the other hand
- however
- on the contrary
- instead
- although
- but

Read the story, and try the sample questions that follows:

Friar Woods

Friar Woods is a nice, quiet place. Some might call it a "neighborhood." All the animals talk to each other. They work together, and they play together. They also protect each other from harm. Leo the Lion is known as the fighter. He will fight any intruder that comes into Friar Woods without an invitation. He works really hard during the day and sleeps soundly at night. Otto the Owl hoots when danger is near. Otto sleeps all day and is up all night. Friar Woods is always under a watchful eye. The animals take care of each other and live in harmony.

1. What is similar about Leo and Otto (**compare**)?

Answer: Leo and Otto both live in Friar Woods.

2. How are Leo and Otto different (**contrast**)?

Answer: Leo sleeps at night, and Otto sleeps during the day.

READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATION

Main Idea

*The **main idea** of a story or passage is what the passage is mostly about. It is the basic idea that the author wants the reader to understand. Sentences that help to support or explain the main idea are called **supporting details**.*

When you are looking for the main idea of a passage, ask yourself . . .

- Why did the author write this passage?
- What is the passage mostly about?

When you think you know what the main idea is, ask yourself . . .

- Do all of the sentences in the passage support this idea?

If the answer is yes, you have found the main idea. Remember, the main idea is more detailed, or specific, than a topic. For example, you might read a passage about the television-watching habits of children. That is the topic. The main idea would be more specific, like "Children today are watching twice as much television on average than children were watching five years ago." The sentences in the passage would support this main idea by explaining this point. One supporting detail might be the number of hours of television children watched five years ago.

Try to find the main idea of the passage below:

Think about any fireworks display you've ever seen. Pretty cool, right? Well, those shows are nothing compared to nature's light show. The Northern Lights, also called Aurora Borealis, can be seen almost any day of the year somewhere in the world. Auroras are a combination of wind from the Sun and the Earth's magnet-like atmosphere. When they come together, the result is a beautiful light show. Auroras can only be seen by human eyes at night. Places near the North Pole are the best to view Aurora Borealis. Eastern Canada and Alaska are good areas near the Pole.

What is the **main idea** of this passage?

This passage is about the Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis. It explains how they happen and where they can be seen. Aurora Borealis is a beautiful natural light show. That is the main idea of this passage. The other sentences in the passage support this idea.

Following Instructions

*Following instructions means to do what a set of directions tells you to do. In order to follow instructions, you must pay attention to details. A measurement, like 2 cups, tells you **how much** to use. Information about minutes or hours tells you **how long** to do something. Pay attention to **when** things happen. Doing things in a certain order can be very important. Read all information carefully. Do not be afraid to go slowly.*

Sample Questions

1. Which choice below is an instruction?

- A. Add 2 cups of milk.
- B. I need 2 cups of milk.
- C. Where are the 2 cups of milk?
- D. Milk is good for your bones.

Explanation: The correct answer is A. "Add 2 cups of milk" is an instruction. It is also called a command. The other choices are statements and a question. They are not instructions.

Beach Fun Sunscreen

Directions: Use all year round. Put a large amount on your uncovered skin before going out in the sun. Make sure to spread this sunscreen evenly. Put on the sunscreen again after swimming or sweating.

Caution: For use on skin only. Do not get it in the eyes. If it gets in the eyes, rinse with water. If rash appears, stop use.

2. When should you put on Beach Fun Sunscreen?

- A. after getting a skin rash
- B. before going out in the sun
- C. before riding out to the beach
- D. after taking an evening shower

Explanation: The correct answer is B. You should put on the sunscreen before going out in the sun. The directions also say to use it after you swim or sweat. Knowing when to do something is important. This will help you use the product successfully. Sometimes directions tell you what not to do. Following these instructions is also important.

Cause and Effect

*Many authors use **cause and effect** in their writing. Cause and effect helps you understand how events in a story are connected. It also helps you understand why a character acts in a certain way.*

A **cause** is why something happens.

An **effect** is what happens because of that cause.

When you read, look for cause-and-effect relationships. Think about these questions:

- Does this passage tell you **why** something happens?
- Does this event **cause** something else to happen?
- Is the character doing this **because** of something that happened?

*You can find cause and effect by looking for **clue words**. **Because, since, so, and as a result** all tell you that you're reading about a cause-and-effect relationship.*

Read the passage below and look for the cause-and-effect relationships.

Many years ago, a group of people called the Huns attacked China. The Huns wanted to conquer the Chinese. **Because** the Chinese wanted to protect themselves, they built a huge wall. This wall was 1,500 miles long. **As a result** of this wall, the Huns were kept out of China. This Great Wall of China is still standing today.

This writer uses **cause and effect**.

Think: "What happened?"

Answer: The Chinese built a wall.

This is the **effect**.

Think: "Why did they build the wall?"

Answer: To keep the Huns out.

This is the **cause**.

The clue words "**because**" and "**as a result**" help us answer these questions.

Text Organization

When you understand how the writer has organized information, you will understand and remember the text better. Writers organize text in several different ways.

Chronological Order

The writer places events in the order in which they occur. Look for the following words and phrases.

- first
- then
- finally
- a few minutes later
- next
- after lunch
- last year

example:

- Mr. Carter carried new books into his classroom. Then, he counted all the books. Next, he will pass out the books to his students. Finally, he will tell his students which pages to read for tomorrow.

Compare/Contrast

The text shows how ideas or things are alike or different. Look for the following words.

- best
- more
- better
- less
- worse
- easier
- than

example:

- Brandon plays more sports than his sister Jackie does. Brandon's muscles are stronger than Jackie's muscles.

Cause and Effect

The text shows that one event causes another thing to happen. Look for the following words and phrases.

- because
- then
- since
- as a result

example:

- The grass in our yard is tall and green because it rained a lot last week.

Pro/Con

The text is divided into two parts: one part tells you why something is good, and the other part tells you why something is bad. Look for the following words and phrases.

- however
- on the other hand

example:

- Playing an instrument in the band can be very rewarding and fun. You can learn a lot about music and rhythm. You can make many new friends in the band. However, playing a band instrument can also be very costly. You will need to spend time practicing your music. Buying an instrument and supplies for your instrument costs a lot of money.

Problem/Solution

The text is divided into two parts. One part presents a problem, and the other part gives the solution to the problem. Look for the following words.

- problem
- solution
- solve
- plan

example:

- Yost City officials have announced that the city has run out of money to give to the public library. This may cause the library to close later this year. Many citizens who hope to solve this problem have come together. They believe the solution is to raise money for the library themselves. They plan to have garage sales and bake sales and give the money they make to the library.

The problem in the passage above can be summed up by this question:

How can the public library get enough money to stay open?

The solution:

Citizens will have garage sales and bake sales to try to make enough money for the library.

Supporting Sentences

*Supporting sentences support the main idea of the paragraph. Supporting sentences should contain **relevant** details that develop and explain the main idea.*

example:

Mexico: The Old and New

(1) Mexico offers visitors a world of contrasts. (2) Its pyramids and ancient ruins are part of ancient history, while its modern cities provide us with the best of today's technology. (3) Its mountains offer cool weather and rocky peaks, while only a few miles away, its beaches tempt us with warm sun and white sand. (4) Its fancy restaurants serve the most sophisticated continental cuisine, while sidewalk vendors sell the simplest of native foods.

Sentence 1 states the main idea of the paragraph.

- The main idea is that Mexico has many examples of contrasts (differences).

Sentences 2 through 4 are supporting sentences.

- The **ancient** pyramids and the **modern** cities are an example of contrast.
- The **cool** mountains are in contrast to the **warm** beaches.
- The **fancy** restaurants stand in contrast to the **simple** food sold by vendors.

WRITING STANDARDS

Introductions and Conclusions

*A good piece of writing has a beginning, a middle, and an end that are well developed. People spend most of their time on the **body** of their writing (the middle part). However, it is just as important to spend as much time on the **introduction** (the beginning) and the **conclusion** (the end).*

Introduction

The **introduction** sets the tone for the rest of your story, paper, or report. The introduction will establish your topic for your audience. A good introduction can get the audience interested in what you have to say. A bad introduction can lose the audience's attention. One way to ease your audience into your introduction is to use **introductory statements**. These are statements that can ask questions, state opinions, present arguments, tell a story, or give background information.

Here are some words and phrases you can use in introductory statements:

- at the present time
- currently
- first
- in the beginning
- right now
- to begin with

Here are some examples of introductory statements:

- At the present time, there is no cure for this illness.
- Currently, the definition for abuse is the physical or emotional mistreatment of others.
- In the beginning, the crime rate for the city was too high to ignore.
- To begin with, the idea that teens need part-time jobs is ridiculous.

Conclusion

The **conclusion** brings everything in your writing to a natural end. Your conclusion will wrap up your paper without offering any new evidence or information. A good **conclusion** will tie everything from the

introduction and body together, and it will get your audience to think about what you have said. **Concluding statements** work in the same way as introductory statements. Concluding statements can restate the main point or argument of your paper, recommend actions or solutions, predict the future, or use a quotation.

Here are some words and phrases you can use in concluding statements:

- as I have demonstrated
- finally
- in conclusion
- in short
- lastly
- therefore
- to sum up
- to summarize

Here are examples of concluding statements:

- Finally, for us to continue to support the seat belt law can only be beneficial.
- In conclusion, I believe the only way to achieve peace is through active discussions.
- In short, the test is ridiculous because it's not current and it doesn't offer any real benefits.
- To sum up, cooperation is the key because as Ben Franklin said, "A small leak can sink a great ship."

Logical Order

*Writers use logical order to help readers understand their writing. **Logical order** is an order that makes sense. Logical order can be in sequence. **Sequence or chronological order** is the order in which things happen. Logical order also uses details to support the writer's ideas.*

Chronological Order

With the help of "clue" words, you can easily understand the correct order of a story.

- **First:** This word is a clue that the sentence should start things off. Remember, it doesn't have to be the first word in the sentence.
- **Next:** This word is a clue that something came before it. A sentence with this word could be second, third, or fourth. You will have to rely on information in the other sentences to decide.
- **Third, Fourth, Fifth:** These are great clue words that tell you exactly what order the events happened.
- **Finally:** This is a clue word that tells you this is one of the last sentences in the story. It should describe the last event that happened in a sequence.

Topic Order

Writers use logical order to help explain their ideas. Each sentence and paragraph must be placed in a way that makes sense. Topics should be clear and followed by examples and details. Although these passages are not in sequence, they still use clue words to guide the readers. These clue words or **transition words** let the readers know what is next. These words may include *however*, *for example*, and *similarly*. Another part of logical order

is a conclusion. A **conclusion** is a paragraph or sentence that wraps up the passage. A conclusion may answer any questions that the reader might have

Example

- **(1)** On Friday, our first day of camp, we went fishing at the lake. **(2)** After we caught four fish, we decided to hike to the other side of the camp. **(3)** While we were swimming, my friend Jude held his breath for three minutes under water! **(4)** We sang songs around the campfire on our last night of camp. **(5)** On Sunday morning, we packed up our gear and boarded the buses back home. **(6)** On Saturday morning, we rode paddleboats and went swimming.

Question: Which sentence in this passage is in the wrong place?

- A. sentence 6
- B. sentence 3
- C. sentence 1
- D. sentence 2

Answer: Sentence 6 is not the final event in the chronological story. Sentence 6 should be placed before sentence 3. Sentence 3 describes what Jude did while the group went swimming. Also, if the speaker left camp on Sunday, then the group must have sang songs on Saturday night.

Transitions and Flow

*When you write, you should try to connect your ideas as smoothly as possible. Some people like to call this "writing flow." Just like water flows in a river, your ideas should flow in your essay. **Transitions**, certain words or phrases, can help connect your sentences and paragraphs.*

Types of Transitions

Signal Time or Sequence

Use words such as these: first, second, finally, last, next, afterward, after, earlier, during, while, before, then, previously, now, until.

example:

- *Earlier*, my mother was at work. *Now* she is at home.

Signal Additional Information

Use words such as these: in addition, furthermore, moreover, and, also, another.

example:

- Last summer, my family visited New York City. *In addition*, we drove to New Jersey to visit Aunt Martha.

Signal Examples or Illustrations

Use words such as these: for example, for instance, to illustrate, such as, including.

example:

- I like to listen to many types of music. *For example*, I like rock music, classical music, and the blues.

Signal Comparison

Use words such as these: likewise, similarly, in the same manner, just as, as well.

example:

- My dad likes to paint with watercolors. *Likewise*, I like to draw pictures.

Signal Contrast

Use words such as these: however, although, but, yet, nevertheless, whereas, in contrast, on the contrary, on the other hand, instead.

example:

- My sister wanted to buy a new dress. *Instead*, she borrowed one from a friend.

Signal Cause and Effect

Use words such as these: consequently, as a result, thus, therefore, because, accordingly, since, so.

example:

- I ate a lot of candy after lunch. *Therefore*, my stomach hurts.

Signal Endings or Closings

Use words such as these: in conclusion, all in all, in brief, in summary, as indicated above.

example:

- *In summary*, it is important for children to spend holidays with their families.

Go with the Flow

Knowing when to use a transition and which one to use is important. If a transition makes your paper sound choppy, you are probably using the wrong one. Try different transitions until the sentences flow together smoothly.

Other Ways to Improve Flow

1) Use pronouns for the second sentence instead of the name(s) and noun(s) in the first sentence.

- **First sentence:** Kierra loves to watch basketball games.
- **Second sentence:** **She** cheers loudly for her favorite team.

2) Combine two sentences into one sentence.

- **Two sentences:** Olivia has brown and black fur. She has pointy ears.
- **One sentence:** Olivia has brown and black fur and pointy ears.

Sample Questions

1. What would be the **best** transition word or phrase to connect the ideas in this sentence?

That store sells different kinds of pets. _____, dogs, cats, hamsters, and birds are sold.

- A. Likewise
- B. On the contrary
- C. For example
- D. Therefore

Explanation: The **best** answer choice is the transition "For example." This phrase signals that the writer is about to list some examples of the kinds of pets that are sold.

- In the following sentence, what does the transition word "afterward" signal?

Peter will go to the movies. Afterward, he will eat dinner.

- A. cause and effect
- B. closing
- C. time
- D. contrast

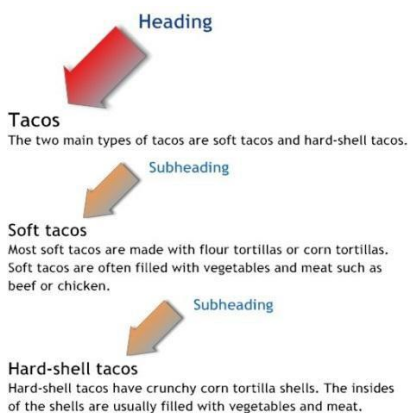
Explanation: In this example, "afterward" signals time. The writer states that after Peter goes to the movies, he will eat dinner.

Headings

*When you turn in your homework, you are often asked to put a **heading** on your paper. The heading tells your name and the date when you finished your work. It may also tell which subject you are studying and the type of homework it is. The heading gives your teacher the information he or she needs to grade your work. Writers use headings in a very similar way.*

Helpful hints about headings:

- Headings give the reader clues about what he or she will find in the text below it.
- If the reader is trying to locate a certain fact, he or she can look at the headings to figure out where to find that fact. That way, the reader does not have to read the entire article to find the information he or she needs!
- If a writer is covering a lot of information, headings can help organize that information.
- Think of headings as "titles" and subheadings as "mini-titles."



Captions

*Sometimes, under an image, there will be a **caption**. This is where information about an illustration is given. This can include names of people or places, descriptions of an event, and even information about who took a certain photograph.*

Look at these examples of captions below.



Dijon, his older sister Rachel, and their adopted younger brother Caleb.



People are more frequently using the library's free-access computers since they updated to high-speed Internet last month.



Cellular phones have become popular around the world.

Photo taken by Ned Dolt of the Frank Times

Test your knowledge of captions on the following example question.

The Digital Age

by Sandra Villa

We live in a time where everything is always improving. This has become true of cameras, too.

Today's camera is the digital camera. It has a lot of advantages. It is easier to use because it does not need film. Film can get tangled and damaged. Also, digital cameras let people find out how a picture turned out within seconds. Film can take hours and even days to process. Digital cameras also take better pictures.

Even professionals use digital cameras. Film is being pushed aside as digital cameras take over. What will become digital next?



Digital cameras are so easy to use.

Photo by Ken James

According to the caption, the photograph above was taken

- A. with a digital camera.
- B. by Ken James.
- C. by Sandra Villa.
- D. with a film camera.

The answer is choice **B**, by Ken James. The caption does not say if the picture was taken with a digital camera or a film camera. It makes a statement about digital cameras and gives the photographer's name.

Precise Language

Have you ever met someone who talks too much? He or she may use too many unimportant words to say something simple or to explain something that only needs a few words to describe. Some people "talk too much" when they write, too.

When you write, it is important to fill your work with rich and colorful details, but it is important to be precise when you do. "Being precise" is another way of saying "don't talk too much when you write." For example, instead of saying that elephants are "really, really, really big," you could say that elephants are "giant." Being precise means using the right words to say what you want to say. Below are more ways to keep your writing precise.

1. Remove extra words that do not add meaning.

Any place is fine with me.

is better than

Any kind of place is fine with me.

2. Change phrases into single words.

The brown-haired girl smiled.

is better than

The girl with brown hair smiled.

3. Use active verbs.

Jerry opened a gift.

is better than

A gift was opened by Jerry.

4. Use powerful words (a thesaurus can help you).

The puppy was not obedient.

is better than

The puppy did not behave very well.

Remember:

Being precise means using the *right* words. It does not mean writing less! Precise writers always get their point across. They just do it with the most powerful words they can.

Appropriate Language and Writing Purpose

*The way you write depends on who is going to read your words (your audience). It is important for you to know what words to use in your writing. If you are writing to a friend, you can use **informal** language. If you are writing to an adult, or if you are writing a school paper, you should use **formal** language. A good way to make sure your language is appropriate is to avoid using **slang** and **jargon**.*

Informal Language

Slang is words and phrases that are very informal and usually used only by one age group or other specific group of people.

examples:

- tight
- cool
- sweet
- y'all
- you guys
- chill
- bomb
- dog
- ain't

Formal Language

When you write papers for school, you should use your best, most formal language. Do not use the same words and phrases you use when talking to your friends and family.

examples:

INFORMAL

The school library is a rocking place to learn.

Dude, cheetahs can run super fast.

The school library is a good place for students to learn.

Cheetahs are one of the fastest animals in the world.

INFORMAL

You guys, the moon is, like, really far away. The moon is many miles away from Earth.
 This book is totally cool to read. This book is about a girl who designs her own car.

Jargon

Jargon is words or phrases used within one group or business. Jargon is often used as a "shortcut" to give information.

example:

- Wayne and Leroy are going to the golf course to play with the dawn patrol.

(The "dawn patrol" is a group of golfers who like to play very early in the morning.)

It is important for you to be able to write for many different purposes, or reasons. Some different purposes for writing are listed below.

- **Describe:** Some writing describes something or how to do something. For example, the directions that come with a new toy have the purpose of describing how to put the toy together.
- **Inform:** Some writing has the purpose of informing. This type of writing explains something or gives information about a topic. A news article is an example of informational writing.
- **Persuade:** In persuasive writing, an author will try to convince an audience to agree with his or her point of view. One example of persuasive writing is an advertisement. It is written to convince people to buy something. Speeches by politicians are also examples of persuasive writing.
- **Narrate:** Narrative writing tells a story. An author describes events and the characters who are involved in the events. Novels and short stories are examples of narrative writing.
- **Entertain:** Some writing has the purpose of entertaining. Comic books and comic strips are examples of writing that entertains. The purpose of this type of writing is often to make people laugh or cry.

Prewriting

Prewriting is a way to organize your thoughts before beginning to write. Good writers use many different prewriting techniques, and you should, too. Some examples are listed below.

Brainstorm

Brainstorming is a prewriting technique designed to help you bring ideas from your mind onto paper. It is a good technique to use when you know a general subject you are interested in writing about but do not exactly know what part of the subject you want to cover. When brainstorming, write down every idea you have, no matter how bad an idea you think it is. You want to get as many ideas down on paper as you can. You can sort through the ideas later.

RAIN FORESTS

- jungles
- trees
- plants

- flowers
- cutting down trees
- loss of homes for animals
- tigers
- snakes
- insects
- natives

Outline

Many writers use an outline to help them think through the various stages of the writing process. An outline is a kind of graphic scheme of the organization of your paper. It indicates the main ideas of your paper as well as the subtopics under each main idea. Outlines range from an informal use of indenting and graphics (such as --, *, +) to a formal use of Roman numerals and letters. Regardless of how formal, the function of an outline is to help you consider the most effective way to say what you want to say.

Brad is going to write a book report on *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. He used an outline for his prewriting.

I. Characters

A. Alice

1. main character
2. young girl

B. White Rabbit

C. Mouse

D. Cheshire Cat

E. Mad Hatter

F. Queen of Hearts

II. Events

A. Falls down the rabbit hole

B. Arrives in a fantasy world

C. Eats cake

D. Gets small

E. Goes to mad tea party

F. Meets the Queen of Hearts

G. Grows larger again

H. Wakes up

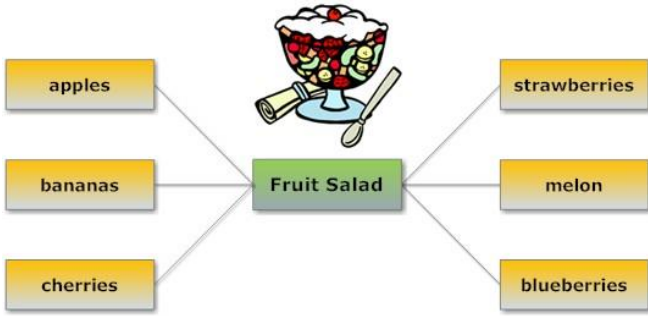
III. My Thoughts

A. I like this book because . . .

B. If I could change one part . . .

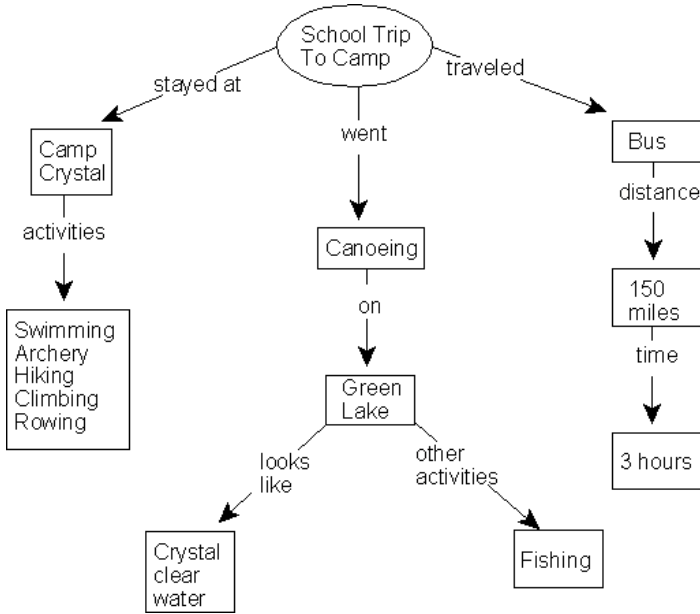
Semantic Map

A **semantic map** is a web-shaped diagram that is a good way to help you assemble ideas for your writing. In the center of the web, you place your most general topic. The arms of the web contain more specific information about your main topic. In the example below, fruit salad is the main topic. The words in the web's gold boxes show each fruit that the writer could write about.



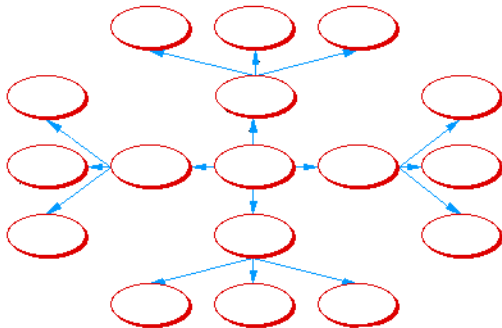
Concept Map

A **concept map** is a special form of a web diagram for exploring knowledge and gathering and sharing information. A concept map consists of nodes or cells that contain a concept, item, or question and links. The links are labeled and show direction with an arrow symbol. The labeled links explain the relationship between the nodes. The arrow describes the direction of the relationship and reads like a sentence.



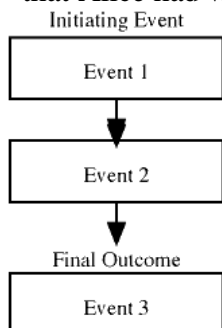
Clustering/Webbing

Clustering or **webbing** is a nonlinear activity that generates ideas, images, and feelings around a starter word. As students cluster, their thoughts tumble out, enlarging their word bank for writing and often helping them see patterns in their ideas.



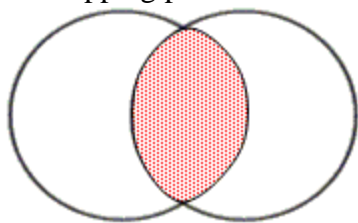
Sequence of Events Chain/Story Map

A **sequence of events chain** or **story map** is used to describe the stages of something (the life cycle of a butterfly); the order of steps that tell how to do something (how to fly a kite); a sequence of events (how the Pilgrims first came to America); or the goals, actions, and outcomes of a character in a story (the adventures that Alice had while she was in Wonderland).



Venn Diagram

A **Venn diagram** is made up of overlapping circles. Each circle is labeled on the outside with a topic. Inside each circle, facts are listed for the topics. Facts are true statements about a topic. When a fact is listed in the overlapping parts of the circles, this means the fact is true for both topics.



Narrowing Down a Topic

*When you are writing, it is important to **narrow down** the subject of your paper. Good writing will draw in your reader to discuss a specific topic.*

When you **narrow down** a topic, think about the following things.

- Figure out the main parts of your paper. See how they can be used within your paper.
- Pay attention to how long the paper should be. The length will tell you how much information to write about. A short essay will need specific information. A longer essay can have a lot of information.
- Be as specific as possible. For example, writing a paper about buildings in large cities would cover too much information. Writing about buildings in Manhattan would be more specific.
- If you have any problems about how to find a specific part to write about, you should ask your teacher for help. Most of the time, this can save you time and can help to focus.

Revising and Proofreading

***Proofreading** and **revising** are very important steps in the writing process. Bad grammar, bad spelling, and bad punctuation can make a paper with good ideas unpleasant to read.*

When you give a gift to someone, you try to make it look as pretty and shiny as you can. Would you ever give a gift that is covered in slime and dirt—even if the gift inside was very nice? No! Think of proofreading and

revising as wrapping a present. You are "wrapping" your writing in good grammar, great spelling, and perfect punctuation!

Here are some tips for proofreading and revising your papers:

- Read your paper aloud, or have someone read it aloud to you. Usually, we hear our errors better than we see them.
- Leave as much time as you can between finishing writing a paper and editing and proofreading it. This causes writers to see the paper in a different way.
- Use two pieces of blank white paper to cover all but one sentence at a time. This keeps you from being distracted by the surrounding sentences.
- Set aside time for proofreading, just as you set aside time for research and writing.
- Build revising and proofreading into your writing process at the best place for you. Many writers like to revise and proofread last so that they can concentrate on their ideas first.
- Good writers do not always know all the grammar and punctuation "rules," but they do know where to look them up. Find and use resources:
 - dictionaries
 - thesauruses
 - software writing programs
 - handbooks
 - handouts from your teacher
 - other writers
- Keep resources handy when you write so that you are not tempted to guess how to correct your errors.
- Ask other writers to listen as you read your paper, to read your paper as you listen, and to help you figure out and apply grammar rules. Good writers get help from other writers.
- Know and keep a list of errors you make often so that you know what errors to look for in your papers.
- Read your paper once for each kind of error. For example, the first time you read your paper, check only for spelling. The second time you read it, check for grammar.

example:

(1) Cold wind blew off the Hudson River. Billy blinked tears out of his eyes. (2) Though his tears came from the cold, his great-grandparents must have had real tears in their eyes as their ship sailed into New York Harbor. (3) What did they think when they saw the giant statue standing in the harbor? (4) How did they feel about the kind-looking lady welcoming them to their new home?

(5) Billy knew plenty about the giant, kind-looking lady because he had visited her home on Liberty Island many times. (6) She was none other than the Statue of Liberty. (7) She stood 151 feet tall atop a 154-foot-tall pedestal. (8) Her mouth was 3 feet wide. (9) Each eye was 2 feet wide. (10) Her fingers were about 8 feet long. (11) That is about 2 feet longer than his dad was tall!

(12) Billy tilted his head back as the ferry neared Liberty Island. (13) He could just see the tablet she held in her left hand, but he would need an eagle's eyes to read "July 4, 1776" written on it. (14) In her right hand she held a torch, a symbol of the light of freedom. (15) Billy's great-grandparents had crossed the Atlantic from Ireland. (16) They had come for the opportunities America offered, but he knew other kids whose ancestors had come for freedom.

Question: How can sentences 8 and 9 be combined to improve the flow of the text?

Answer: Her mouth was 3 feet wide, and each eye was 2 feet wide.

Proofreading & Editing

Proofreading or editing is a very important part of writing. You should always proofread your writing. If you can, have someone else proofread it as well. Below is a list of things you should look for when proofreading.

Spelling

- Read your writing very closely and look for misspelled words.
- When writing on a computer, always remember to use the "spell check" feature.

Capitalization

- Make sure you start all sentences with a capital letter.
- Check to see that you have capitalized all proper names.

Punctuation

- Check to see that the end of each sentence has correct punctuation.
- Make sure questions end with question marks.
- Make sure all quotes are properly punctuated with commas and quotation marks.
- Make sure you use commas in compound sentences and in items listed in a series.

Usage

- Check for mistakes with commonly mixed-up words (example: accept/except).
- Check to see that you have used the proper verb forms (example: ran/run).

Resources

We live in an information age. It is easier than ever to become well informed on a variety of subjects. Now, most questions can be answered conveniently with the click of a computer mouse or a visit to the local library. Here is a list of various research resources.

Types of Research Resources

Almanac	an annual publication in calendar form with weather forecasts, astronomical data, tide tables, and other information
Atlas	a book of maps
Biography	a written account of another person's life
Computerized Catalog Database	used to search for books, magazines, or videos by title, author, or subject
Dewey Decimal System	a library system organized by category and number order on bookshelves

Types of Research Resources

Dictionary	a reference book containing an alphabetical list of words with their meanings and pronunciations
Encyclopedia	a series of reference books with quick overviews of a wide range of subjects and people
Field Trip	a trip to a particular location or museum for learning purposes
Glossary	alphabetical list of terms and definitions found at the back of a textbook
Guide to Periodicals	magazine article directory listed by topic and found at all libraries
Magazine	published at different times in the year and includes information and ideas about many topics
Newspaper	a daily publication of articles about current events
Online Search Engine	a Web site that quickly scans the Internet for the keywords entered
People	an excellent research resource when interviewed for stories, personal experience, or professional knowledge
Thesaurus	a reference book used to find synonyms, words with similar meanings
Web Sites	online resources with up-to-date information about many different topics

Reliable Sources

*When you do research, it is important to think about whether or not you have good sources. A **reliable** source is one in which the information is truthful and can be trusted. Reliable sources are also known as **credible** sources. When trying to figure out if a source is reliable or not, try asking yourself some questions about each source.*

What is the best type of source for your subject?

example:

If you wanted to learn about George Washington, a book or a research article would be a good source. Your local newspaper would probably not be a very good source for information about George Washington.

Is the writer an expert (a person who has a lot of knowledge about a subject)?

example:

It is important to find out how much the writer knows about a subject. If you were looking for information about monkeys, a book by a person who works with monkeys every day would be a good source.

How up-to-date is the information?**example:**

Information can change quickly, especially in subjects like science and computers. A reliable Web site would be a good place to look if you wanted the latest information about a new computer.

Can you find a reliable person to interview about this subject?**example:**

If you wanted to learn about the history of your town, you might interview a person who grew up there. It is best to find eyewitnesses for a research interview.

Making Connections

*One part of being a good reader is **making connections** between what you read and what you already know. As you read, think about how a subject is similar to other subjects you know about.*

Read this article and look at the connections you can make.

Dr. Seuss

Dr. Seuss was an American writer who wrote books for children. His books have colorful pictures and stories written in rhyme. Two of his most famous books are *Green Eggs and Ham* and *The Cat in the Hat*. Dr. Seuss also wrote *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, which was made into a television cartoon and a movie.

- Think about where you would most likely find this piece of writing. Use what you know about books to guess which book would have writing similar to this article.

Question 1: This article would most likely be found in a book about_____.

Answer: famous writers

- Think about where you would look to find more information. Use what you already know to think about what other articles would be helpful.

Question 2: What article could someone read to find more information about Dr. Seuss?

Answer: *The Life and Work of Dr. Seuss*

- Think about how an activity you read about is similar to another activity. Use what you know about everyday activities to make a connection between the two.

Question 3: How is Dr. Seuss similar to a poet?

Answer: Both writers use rhyme in their writing.

Paraphrasing

*If your teacher asks you to **paraphrase** a text, he or she wants you to put the text in your own words. A paraphrase is a rewording of a text that does not change the meaning or leave out details. It uses different*

words to give the same information found in the original text. It is different from summaries because it retells all of the ideas. Paraphrases are usually the same length as the original text. It can even be longer.

Why should you paraphrase?

- It helps you make sure that you understand the text.
- It can help you understand confusing language.
- It improves your writing skills.
- It keeps you from copying the author's words when writing about the text.

Example:

Original Text

Kristy woke up with an awful headache. Her nose was runny, and her throat hurt. All Kristy wanted to do was go back to sleep.

"Dad," she said, "I should stay home from school."

After her dad felt her forehead, he did not argue.

Paraphrase

Kristy felt sick when she got up that morning. Her head hurt, and she had a runny nose and sore throat. Kristy did not want to do anything but fall asleep again. She told her dad that she should not go to school. Her dad agreed once he checked her forehead.

Taking Notes

When you sit down to research a report topic, you should take notes.

Write notes to prepare your information.

- Good notes paraphrase what you've read by putting it in your own words.
- Good notes also summarize what you've read. This means that you write down the main points and condense the information into one or two important sentences.
- Finally, good notes are relevant. They directly relate to the topic you are researching. Only write down relevant information in order to save time and make sure your report stays on one topic.

Use your notes to write the final paper.

- Put your notes in order by topic or theme.
- Throw out notes that don't relate to your topic or don't fit.
- Put the notes into your own words.
- Write the report and add information from your notes throughout the text in a natural way. Don't just tack it onto the end.

Citing Sources

*When your teacher asks you to write a report, you will look for information in different places. The places where you find information are called **sources**. It is very important to name (or **cite**) the sources you use when you write a report. If you do not, you are **plagiarizing**.*

Plagiarism is the stealing of somebody else's words, ideas, or information. It happens when you use someone's words, ideas, or information and make them look like your own. Plagiarism is not allowed. If you plagiarize, you could fail the assignment and even get suspended! To avoid plagiarism, always show where you found the ideas or information you use.

Quoting and Paraphrasing Information

You can present information from a source by **quoting** or **paraphrasing**.

To **quote** means to copy someone else's exact words. To show the reader that the words are copied, place them in quotation marks.

example:

- According to Kendra Yates, "Savannah plays a key part in Georgia's tourism industry" (5).

To **paraphrase** means to use your own words to state someone else's ideas or information.

example:

- According to Kendra Yates, Savannah is an important city for tourism in Georgia (5).

The lack of quotation marks shows the reader that the writer is using his or her own words. The **citation** shows that the information is from a source the writer used. When you quote or paraphrase information, giving credit to your source(s) is necessary.

Citing Information

There are many different ways you can give credit to a source. When writing a report, use the style that your teacher likes best. This lesson will teach you how to use **footnotes** and **in-text citations**.

Footnotes are notes found at the bottom of a page. They give more information about something in the text. Each note has a number that matches with a number in the text. For your first footnote citation, place a small raised "1" after the first sentence that has borrowed information. Then, at the bottom of the page, next to another "1," give information about the source, like the author's name and the title of the source. Your second footnote citation should use the number 2, your third one should use the number 3, and so on.

example:

- My name is Madeline Pennington, and I live in Savannah, Georgia. Savannah is Georgia's first city.¹

1. Kendra Yates, Savannah (New York: Pete and Smith, 2009), 5.

An **in-text citation** gives credit to a source in the text that has borrowed information. It is used along with a **bibliography**, or **works-cited list**. To credit a book source in the sentence that has the borrowed information, simply include the author's last name and the page number where the information can be found. If the reader wants to, he or she can look up the author's name in your bibliography to find out more information about the source.

example:

- My name is Madeline Pennington, and I live in Savannah, Georgia. Savannah is Georgia's first city (Yates 5).

Crediting Images

To **credit an image** in a report, you can put a note right under it. The note should say who created the image. It should also name the source where you found the image.

example:



Fig. 1. Don Nelson, *Grand Canyon*, 2007, *The Glorious Grand Canyon*, by Rob Smith (San Francisco: Euless Press, 2008) 124.

Bibliographies

A **bibliography**, also known as a **works-cited list**, is a list of sources. When you use in-text citations in your report, you should have a bibliography at the end of your report. The bibliography should list all of the sources that you used. Use each author's last name to put the sources in alphabetical order. For each source, try to include the author, the title, the type of source (magazine, newspaper, Web site, book, etc.), and the date of publication.

example:

Works Cited

Ada, Janet. *Popular Sites of Savannah*. Cambridge: New Press, 2009. Print.

Williams, Zach. *History of Savannah*. Savannah Historical Society, 28 Sept. 2008.

Web. 20 Nov. 2010. <<https://www.savannahsociety.org>>.

Yates, Kendra. *Savannah*. New York: Pete and Smith, 2009. Print.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS: CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are used to link words, phrases, and clauses.

Coordinating Conjunctions

Use a coordinating conjunction (**and, but, or, nor, for, so, or yet**) to join individual words, phrases, and independent clauses. (Note that you can also use the conjunctions "but" and "for" as prepositions.)

Examples

- Lemons **and** limes are sour.
 - In this example, the coordinating conjunction "and" links two nouns.
- I like to go hiking in the woods, **for** the trees give a lot of shade .
 - In this example, the coordinating conjunction "for" is used to link two independent clauses.
- Quinn spent the weekend riding his bike **and** watching movies.
 - Here the coordinating conjunction "and" links the two participial phrases "riding his bike" and "watching movies," which act as adjectives describing the noun "Quinn."

Subordinating Conjunctions

Use a subordinating conjunction

(**after, although, as, because, before, how,if, once, since, than, that, though, till, until, when, where, whether, andwhile**) to introduce a dependent clause and show the relationship among the independent clause(s) and the dependent clause(s).

Examples

- **After** the rain stopped, Olivia went outside to play.
 - The subordinating conjunction "after" introduces the dependent clause "After the rain stopped."
- **If** my team wins this game, it will move on to the finals.
 - Similarly, the subordinating conjunction "if" introduces the dependent clause "If my team wins this game."

Jubilee jumped out of her chair **when** the cat scared her.

- The subordinating conjunction "when" introduces the dependent clause "when the cat scared her."

Todd had to walk home from the park **because** his bike had a flat tire.

- The subordinating conjunction "because" introduces the dependent clause "because his bike had a flat tire."

Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions

(**both . . . and, either . . . or, whether . . . or,not only . . . but also, neither . . . nor, and so . . . as**) always appear in pairs and are used to link equal sentence parts.

Examples

- **Both** my grandpa **and** my dad played professional baseball.
 - In this sentence, the correlative conjunction "both . . . and" is used to link the two noun phrases that act as the compound subject of the sentence: "my grandpa" and "my dad."

- You can have **either** a brownie **or** a cupcake.
 - In this sentence, the correlative conjunction "either . . . or" links two noun phrases: "a brownie" and "a cupcake."

Pippa did not know **whether** to be a singer **or** to be an actress.

- In this sentence, the correlative conjunction "whether . . . or" links the two infinitive phrases "to be a singer" and "to be an actress." (An *infinitive phrase* is a phrase that starts with "to" and acts as a noun, adverb, or adjective.)
- Sadie won **not only** the first prize **but also** the grand prize.
 - In this sentence, the correlative conjunction "not only . . . but also" links the two noun phrases ("the first prize" and "the grand prize") which act as direct objects.

Prepositions

A *preposition* is a word or group of words that relates space, time, cause, or manner between its object or another word in the sentence. A preposition with its object is known as a *prepositional phrase*.

Check out the sentences below. The prepositional phrases are in **green**, **red**, and **blue**. The prepositions are underlined.

Watch **for a shooting star.**

Smile **at the baby.**

Sonya dreams **of traveling **to** Nepal.**

Think **about your answer.**

Winnie the Pooh loves the taste **of honey.**

Your lunch is **in the kitchen.**

Sally locked her keys **inside the car.**

Jacob's ice cream fell **on the floor.**

Mom bought milk and cookies **at the store.**

The dog is begging **for scraps under the table.**

A squirrel is hiding **underneath the leaves.**

There is a rug somewhere **beneath that pile of clothes.**

There is oil **below the ocean floor.**

Beckah's house is just **over the hill.**

The bug is flying **above the shelf.**

Walter lives **near the school.**

The restaurant is **by the river.**

I found my necklace **between the bed and the wall.**

There are bees **among the flowers.**

The Hotcake Corral is **opposite that building.**

Turn **to the right.**

Sarah ate a snack **at midnight**.
 Nicki has a softball game **on Friday**.
 My birthday is **in December**.
 Emily is wrinkled **from being in the pool for two hours**.
 We haven't had hot dogs **since July**.
 Cats sleep a lot **during the day**.
 I should have enough money **for my bike within a month**.
 We're going on vacation **from April to June**.
 The bathroom is **next to my room**.*

*Note that the preposition in the last example consists of two words. Prepositions with more than one word are called *phrasal prepositions*.

Interjections

Interjections are short words or phrases that show emotion. Exclamations like "Oh," "Um," or "Ah" are examples of interjections. An interjection can stand alone or be included in a sentence.

The **bold** words in the following sentences are interjections:

- **Ouch**, that hurt!
- **Oh no**, I forgot that the test was today.
- The answer is . . . **ummm** . . . Atlanta!
- I don't know about you but, **goodness**, I thought that test was too hard!
- I heard one kid say, "He has a new bike, **eh**?"
- **Ha!** Ellie put her costume on backwards.
- I wasn't expecting us all to end up on the same team. **Wow!**
- **Good grief!** The prom tickets cost \$60 per couple this year.
- **Oops**, that was supposed to be a secret.
- **Awesome!** I can't believe you guys bought me a car!
- **Hey!** The car is my favorite color, too.
- **Well**, I guess I should drive by and show Grandma and Grandpa my new wheels.

Note: A strong interjection is often followed by an exclamation mark. A mild interjection is followed by a comma.

Verb Tenses

The chart below lists the standard verb tenses with examples.

Simple tenses show that an action happens in the present, past, or future.

Present	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I climb/build	we climb/build
<i>2nd Person</i>	you climb/build	you climb/build

<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it climbs/builds	they climb/build
Past	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I climbed/built	we climbed/built
<i>2nd Person</i>	you climbed/built	you climbed/built
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it climbed/built	they climbed/built
Future	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I will climb/build	we will climb/build
<i>2nd Person</i>	you will climb/build	you will climb/build
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it will climb/build	they will climb/build

Perfect tenses show that an action was or will be completed before another time or action.

Present Perfect	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I have climbed/built	we have climbed/built
<i>2nd Person</i>	you have climbed/built	you have climbed/built
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it has climbed/built	they have climbed/built
Past Perfect	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I had climbed/built	we had climbed/built
<i>2nd Person</i>	you had climbed/built	you had climbed/built
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it had climbed/built	they had climbed/built
Future Perfect	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I will have climbed/built	we will have climbed/built
<i>2nd Person</i>	you will have climbed/built	you will have climbed/built
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it will have climbed/built	they will have climbed/built

Progressive tenses show continuing action.

Present Progressive	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I am climbing/building	we are climbing/building
<i>2nd Person</i>	you are climbing/building	you are climbing/building
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it is climbing/building	they are climbing/building
Past Progressive	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I was climbing/building	we were climbing/building
<i>2nd Person</i>	you were climbing/building	you were climbing/building
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it was climbing/building	they were climbing/building

Future Progressive	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st Person</i>	I will be climbing/building	we will be climbing/building
<i>2nd Person</i>	you will be climbing/building	you will be climbing/building
<i>3rd Person</i>	he/she/it will be climbing/building	they will be climbing/building

Irregular Verbs

The past tense form of most verbs is made by adding **-ed**. Verbs that do not follow this format are called **irregular verbs**.

The **present tense** of a verb tells what is happening now.

example:

- He begins to sing.

The **past tense** of a verb tells what has already happened.

example:

- He began to sing.

The **past tense of an irregular verb** is sometimes used with have, has or had.

example:

- He has begun to sing.

The irregular verb chart shows a few of the many verbs with irregular forms:

Verb	Past Tense	Past Tense (with have, has, or had)
go	went	have, has, or had gone
do	did	have, has, or had done
fly	flew	have, has, or had flown
grow	grew	have, has, or had grown
ride	rode	have, has, or had ridden
see	saw	have, has, or had seen
sing	sang	have, has, or had sung
swim	swam	have, has, or had swum
throw	threw	have, has, or had thrown

Troublesome Verbs

Some verbs are **troublesome verbs** because they are often used incorrectly. Do you know the difference between *raise / rise, set / sit, and lay / lie*?

Raise or Rise

Raise

- Use **raise** to mean "to lift or cause upward movement; to be lifted." It is transitive, which means it needs an object (to **raise** something). The past tense is **raised**.

example: We must **raise** the flag. I was the person who **raised** the flag yesterday.

Rise

- Use **rise** to mean "to get up; to extend upward; to ascend." It is intransitive, so it does not need an object. The past tense is **rose**.

example: You need to **rise** earlier in the morning. When the bread **rose**, I knew it was ready.

Set or Sit

Set

- Use **set** to mean "to place something." It is transitive, which means it needs an object (to **set** something). The past tense is **set**.

example: I need to **set** the bag in the corner. I **set** that bag in the corner yesterday.

Sit

- Use **sit** to mean "to be seated; to recline." It is intransitive, so it does not need an object. The past tense is **sat**.

example: I **sit** at the front of the class. I **sat** in the back of the class last year.

Lay or Lie

Lay

- Use **lay** to mean "to put or place." It is transitive, which means it needs an object (to **lay** something). The past tense is **laid**.

example: You can **lay** the newspaper on the desk. I **laid** the dishes on the counter a couple hours ago.

Lie

- Use **lie** to mean "to rest; to recline; to sleep." It is intransitive, so it does not need an object. The past tense is **lay**. This past tense is probably what makes lay and lie so confusing.

example: I **lie** in bed even though I'm awake. Yesterday, I **lay** in bed but could not go to sleep.

Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives and Adverbs are words that describe other parts of speech.

Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns:

Adjectives answer questions like these: *What kind? How many? Which one?*

The pooch is *funny*.

(The adjective *funny* describes the noun *pooch*.)

Adjectives follow being verbs, like *feel, taste, smell, sound, look, appear, and seem*. Notice that in the sentences below there is no action being taken.

Clarissa's singing sounds *bad*. (not *badly*)

Dad's cooking tastes *awful*. (not *awfully*)

The bakery smells *sweet*. (not *sweetly*)

I feel *weak*. (not *weakly*)

She seems *unhappy* today. (not *unhappily*)

The pictures appear *dark*. (not *darkly*)

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs:

Adverbs answer questions like these: *When? Why? Where? How?* Many adverbs in end *-ly*.

Jane jumps *happily*.

(The adverb *happily* describes the verb *jumps*.)

Jane got *really* tired.

(The adjective *tired* describes the noun *Jane*. The adverb *really* describes the adjective *tired*.)

Jane went to bed *unusually early*.

(The adverb *early* describes the verb *went*. The adverb *unusually* describes the adverb *early*.)

Comparatives and Superlatives

*To show differences, we use **comparative** and **superlative** forms of adjectives and adverbs.*

Comparatives

The comparative form compares two things.

- Most adjectives with one syllable use **-er** endings to form the comparative. Double the final consonant if it follows a vowel.

Big becomes **bigger**.

The new TV is **bigger** than the old one.

- Most adjectives with two or more syllables use the adverb **more** before the adjective to form the comparative.

Delicious becomes **more delicious**.

Ice cream is **more delicious** than fruit salad.

- For most adjectives with two syllables ending in **-y**, drop the **-y** from the ending and add **-ier** to form the comparative.

Messy becomes **messier**:

My room is **messier** than my brother's.

Superlatives

The superlative form compares three or more things.

- Adjectives with one syllable use **-est** endings to form the superlative. Double the final consonant if it follows a vowel.

Cold becomes **coldest**:

February was the **coldest** month last year.

- Adjectives with two or more syllables use the adverb **most** before the adjective to form the superlative.

Comfortable becomes **most comfortable**:

Shadow thinks that her bed is the **most comfortable** place in the house.

- For adjectives with two syllables ending in -y, drop the -y from the ending and add **-iest** to form the superlative.

Scary becomes **scariest**:

Arnold is the **scariest** monster in my closet.

Exceptions

There are many adjectives that do not follow the rules above. Here are a few:

Adjective

fun

yellow

quiet

Comparative

more fun

yellower

quieter

Superlative

most fun

yellowest

quietest

Two of the most important exceptions are **good** and **bad**.

Adjective

good

bad

Comparative

better

worse

Superlative

best

worst

The soup tasted **good**.

The chicken tasted even **better**.

The apple pie tasted the **best**.

Jane's feet smell **bad**.

Samantha's feet smell **worse**.

Jacob's feet smell **worst** of all.

Negatives

To create negatives, use the adverb **less** before the adjective to form the comparative and the adverb **least** placed before the adjective to form the superlative.

Adjective

hot

sad

Comparative

less hot

less sad

Superlative

least hot

least sad

Capitalization

There are several uses for capital letters listed here. If you have a question about an example, try checking a dictionary to see if the word is capitalized there. Use capital letters in the following ways:

The first word of a sentence

example: That store on Main Street sells pretty jewelry.

The pronoun "I"

example: My friend likes me because I am nice to her.

Proper nouns

(the names of specific people, places, groups, and sometimes things)

examples:

- Lake Erie
- Purple Product Company
- Abraham Lincoln
- Empire State Building
- Boy Scouts of America
- San Antonio, Texas

Family and relatives

(when used as proper names)

examples: We visited Uncle Bob on Friday. Next week, we will visit our other uncles. I asked Mother for a cookie.

The names of God, religious figures, and holy books

(but not the non-specific use of the word "god")

examples:

- God the Father
- Moses
- the Virgin Mary
- Shiva
- the Bible
- Buddha

Titles that come before names, but not titles that follow names

examples: Sammy voted for Mayor Smith. Arnold Davis is the president of our club.

Directions that are names

(North, South, East, and West when used as sections of the country, but not as compass directions)

example: Our family is from the Southwest. Martha lives east of the library.

The days of the week, the months of the year, and holidays

(but not the seasons used generally)

examples:

- Monday
- September
- autumn
- summer
- February
- Christmas

The names of countries, nationalities, and languages

examples:

- Spain
- Mexican
- Russian
- Germany

The first word in a sentence that is a direct quote

example: My friend Eddie said, "We should go to the movies."

The major words in the titles of books, articles, and songs

(but not short prepositions or the articles "the," "a," or "an," if they are not the first word of the title)

example: Tomorrow, I will read *The Cat in the Hat*.

Members of national, political, racial, social, and athletic groups

examples:

- Korean Americans
- Texas Rangers
- Hispanics
- Republicans
- Dallas Cowboys
- Austin Cycling Association

Periods and events

(but not century numbers)

examples:

- The Middle Ages
- Industrial Revolution
- twentieth century
- The Persian Gulf War

Trademarks

examples:

- Kellogg's
- Coca-Cola
- Subaru
- Foot Locker

Words for and abbreviations of specific names

(not things that came from proper nouns)

examples:

- ATM
- CD
- HTML
- SOS

Spelling

The steps and tricks below can help you spell some difficult words.

Look at the word.

- What does it mean?
- How is it spelled?
- Do you see any word parts that you know?

Say the word.

- What sounds do you hear?
- Are there any silent letters?
- Is it spelled like how it sounds?

Spell the word out loud.

- Do you notice any patterns?

Copy the word.

- Did you copy all the letters correctly?

Cover, write, and check the word.

- Did you spell the word correctly?

Spelling Tricks

Take a word that you are having trouble spelling, and try the following strategies to help you remember it.

Divide It

Divide the tricky word into smaller parts. Learn each part separately.

Example

in-de-pen-dent

Make Up Your Own Pronunciation

Say the tricky word in a way that will help you remember how it is spelled. Just remember not to pronounce the word this way in conversation!

Example

True pronunciation: ed-i-ter

Made-up pronunciation: ed-i-tor

Pair It Up

Pair the tricky word with a shorter, related word that gives a sound clue.

Example

depend → **independent**

Study the Problem Part

Find the part of the tricky word that gives you problems and study it extra hard.

Example

editor

Think of a Sentence

Link the tricky word with a word that has the same problem letters.

Example

My *independent* sister put a **dent** in my car.

Think of Other Forms

Think of other forms of the word where you can better hear the problem letters in the word.

Example

editor → editorial

Use Rhyme

Find a rhyming word that you know that is spelled the same at the end.

Example

Independent rhymes with **rent**.

Multiple Meaning Words

Sometimes words are *spelled alike* but have *different meanings*. Knowing about different types of words and their definitions is very important to reading and writing.

Multiple meaning words can be tricky. Use context clues and think carefully about the sentence's message to figure out which meaning is being used. Below are some examples of words with multiple meanings:

- **Bank** can mean a "place where money is stored" or an "area along the side of a river (riverbank)."
- **Skirt** can mean "a free hanging part of a garment extending from the waist down" or "to go or pass around or about."
- **Lean** can mean "to depend on for support" or "thin."
- **Bat** can mean "the flying mammal" or "the tool used in baseball."

Sample Questions

The **beams** from the sun made the diamond sparkle.

What is the meaning of the bold word in the sentence above?

- A. widest parts
- B. planks of wood
- C. bright smiles
- D. rays of light

Explanation: The word "beams" has many meanings. All of the answer choices are definitions of the word. However, in this sentence, "beams" means "rays of light." The correct answer is D. The reader can tell that this definition is being used because the beams are coming "from the sun." Also, the beams are making "the diamond sparkle." Looking at context clues helps the reader figure out the meaning being used.

As she collected her prize money, Kayla could not believe her **stroke** of luck.

In this sentence, the word **stroke** means

- A. a movement of a pen or pencil.
- B. a blow from a fist or hammer.
- C. a sudden or chance happening.
- D. a gentle and soothing touch.

Explanation: The word "stroke" has many meanings. All of the answer choices are definitions of the word. However, in this sentence, "stroke" means "a sudden or chance happening." The correct answer is C. The reader can tell that this definition is being used because Kayla "couldn't believe" her luck. Her winning the "prize money" came as a surprise to her. It was "sudden."

Context Clues

*Learning words can be hard. If you are not sure what a word means, it helps if you can at least know the information around the word. There are ways of figuring out what a new or unusual word means. One way is to use **context clues**.*

Using context clues means using the information around the word you do not know. These words help you find what it means. You can also use the information in the rest of the paragraph to help you figure out what the word means. There are a few things to watch for when looking for context clues:

A punctuation mark, such as a comma (,) or dash (—), may help you understand how the word is being used.

example:

- A ceiling fan uses the same energy as a 40 watt incandescent light bulb, **the normal screw-in type light bulb**. Incandescent is a big word. If you do not know what it means, look at the hint after the comma. The hint is the normal screw-in type light bulb. This shows that incandescent must mean the same thing as **the normal screw-in type light bulb**.

Key words, such as "or" and "that is," may also give you a hint that a definition is nearby.

example:

- Good ventilation or **air flow** can help the people in the room feel cooler. Ceiling fans give better indoor ventilation.

The sentence above shows that ventilation means **air flow**.

Also, make sure to read the entire paragraph. Sometimes a word's definition may become clearer by reading the entire paragraph where it appears.

Affixes

When you are trying to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word, it helps to try to break down the word into smaller parts. These parts are called affixes and root words. Affixes include two different types of word parts: prefixes and suffixes. They attach to root words and change their meanings. Prefixes and suffixes provide clues that help define the meaning of a word.

Prefixes

A **prefix** is a letter or group of letters added to the **beginning** of a word to make a new word.

Prefix	Meaning	
dis-	not	<i>disobey</i> (not obey)

Prefix	Meaning	
extra-	beyond	<i>extraordinary</i> (beyond what is ordinary)
fore-	before or in front of	<i>forecast</i> (to tell what will happen before it happens)
micro-	small	<i>microscope</i> (tool that helps you see small things)
mis-	bad; badly	<i>misinform</i> (inform badly)
mono-	one	<i>monopoly</i> (when one company has power)
multi-	many	<i>multivitamin</i> (pill containing many vitamins)
pre-	before	<i>preheat</i> (heat before)
post-	after	<i>postscript</i> (writing added after the end of a letter)
re-	again	<i>redo</i> (do again) <i>rebuild</i> (build again) <i>rewrite</i> (write again)
sub-	under or below	<i>subzero</i> (below zero)
super-	above	<i>supernatural</i> (above the natural)
ultra-	beyond	<i>ultramodern</i> (beyond modern)
un-	not	<i>unable</i> (not able) <i>unfinished</i> (not finished)

Suffixes

A **suffix** is a letter or group of letters added to the **end** of a word to make a new word.

Suffix	Meaning	
-able	to be able	<i>fixable</i> (able to be fixed)
-ed	past tense	<i>talked</i> <i>helped</i>
-er	more	<i>bigger</i> (more big) <i>brighter</i> (more bright)
-est	most	<i>biggest</i> (most big) <i>brightest</i> (most bright)
-ful	full of	<i>thankful</i> (full of thanks) <i>beautiful</i> (full of beauty)
-ish	like	<i>boyish</i> (like a boy)

Suffix	Meaning	
-ing	present participle	walking barking
-ion -tion	the process of	creation (the process of creating)
-less	without	careless (without care) helpless (without help)
-logy	the study of	mineralogy (the study of minerals)
-ly	in a way; like	happily slowly
-ment	act of doing	movement (the act of moving)
-ness	quality of being	kindness (the quality of being kind)
-or	one who	inspector (one who inspects)
-ous -ious	having the qualities of	anxious (having the qualities of anxiety)
-ship	status, condition	relationship (the status of relating)

Root Words

A root word is a word that prefixes and/or suffixes are attached to.

Root Word	Meaning	
hemi	half	hemisphere (half of a sphere)
contra	against	contradict (to speak against)

Dictionary Use

You can use a dictionary for many things. A dictionary can tell you what words mean. It can tell you how to pronounce, or say, words. It also tells which country words come from.

Alphabetical Order

Dictionaries are arranged in alphabetical order. For example, words that start with the letter A come first. After the A words come the B words.

Pronunciation

Dictionaries have pronunciation keys to help you pronounce words. Here is a pronunciation key:

\ə\ as **a** in **asleep**
 \a\ as **a** in **apple**
 \ā\ as **a** in **case**
 \ă\ as **o** in **mop**
 \aũ\ as **ou** in **out**
 \ch\ as **ch** in **chin**
 \e\ as **e** in **bet**
 \ē\ as **ea** in **easy**
 \g\ as **g** in **go**
 \i\ as **i** in **hit**
 \ī\ as **i** in **ice**
 \j\ as **j** in **job**
 \[ng]\ as **ng** in **sing**
 \ō\ as **o** in **slow**
 \ô\ as **aw** in **law**
 \oi\ as **oy** in **boy**
 \th\ as **th** in **thin**
 \th\ as **th** in **the**
 \ü\ as **oo** in **boot**
 \û\ as **oo** in **foot**
 \y\ as **y** in **yet**
 \zh\ as **si** in **vision**

Which word has the same vowel pronunciation as **beat**?

- A. chat \ˈchat\
- B. leaf \ˈlēf\
- C. dive \ˈdīv\
- D. kitchen \ˈki-chən\

The key shows that \ē\ makes the same vowel sound as in **easy** and **beat**. This sound is also at the end of **leaf** \ˈlēf\.

Word Origins

An origin of a word is the language the word comes from. Some words come from French. Some come from Spanish. Others are original English words.

dog \ˈdɒg\ *n.* [English] **1:** a mammal that eats meat and is related to wolves **2:** a male dog

The word **dog** originated from the English language. The origin is usually in brackets before the definition.

Guide Words

Dictionaries have **guide words** to help you find the word you need. Guide words are at the top corner of the page and show which words are first and last on the page. Words that come between these words in alphabetical order are on this page.

Which word is on the page with guide words **cool** and **cop**?

- A. climb
- B. coop
- C. coat
- D. cut

Words on this page must be between the words **cool** and **cop** when in alphabetical order. You would find the word **coop** on this page.

Definitions

A definition is the meaning of a word. Some words have more than one meaning. Dictionaries number the definitions when there is more than one.

set \set\ *n.* [Middle English] **1 a:** the act or action of setting **b:** the condition of being set **2:** a number of things of the same kind that belong or are used together **3:** a habit or learning interest **4:** direction or flow **5:** the act or result of arranging hair by curling or waving **6:** a division of a tennis match won by the side that wins at least six games beating the opponent by two games or by winning a tiebreaker

Which sentence best fits definition 2 of **set**?

- A. The wind changed its set from east to north.
- B. Mr. Smailes polished his silver tea set.
- C. Carla set her hair with a hot curling iron.
- D. The pitcher committed a balk during the game.

Definition 2 means "a number of things of the same kind that belong or are used together," so B makes the most sense.

Syllables

A dictionary will show how a word is divided into syllables. This is what the syllables look like in the main entries:

- for•get
- cov•er
- il•lus•tra•tion

Parts of Speech

A dictionary gives the part of speech of each entry. The part of speech tells how the word is used in a sentence. Below are abbreviations for parts of speech:

v. = verb

n. = noun

adj. = adjective

adv. = adverb

Look at the dictionary entry below.

fly \ˈfli\ *n.* [English] **1:** a winged insect, especially a housefly **2:** a baseball hit high in the air **3:** a fishhook covered to look like an insect

The part of speech is abbreviated by *n.* This means "noun."

Thesaurus Use

*A **thesaurus** is a reference book similar to a dictionary. Instead of having definitions like a dictionary, a thesaurus has synonyms. **Synonyms** are words that have the same or almost the same meaning as another word.*

You can use a thesaurus to revise your writing. If you are writing a story and keep using the word "big," you can look in a thesaurus for other words that mean the same thing as "big" and use those instead. By using a variety of words, your writing becomes more colorful and more exciting.

*Often, thesaurus entries provide contrasting words and **antonyms** (words having the opposite or nearly the opposite meaning). The antonyms will be labeled in some way to tell them apart from the synonyms.*

Word Concepts

Word concepts are very short definitions, usually one word long. Concepts give general ideas of words. For example, the concept for the word dog is "animal." The concept in a thesaurus entry is in parentheses and capital letters. Look at the thesaurus entry below:

land, *n.* soil, earth, property (GROUND)

The concept gives a short meaning that covers the general idea of the word. **Ground** is a general idea for **land**.

Parts of Speech

A thesaurus gives the part of speech for each entry. The part of speech tells how the word is used in the sentence. Below are abbreviations for parts of speech.

v. = verb

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In the thesaurus entry below, the part of speech for **sag** is a verb:

sag, *v.* lean, curve, bow (BEND)

Synonyms

The main purpose for using a thesaurus is to choose synonyms. Writers use a thesaurus when they revise their work. They can replace dull words with interesting ones. The words listed between the part of speech and the concept word are synonyms. Study the following thesaurus entries and sample question below:

date, *n.* appointment, engagement (ARRIVAL)

date, *n.* day, year, hour, moment (TIME)

date, *v.* fix the time, register (TIME MEASUREMENT)

Which word would best replace **date** in the following sentence?

The sisters set a **date** to meet for lunch.

A. day

B. register

C. appointment

D. year

Replace **date** in the sentence with each answer choice. **Appointment** makes the most sense:

The sisters set an **appointment** to meet for lunch.

Antonyms

Sometimes the thesaurus will show antonyms of a word. Antonyms are words that have an opposite meaning. The thesaurus will use **ant** to show that the words listed are antonyms instead of synonyms. Here is an example:

gloomy, *adj.* heavyhearted, mournful, sorry, unhappy, blue (SAD)
ant glad, happy, cheerful

Glossary Use

*A **glossary** is a list of words and what they mean. You will find glossaries in the back of textbooks and other nonfiction works. A glossary will give the meanings of special terms that are found in the book. These terms are in alphabetical order in the glossary.*

Look at the example of a glossary below.

Film Glossary

R

reel

a spool that holds film

rough cut

Film Glossary

film that has been put together but has not gone through final editing

S

scene

a single shot or a series of shots

T

trim bin

a bin on wheels on which film is hung during editing

trim

an outtake of several frames

Test your knowledge of glossaries on the example question below.

Bobsled Glossary

B

bobsled

a large sled made for racing with a long seat for two to four people

brakeman

the person in the back of the sled who applies the brakes

C

crew

the three athletes that sit behind the driver in a four-man bobsled

D

D-rings

D-shaped handles used to steer the sled

driver

the person at the front of the sled who steers

According to the glossary above, which term describes a person who needs to know how to work the D-rings?

- A. brakeman
- B. crew
- C. driver
- D. bobsled

The correct answer is choice **C**, driver. According to the glossary, D-rings are D-shaped handles used to steer the sled. The reader can learn from the glossary that the driver is the one who steers the sled. Therefore, the driver would need to know how to work the D-rings to steer the sled.

Idioms

*An **idiom** is something authors use in their writing to make it more exciting. It is a word or saying many people in a certain place or area say.*

There is one important thing to remember about idioms: They do not mean what they say.

*The **literal meaning** (what is really said) is different from the **intended meaning** (what is meant).*

For example:

Someone might say to you, "**Break a leg!**" This does not mean they want you to really break your leg. It is a saying some people say instead of "Good luck."

Another example would be someone saying, "**You got up on the wrong side of bed.**" It does not really mean there is a wrong side of bed. It means that you woke up cranky or angry.

You might miss a day of school because you feel "**under the weather.**" The real meaning has nothing to do with the weather. It means you feel sick.

Idioms are hard to teach, so it's better if you memorize the ones you hear. Make a list of some **idioms** you hear. Learn them. Also, use **context clues** to help you figure out what they mean.

Adages and Proverbs

*An **adage** or a **proverb** is a saying that is believed to be true. It is often short and is based on people's experiences over time. An adage or a proverb is often used by people for a long time. It is believed to share wisdom.*

People who are similar or have things in common often spend a lot of time together.

What you wear affects how people treat you.

Practice is the key to mastering a skill.

Example:

Read the following passage.

The Bicycle

Every morning before leaving for school, Sahara looked at her bicycle in the garage. She wanted to take it for a ride, but she was always running late. It did not help that the front tire seemed almost out of air. One morning, Sahara also noticed something sticking out of her back tire. She looked closer and saw that it was a sharp piece of plastic. Once again, Sahara was in a hurry and ran to school. When she returned from school,

Sahara decided to ask her brother, Samuel, for help.

"You should have taken the plastic nail out of the tire as soon as you saw it," Samuel said. "Why didn't you clean up the garage floor before storing your bicycle here, sis?"

"Ummm . . . I was always in a hurry," Sahara presented her excuse, feeling bad. "Can you fix it?"

"No, you need a new tire," Samuel said. "Next time, be more careful. You could have easily avoided ruining the tire."

Sahara was about to lose all her allowance and her birthday money on the new tire.

Which adage best relates to the passage?

- A. A stitch in time saves nine.
- B. Stop and smell the roses.
- C. Two heads are better than one.
- D. Look before you leap.

Explanation:

The passage shows that Sahara does not fix a problem when it is small and ends up having to pay a big cost for it. If she had cleaned up the garage or taken the plastic nail out of the tire on time, she would not have lost the whole tire. If Sahara had fixed her small problem on time, she would have enjoyed her money for other things.

Synonyms and Antonyms

*A **synonym** is a word that has the same or almost the same meaning as another word.*

*An **antonym** is a word that means the opposite of another word.*

Synonyms

It's easy to remember the meaning of **synonym** by using this little trick:

Synonym = Same

They both start with an **S!**

Examples:

- **rabbit** and **bunny**
- **rocks** and **stones**
- **enjoy** and **like**
- **hot** and **boiling**
- **throw** and **toss**

Antonyms

It's easy to remember the meaning of **antonym** by using this little trick:

Antonym = Opposite

They both start with a **vowel!**

Examples:

- **bad** and **good**
- **hot** and **cold**

- **soft** and **hard**
- **smooth** and **rough**
- **slow** and **fast**

Replace the bold word with a **synonym**.

I **enjoy** baseball.

- A. hate
- B. like
- C. need
- D. want

Tip: Replace the bold word with each answer choice. If the meaning of the sentence is the **same**, then you've found a **synonym**. If the meaning of the sentence is the **opposite** of what it was before, then you've found an **antonym**.

"I **like** baseball" means the same thing as "I **enjoy** baseball," so **like** and **enjoy** are **synonyms**. The answer is **B!**

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Pronouns refer to or take the place of other nouns. Using the correct pronoun is important in order to avoid confusion. Each pronoun must have a clear noun to which it refers. The noun that a pronoun replaces is called the **antecedent**.

Pronouns Should Always

1. Agree in number

- If the pronoun takes the place of a singular noun, you have to use a singular pronoun.

If a student parks a car on campus, he has to buy a parking sticker.

(Not: *If a student parks a car on campus, they have to buy a parking sticker.*)

Remember: The words EVERYBODY, ANYBODY, ANYONE, EACH, NEITHER, NOBODY, SOMEONE, A PERSON, etc. are singular and take singular pronouns.

Everybody ought to do his best. (Not: *their best*)

Neither of the girls brought her umbrella. (Not: *their umbrellas*)

2. Agree in voice/person

- If you are writing in the "first person" (I), don't confuse your reader by switching to the "second person" (you) or "third person" (he, she, they, it, etc.).
- Similarly, if you are using the "second person," don't switch to "first" or "third."

When a person comes to class, he should have his homework ready.

(Not: *When a person comes to class, you should have your homework ready.*)

3. Refer clearly to a specific noun.

- Don't be vague or ambiguous. The sentences below are examples of vague and ambiguous pronoun references.

Although the motorcycle hit the tree, it was not damaged. (Is "it" the motorcycle or the tree?)

I don't think they should show violence on TV. (Who are "they"?)

Vacation is coming soon, which is nice. (What is nice, the vacation or the fact that it is coming soon?)

George worked in a national forest last summer. This may be his life's work. (What word does "this" refer to?)

If you put this sheet in your notebook, you can refer to it. (What does "it" refer to, the sheet or your notebook?)

The Forms and Functions of Personal Pronouns					
	1st Person	2nd Person	3rd Person Masculine	3rd Person Feminine	3rd Person Neuter
Subjective Case Singular doer of action	I	you	he	she	it
Subjective Case Plural doer of action	we	you	they	they	they
Objective Case Singular receiver of action	me	you	him	her	it
Objective Case Plural receiver of action	us	you	them	them	them
Possessive Case Singular w/out noun	mine	yours	his	hers	its
Possessive Case Plural w/out noun	ours	yours	theirs	theirs	their
Possessive Case Singular with noun	my	your	his	her	its
Possessive Case Plural with noun	our	your	their	their	their
Compound Personal	myself	yourself	himself	herself	itself

(Reflexive and Intensive) Singular					
Compound Personal (Reflexive and Intensive) Plural	ourselves	yourselves	themselves	themselves	themselves

Subject-Verb Agreement

Subjects and verbs must agree with one another in number. In the present tense, a singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb. Below is a list of common subject-verb agreement rules.

Singular verbs end in **-s** or **-es**.

Unlike nouns, the plural form of a verb is not made by adding an *-s* or *-es* to the ending. It's actually the opposite. For present-tense verbs, adding the *-s* to the end makes it singular. If the verb is plural, there is no *-s* ending used.

Singular Verbs

The **puppy sleeps** soundly.
The **blanket needs** washing.

Plural Verbs

The **puppies sleep** soundly.
The **blankets need** washing.

Compound subjects joined by "and" take a plural verb.

A subject that is made up of two or more nouns is a compound subject. When the parts are connected by *and*, the subject is plural, so it takes a plural verb.

The **goose** *and* the **duck waddle** by the pond.

Jack, Kara, and Sandy play leapfrog together.

Subjects with singular nouns joined by *or* or *nor* take a singular verb.

Either **you** *or* your **sister waters** the plants.

Neither the **treats** *nor* the **catnip calms** the cat.

Subjects with a singular noun and a plural noun joined by *or* or *nor* take the verb that agrees with the closer noun.

Syrup *or* **raisins taste** good with oatmeal.

Neither the **students** *nor* their **teacher comes** to school during a snowstorm.

Subjects are not in modifying phrases.

When the subject and the verb are separated by other words or phrases, make sure the verb agrees with the subject, not with a noun within the phrase.

One of your buttons **is** missing.

Our **neighbor** who grows tomatoes **shares** his harvest with us every year.

The **citizens** of Murphy, Texas, **vote** today.

Don't let those phrases fool you.

Phrases using *with*, *together with*, *including*, *accompanied by*, *in addition to*, or *as well* do not change whether a subject is singular or plural. If the subject is singular, the verb should be as well.

The **outfit**, including the socks, **costs** \$45.

The **twins**, as well as their baby brother, **ride** in the shopping cart.

Nouns with a plural form but with a singular meaning take singular verbs.

Nouns such as *United States*, *civics*, *mathematics*, *measles*, and *news* take singular verbs.

Alvin and the Chipmunks **is** a cute movie.

Fifteen **dollars** **is** too much for a movie ticket.

Nouns such as *scissors*, *tweezers*, *trousers*, *jeans*, and *shears* take plural verbs.

These nouns may appear to have a singular meaning, but each of these things is made up of two parts.

Tori's **shorts** **look** comfortable.

Tim's **glasses** **make** him look smarter.

Collective nouns *usually* take singular verbs.

A collective noun has a singular form even though it refers to a group of individuals or things. Examples include *army*, *audience*, *crowd*, *group*, *team*, *committee*, *class*, and *family*. These nouns take a singular verb when the group acts as one unit.

The **flock** **follows** the shepherd.

The **band** **plays** jazz music.

The **team** **wins** every game.

However, a plural verb is used when people or things within a group act separately.

The **team** **disagree** about where to celebrate after the game.

If the subject follows the verb, the subject and verb should still agree.

When the normal subject-verb order is inverted in a sentence, the verb still agrees with the subject. For example, in sentences beginning with *there* or *here*, the subject follows the verb. Since neither *there* nor *here* is ever the subject of a sentence, the verb agrees with the noun that follows the verb.

There **is** a **bird** on the fence.

Here **are** your clean **clothes**.

With words that indicate portions, look to the object of the preposition.

With words that indicate portions—*percent*, *fraction*, *part*, *majority*, *some*, *all*, *none*, *remainder*, and so forth—look at the object of the preposition (the noun following the *of* phrase) to determine whether to use a singular or plural verb. If the object of the preposition is singular, use a singular verb. If the object of the preposition is plural, use a plural verb.

Two-thirds of the **candy bars** **were** chocolate.

Twenty percent of the **students** **are** fourth graders.

Be careful with indefinite pronouns.

Indefinite pronouns do not replace a specific noun. The words *each, each one, either, neither, everyone, everybody, anybody, anyone, nobody, somebody, someone*, and *no one* are singular and require singular verbs. The words *both, few, many, others*, and *several* are plural and require plural verbs. The words *all, any, more, most, none*, and *some* may be either singular or plural depending on what the indefinite pronoun refers to.

Someone in the back of the bus **likes** paper airplanes.

Both of the boys **have** funny haircuts.

Prepositions

A **preposition** is a word or group of words that relates space, time, cause, or manner between its object or another word in the sentence. A preposition with its object is known as a **prepositional phrase**.

Check out the sentences below. The prepositional phrases are in **green, red, and blue**. The prepositions are underlined.

Watch for a shooting star.

Smile at the baby.

Sonya dreams of traveling to Nepal.

Think about your answer.

Winnie the Pooh loves the taste of honey.

Your lunch is in the kitchen.

Sally locked her keys inside the car.

Jacob's ice cream fell on the floor.

Mom bought milk and cookies at the store.

The dog is begging for scraps under the table. A squirrel is hiding underneath the leaves.

There is a rug somewhere beneath that pile of clothes.

There is oil below the ocean floor.

Beckah's house is just over the hill.

The bug is flying above the shelf.

Walter lives near the school.

The restaurant is by the river.

I found my necklace between the bed and the wall.

There are bees among the flowers.

The Hotcake Corral is opposite that building.

Turn to the right.

Sarah ate a snack at midnight.

Nicki has a softball game on Friday.

My birthday is **in December**.
 Emily is wrinkled **from being in the pool for two hours**.
 We haven't had hot dogs **since July**.
 Cats sleep a lot **during the day**.
 I should have enough money **for my bike within a month**.
 We're going on vacation **from April to June**.
 The bathroom is **next to my room**.*

*Note that the preposition in the last example consists of two words. Prepositions with more than one word are called *phrasal prepositions*.

Types of Sentences

Simple—Expresses a complete thought; has a subject and predicate. EX: The boy hit the ball. Or The tall, red-headed boy hit the spinning ball.

Compound—Two simple sentences joined by a conjunction. EX: I am going swimming and Laura is taking a nap.

Complex—Consists of one dependent clause and one independent clause. Ex: After we go to the movie, we are going out to eat. (Dependent clause is underlined)

Compound-complex—At least two independent clauses and 1 or more dependent clauses. Ex: As I rode down the street, I saw two little boys, and they waved at me. (Dependent clause is underlined)

Subjects & Predicates

Complete subject— All the words that tell who or what the sentence is about. (stops at the verb) EX: The little old woman wore a red bow in her hair.

Simple subject— The main word or words that tell who or what the sentence is about. EX: The little old woman wore a red bow in her hair.

Compound subject— Two or more subjects that have the same predicate. Ex: The little old woman and the tiny girl wore a red bow in their hair.

Complete predicate— All the words that tell what the subject is or does. (from the verb to the end of the sentence) Ex: The little old woman wore a red bow in her hair.

Compound predicate— Two or more predicates that have the same subject. Ex: The little old woman wore a red bow in her hair and carried a red purse.

Dependent and Independent Clauses

Independent Clause – Makes sense by itself. Ex: Native Americans lived on the island, until they were attacked.

Dependent Clause - Doesn't make sense by itself. Ex: Native Americans lived on the island, until they

Nouns

Common Nouns – any person, place, thing, or idea. Ex: friend, shirt, school

Proper Nouns – A particular person, place, thing or idea. Ex: Laura, Valdosta

Singular Nouns – One person, place, thing, or idea. Ex: beach, pony, fox, class

Plural Nouns – More than one person, place, thing, or idea. Ex: beaches, ponies, foxes, classes

Singular Possessive Nouns – Shows ownership by one person or thing. Ex: Allen's car, Sharon's notebook.

Plural Possessive Nouns – Shows ownership by more than one person or thing. Ex: twirlers' batons, students' pencils

Pronouns

Subject Pronouns – pronoun used in the subject of a sentence. Ex: You can come to the race.

Object Pronouns – pronoun used in the object position (behind the verb) Ex: Sam will drive you to the race track.

Reflexive Pronouns – pronoun has self or selves (Remember: mirror shows reflection of yourself) Ex: I can clean the kitchen myself.

Indefinite Pronouns – pronoun doesn't refer to a specific person – Has no antecedent. Ex: Everybody wants to go to the party. (Everybody doesn't refer back to a certain person) *Antecedent is the word that the pronoun replaces.

Possessive Pronouns – pronoun that shows ownership. Ex: His baseball is in the car.