Lochend Community High School

Grammar Rules for Home Support



August 2019

Grammar Rules for Home Support

Some things we’re taught at school stay lodged in our brains for the rest of our lives. Others require some refreshing. This can be very true of grammar. No one gets excited by the thought of grammar – not even English teachers – but good literacy skills are very important for all the subjects your young person will be studying. This booklet is designed to give you a reference to check up on anything you might be unsure of as you support your child.

As a school, all staff are given access to this document too in order that they may reinforce these rules in all aspects of their teaching and support of the young people in their classes.

If there are any aspects of this that you are unclear about or additional supports you feel we could provide, feel free to contact Ms Bell.

**Parts of Speech**

Parts of speech explain how types of words are used in sentences. There are eight of these.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Part of Speech** | **Use** | **Examples** |
| **Noun** | A naming word for a person, place, thing or idea. | dog, bridge, Edinburgh, Lauren, hatred |
| **Pronoun** | A word that is used in place of a noun. | I, you, he, she, we, they, this, that, who, which, everyone |
| **Adjective** | A describing word used to describe a noun or pronoun. | cold, short, red, wild, Glaswegian, gorgeous |
| **Verb** | A doing word; a word for an action or way of being. | run, dance, jump, read, appear, be, have, seem |
| **Adverb** | A describing word used with verbs that tells how, where or when something is done. | loudly, quietly, finally, next, last, very, too |
| **Preposition** | A word that relates nouns or pronouns to other words. | on, in, with, of, to, around |
| **Conjunction** | A joining word that is used to link words or groups of words. | and, but, because, or, while |
| **Interjection** | A word used to express strong emotion. | Argh! No! Ooo! |

**Using Capital Letters**

**Rules**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rule** | **Example** |
| ***Every sentence*** starts with a capital letter. | Welcome to our school. |
| ***Days*** of the week and ***months*** of the year get capital letters. | My party is on the first Saturday in November. |
| The pronoun “***I***” always gets a capital letter. | Why am I not allowed to read? |
| ***Names of people*** – both first names and surnames –get a capital letter. | David and Steven Jones both got prizes. |
| The ***titles of people*** are also given capitals. | Both Professor Plum and Mrs White were in the kitchen. |
| Capitalise the ***names of places.*** | I live in Easterhouse in Glasgow. |
| ***Specific holidays*** are given capitals too. | After Christmas Day comes Boxing Day. |
| Capital letters are also used for the **names of companies**. | My favourite cinema is The Vue. |
| ***Languages, religions and nationalities*** all start with a capital letter. | Where did you study Italian?  My grandmother is Gambian.  We have been studying Judaism, Islam and Christianity this term. |

**Sentencing**

1. A sentence is a group of words that makes sense on its own. It is a complete thought.
2. You must use correct punctuation to show where a sentence starts and ends.

All sentences start with a capital letter.

All sentences end with either a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

1. A sentence should always contain a verb and a subject.
2. Sentences should only contain one “and”.
3. The simple sentence is the most basic of the sentences. It includes a subject, a verb, and it expresses a complete thought.
4. A compound sentence is made up of two simple sentences. The two simple sentences are joined by a comma (,) followed by an appropriate conjunction.
5. If the sentence is an instruction or request you may not need a subject. eg Be quiet!

***All pupils in the BGE are expected to write in sentences. We insist on:***

* ***A capital letter***
* ***An appropriate ending (. ! ?)***
* ***The sentence making sense***

**Paragraphs**

Paragraphs exist to organise written texts. All extended writing should be appropriately paragraphed.

New paragraphs are taken to denote change. One method of remembering this is :

TiPToP

**Ti** - stands for **Time**, so start a new paragraph for a different time period.

**P** - stands for **Place**, so start a new paragraph for each new place.

**To** - stands for **Topic**, so start a new paragraph for each new topic, idea or subject.

**P** - stands for **Person**, so start a new paragraph for each new speaker.

**Punctuation**

Below is a table covering the main punctuation marks and their usage. The shaded ones are those most commonly used in the BGE.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | Usage | Example |
| Apostrophe  ‘ | \*used to show a contraction of words | Can’t |
| \*used to show ownership/possession | John’s bag |
| Capital letters  A, B, C... | \*used to mark the first word in a sentence | The door slammed shut. |
| \*used to indicate a proper noun | I long to travel to Easterhouse. |
| Colon  : | \*To introduce a list | In order to make this meal you will need the following: cheese, pasta, water and salt |
| \*to signal an explanation following a statement | She was a beautiful girl: dark brown eyes with long, thick lashes. |
| \*to provide balance in a sentence with contrasting ideas | To err is human: to forgive divine. |
| Comma  , | \*to avoid confusion |  |
| \*used round parenthesis | I took my bag, full of the usual marking, with me. |
| \*to separate items in a list | I need chocolate, cola, crisps and Smarties. |
| \*separating a prepositional phrase out of sequence | Once I am up, I shall sort out the rubbish. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Dash  -  - - | \*used singly to indicate an afterthought | Homework was due in today – or was it tomorrow? |
| \*used singly to replace the colon used between explanation and statement | The winter was starting to bite – gritters were out each night. |
| \*used in pair to separate parenthetical statement | John – who always had messy hair – was going along too. |
| Ellipsis  ... | \*used to indicate that words have been missed out | Closed like confessionals ... none of the glances they absorb |
| Exclamation mark  ! | \*used to indicate a raised voice(e.g. a command or warning) or surprise | Run! Help! Look at that! |
| Full stop  . | \*used to mark the end of a sentence | The class did their homework to an exceptional standard. |
| Inverted commas  “ “ or  ‘ ‘ | \*used to identify words spoken in direct speech | “Let’s go!” shouted Mary. |
| \*used to indicate the words of a quotation | “Summer is fading” |
| \*used to indicate the title of a book etc | “The Conegatherers” by Robin Jenkins |
| \*used to indicate an unusual use of a word | Surveying the vandalism, she thought about its ‘artist’. |
| Question mark  ? | \*used to indicate a question (may create a questioning tone or doubt) | Is this a dagger I see before me? |
| \*used to indicate a rhetorical question | Do I look stupid? |
| Semi-colon  ; | \*to show a link between two statements which could exist as grammatically independent sentences | Robert is at school; he is in primary five. |
| \*to separate items in a complex list (one which may require commas within items) | He used an old, broken bottle; a length of rope folded in half; a discarded, rusty, red tray; a half-eaten hotdog. |

**Apostrophes**

***The greatest number of errors made in punctuation involve the incorrect use of apostrophes for possession.***

When apostrophes are used to show possession, the apostrophe goes before the **S** for a singular and after the **S** when it's more than one.

•The **dog's** kennel

•The **dogs'** kennel

The most notable exception is when the plural doesn't end in **s** e.g. children. These words have the apostrophe before the **s**. For example:

• **children's** toys

Another exception is singular nouns ending with s e.g. Wales. These form their possessive forms either by adding **'** (just an apostrophe) or **'s** depending on how you (personally) say the possessive form. For example:

•John **Wells'** report

This is correct. It is used by those who would say John Wells report as opposed to John Wellsiz report.

•John **Wells's** report

This is also correct. It is used by those who would say John Wellsiz report.

An apostrophe can be used to replace a letter or letters (e.g., isn't, can't). The new word formed is called a contraction. Contractions are not usually used in formal correspondence. Contractions are most commonly used in informal writing to reflect how we speak.

NB

it’s = contraction of it is its = possessive, belonging to it.

you’re = contraction of you are your = possessive, belonging to you