The Sentence
Types, Features and Structures
“And the words slide into the slots ordained by syntax, and glitter as with atmospheric dust with those impurities which we call meaning.”

Slides Available for Download at:


Also, please visit:

https://www.theliteracybug.com/commanding-sentences
I. Introduction

II. Define key areas:
   a. Sentence types
   b. Sentence structures
   c. Sentence features
   d. Sentence (or Syntax) trees

III. Enhancing meaning in Sentences

IV. From a developmental Perspective
The purpose of the presentation is to:

- emphasise how our sentences allow us to express and understand states of affairs;
- explore the elements of traditional, English grammar;
- allude to elements which add clarity and grace to our sentences;
- outline a child's path toward grammatical competence (and how to support this development);
- address what CANNOT be explained through traditional grammar; and
- provide recommended readings.

Keep Wittgenstein's observation in mind, "grammar does not tell us how language must be constructed in order to fulfil its purpose, in order to have such-and-such an effect on human beings. It only describes and in no way explains the use of signs."

Also, bear in mind that this presentation does not address Halliday's functional grammar.
“In readers who have acquired enough facility in … word-level skills (e.g., word recognition and letter-sound decoding) …

“Then … language comprehension and related skills, such as vocabulary knowledge and syntactic competence, account for more of the variance in reading comprehension.” (Snow, 2002, pp. 102-103)
Grammar is a key part of literacy

“Attention is dynamic, not static -- one would like to say. I begin by comparing attention to gazing but that is not what I call attention; and now I want to say that I find it is impossible that one should attend statically.” (Wittgenstein, Zettel, #673)


“One’s understanding of [a] sentence is different, in some sense, deeper and better, the more one knows and can recognize about the [field].” (Gee, 2003, pg 29)

“Even when we want to think about a child learning to read initially, we want to think about what sorts of texts we want the child eventually to be able to read in what sorts of ways.” (Gee, 2003, pg 28)

“A reader’s engagement in each of the following elements is impacted by the particulars of the reading activity itself, including its purpose, content, context and participants.

- **Attention**
- **Written Word Decoding**
- **Syntactic Parsing**
- **Constructing the Propositional Text Base**
- **Constructing Mental Models and/or Situational Models**
- **Prior and Developing Knowledge and Experiences**
  - (including knowledge of textual structures and conventions)

“There are important development dynamics here: the more children are spoken to, the more they will understand oral language. The more children are read to, the more they understand all the language around them, and the more developed their language becomes.” (Wolf, 2008, p 84)
LEVELS OF PROCESSING FOR READING COMPREHENSION

- **inside the text**
  - **decoding**
    - letter patterns in words; and general grammatical knowledge (accessing the *surface code*)
  - **literal comprehension** (make sense of)
    - extracting meaning from within the sentence - paraphrasing & summarising (constructing the *propositional text base*)
  - **inferring** (extract meaning from)
    - synthesising meaning from across the text - summarising, conceptualising (constructing a *mental model* and *monitoring comprehension*)
  - **interpreting & evaluating** (make an assessment of)
    - making meaning beyond the text - what does the text mean? what do I think? is this correct? (forming judgements, reacting, responding and clarifying meaning)

- **beyond the text**
  - making meaning beyond the text - what does the text mean? what do I think? is this correct? (forming judgements, reacting, responding and clarifying meaning)
“He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees.”

Opening lines from Ernest Hemmingway’s novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (published in 1940)
"He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees."

Opening lines from Ernest Hemmingway’s novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (published in 1940)

What? Who?  
Doing what?  
How?  
Where?
“A proposition [(e.g. a sentence)] is not a blend of words. -- (Just as a theme of music is not a blend of notes.) A proposition is articulate. ”

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 3.141
“A proposition is a picture of reality. A proposition is a picture of reality as we imagine it.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 4.01
“There are subjects or objects or actions or descriptives …, and as such they combine into a statement about the world, that is, into a meaning that one can contemplate, admire, reject or refine.”

Stanley Fish, *How To write a sentence; and how to read one.* (2011), pg 2
“Some sentences have to be read several times to be understood as sentences.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Zettel, 73*
“Some nights have the atmosphere of a sigh: a slow release of the chest’s day-long tightness.”

Damon Young, *The Art of Reading. (2016)*, pg 100
“[Sentences] promise nothing less than lessons and practice in the organisation of the world.”

Stanley Fish, *How To write a sentence; and how to read one*. (2011), pg 7
“In a proposition a situation is, as it were, constructed by way of experiment. Instead of, ‘This proposition has such and such a sense’, we can simply say, ‘This proposition represents such and such a situation.’”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 4.031
“We may never fly in a hot-air balloon, win a race with a hare, or dance with a prince until midnight, but through stories in books we can learn what it feels like.”

Maryanne Wolf, *Proust and the squid: the story and science of the reading brain*, (2008), pg. 86
“When you write you lay out a line of words. The line of words is a miner’s pick, a wordcarver’s gouge, a surgeon’s probe. You wield it and it digs a path you follow.”

Stanley Fish, *How To write a sentence; and how to read one.* (2011), pg 3
“Often, when I have had a picture well framed or have hung it in the right surroundings, I have caught myself feeling as proud as if I had painted the picture myself.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Culture and Value*
“I understand the picture exactly, I could model it in clay. -- I understand this description exactly, I could make a drawing from it. In many cases we might set it up as a criterion of understanding, that one had to be able to represent the sense of a sentence in a drawing.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: Zettel, 245
“Someone paints a picture in order to show how he imagines a theatre scene. And now I say: “This picture has a double function: it informs others, as pictures or words inform -- but for one who gives the information it is a representation .. [of a state of affairs].”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophical Investigations, 280
“A proposition [i.e. sentence] includes all that the projection includes, but not what is projected.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 3.13

I must still process it. I must be able to follow the language, the vocabulary and the sentence structure
Corandic is an emurient grof with many fribs; it granks with corite, an olg which cargs like lange. Corite grinkles several other tarances, which garkers excarp by glarcking the corite and starping it in tranker-clarped strobs.

After this presentation, you may be able to map the grammatical structure of this sentence, but …

https://www.oneeducation.co.uk/one-editorial/literacy/how-do-children-learn-to-read/
“A sentence is given me in code together with the key. Then of course in one way everything required for understanding … And yet I should answer the question “Do you understand this sentence?” : No, not yet; I must first decode it. And only when e..g. I had translated it into English would I say “Now I understand it.””

Ludwig Wittgenstein: Zettel, 74
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There are four types of sentences

- **Declarative (.)** - are statements
- **Interrogative (?)** - are questions
- **Imperative (! or .)** - are commands
- **Exclamatory (!)** - are EXCLAMATIONS!!!
• **Declarative sentences** are also known as statements. A declarative sentence is punctuated at the end with a **full stop** (.).

• Most of the sentences we use are declarative sentences.

• Look at the following three examples:

  • The grass is green.

  • She backed up a few steps, then ran toward the ocean.

  • The rain splattered harshly on the tin roof.
Interrogative Sentences ( ? )

- Interrogative sentences are also known as questions. An interrogative sentence is punctuated at the end with a question mark (?).

- Interrogative sentences are probably the second most common sentence. They usually use an interrogative pronoun, such as “who”, “what”, or other common words like “how”, “when”, “where”, “why”.

- Look at the following three examples:
  
  - Do you understand the way they talk?
  
  - What was the cause of the accident?
  
  - Who is the Governor General of Australia?
Imperative Sentences (! .)

- Imperative sentences are also known as commands. An imperative sentence is punctuated at the end by either a full stop (.) or exclamation point (!).

- Look at the following three examples:
  
  - Complete the homework.
  
  - Open the door.

  - Look sharp!
Exclamatory sentences are also known as exclamations. An exclamatory sentence is punctuated at the end with an exclamation point (!).

Exclamatory sentences are used to place added emphasis on what is being said or written.

Look at the following three examples:

- He’s dead!
- It’s true! I heard it on the eight o’clock news!
- I want to save it, not destroy it!
To review, there are four types of sentences:

- Declarative (.) - are used to make statements
- Interrogative (?) - are used to ask questions
- Imperative (! or .) - are used for commands
- Exclamatory (!) - are used to emphasise EXCLAMATIONS!!!
Declarative sentences are written in either the active voice or the passive voice. In fact, I wrote the previous sentence in the passive voice, while I am writing this sentence in the active voice. Can you tell the difference? Consider the following paired sentences:

- The boy kicked the ball. (active voice)
- The ball was kicked by the boy. (passive voice)
- Declarative sentences are written in either the active voice or the passive voice. (passive voice)
- I write declarative sentences in either the active voice or the passive voice. (active voice)
The ball *was kicked* by the boy. (passive voice)

Declarative sentences *are written* in either the active voice or the passive voice. (passive voice)

In the passive voice sentences, the subjects “the ball” and “declarative sentences” are not actually completing the action of the verb.

In the first passive sentence, the boy completes the action (kicking).

In the second, we don’t actually know who is completing the action (writing). It could be anyone or everyone. A writer can find uses for the vague, general quality of the passive voice, but in many cases readers want writing to be specific and the passive voice frustrates them.
EXTRA: Direct and Indirect Statements and Questions

- Most of the sentences that we write are direct sentences or questions. However, some sentences are written as if we are telling uncertain or second-hand information. These are called indirect sentences or questions. Consider the following sentences:

  - “Why did you do that?” - (direct question)

  - He asked, “why did you do that?” - (indirect question)

  - The concert will go ahead. - (direct statement)

  - I assume that the concert will go ahead. - (indirect statement)

  - I heard the Prime Minister on the radio today. - (direct statement)

  - I was told that the Prime Minister spoke on the radio today. (indirect statement)
Can you find examples of each sentence type in the following passage?
Can you find examples of each sentence type in the following passage?

him.

CRACK!
The noise had come from outside. Was it a gunshot? Or just a car backfiring?
The teacher stopped talking for a moment. Every head in the room turned toward the window.

Nothing. Silence.
The teacher cleared his throat, which drew the boys’ attention to the front of the room again. He continued the lesson from where he had left off. Then–

CRACK! POP–POP–CRACK!
Gunfire!
‘Everyone, DOWN!’ the teacher shouted.

Some of the boys moved at once, ducking their heads and hunching over. Others sat frozen, their eyes and mouths open wide. Salva covered his head with his hands and looked from side to side in panic.
The teacher edged his way along the wall to the window. He took a quick peek outside. The gunfire had stopped, but now people were shouting and running.

‘Go quickly, all of you,’ the teacher said, his voice low and urgent. ‘Into the bush. Do you hear me? Not home. Don’t run home. They will be going into the villages. Stay away from the villages – run into the bush.’

He went to the door and looked out again.

‘Go! All of you, now!’

The war had started two years earlier. Salva did not understand much about it, but he knew that rebels from the southern part of Sudan, where he and his family lived, were fighting against the government, which was based in the north. Most of the people who lived in the north were Muslim, and the government wanted all of Sudan to become a Muslim country – a place where the beliefs of
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There are four sentence structures:

- Simple
- Compound
- Complex
- Complex-Compound
Simple sentences have one subject and one predicate.

In the following two examples, the subjects are in red and the predicates are in black.

- **Yura and Tonya** hurried across the street.
- **Herbert** led the calf into the pen

The subject is the person or thing that performs the action (or being) of the verb (see ”words” section). While this is not true in every case, we will use this as a working definition.

The predicate is, then, the rest of the sentence (or clause) that describes or comments on the subject. The predicate (usually) begins with a predicate verb. Again, this will become more complex as we study the sentence.
The subject and the predicate verb(s) must agree. The form of the predicate verb(s) depend upon the nature of the subject, particularly whether it is singular (one) or plural (more than one).

In the present tense, it is usually a matter of adding “s” to the end of the verb if the subject is singular. For past tense, it’s usually a matter of adding “-ed” to both singular and plural subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Present Form</th>
<th>Past Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>talks</td>
<td>talked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>talks</td>
<td>talked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>talks</td>
<td>talked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (singular)</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>talked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane and Sarah</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>talked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>talked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane and Sarah</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A compound sentence has at least two independent clauses linked by a conjunction.

A conjunction is a joining word that links either words or clauses.

For example, and, or, because, but, therefore, so, since, if, when, after, while ... 

The student didn’t finish her homework, because the dog ate it.

He went to the movies, while his friend went to the soccer match.
A clause must also contain a subject and a predicate. A clause is similar to a simple sentence, because a simple sentence must have a subject and a predicate, but many clauses can be in one compound, complex or complex-compound sentence.

There are two types of clauses: the independent clause and the dependent clause. An independent clause can stand alone as its own sentence. A dependent clause, though, needs an independent clause or another dependent clause to complete its meaning, even though it has a subject and a predicate.
An independent clause is different than a sentence, because many independent clauses can exist in one sentence.

In the following example, three independent clauses are in the one sentence. The three subjects are each in red, and the three predicates are each in black.

The detective looked everywhere for the thief but the thief had escaped capture because his cat could easily distract the detective.

The one sentence could be broken up into three sentences:

The detective looked everywhere for the thief. The thief had escaped capture. His cat could easily distract the detective.
In the previous section, we saw three independent clauses linked by the conjunctions “but” and “because”.

Conjunctions do not need to appear between independent clauses to link them. Consider the following examples. The conjunctions are underlined and a slash (/) is placed between independent clauses.

- If the war begins, / many people's lives will be at risk.
- When the clock strikes midnight / the spell will wear off.
- She ran to the beach, / she threw her towel on the sand / and she relaxed in the sun.
A complex sentence contains one independent clause linked to a dependent clause by a relative pronoun, like “that”, “which” and “who”.

Complex sentences allow a writer to add details in a very ordered manner. In the following example the relative pronouns are underlined and the dependent clauses are in red.

- The inspector, who worked for Scotland Yard, arrested the thief on London Bridge, which was full of tourists at the time.

- The independent clause is: The inspector arrested the thief on London Bridge.
A dependent clause is different than an independent clause, because it does not make sense on its own.

The subject of a dependent clause is usually a relative pronoun (eg. that, which or who)

The following is an example of one sentence with one independent clause and two dependent clauses. The dependent clauses are in red and the independent clause is in black.

The gentleman who wore a wig decided to cross the road which was full of traffic.
Let's explain the following sentence.

The gentleman, who wore a wig, decided to cross the road, which was full of traffic.

The independent clause is: “The gentleman decided to cross the road.”

A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun or noun phrase. A relative pronoun serves a similar purpose. In the above sentence:

“who” replaces “gentleman”; “which” replaces “road”
Lastly, how do we know that we have two dependent clauses

- The gentleman, who wore a wig, decided to cross the road, which was full of traffic.

The following sentences DO NOT MAKE SENSE!

- “The gentleman decided to cross the road. Who wore a wig. Which was full of traffic.”
Dependent clauses in complex sentences are like small details painted in a sentence to better illustrate what you want your reader to see or focus upon. A dependent clause can even be joined to another dependent clause.

At times, you may have an option on whether to create a dependent clause or use another way to add detail. It is a matter of choice. Consider the following examples. How do they present a similar description differently?

- The man, who was quite tall, looked silly diving through a hoop that had been set on fire.
- The tall man looked silly diving through a flaming hoop.
What is complex-compound sentence? A complex-compound sentence has the feature of a complex sentence and the features of a compound sentence. Or:

- At least one dependent clause linked to an independent clause by a relative pronoun

- At least two independent clauses linked together by a conjunction

- eg. The sweet wind, which blew in from the north, smelled much sweeter yesterday, because love was in the summer air.
### KEY DEFINITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>is the person or thing that performs the action (or being) of the predicate verb(s) (see &quot;words&quot; section)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predicate</td>
<td>is the rest of the sentence (or clause) that describes or comments on the subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent clause</td>
<td>is a clause that can stand alone as its own simple sentence but can be part of compound, complex or complex-compound sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>relating to clauses, it is a word that joins independent clauses together (eg and, or, but, because, if)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent clause</td>
<td>is a clause that cannot stand alone as its own simple sentence but can be part of a complex or complex-compound sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Pronoun</td>
<td>is a pronoun that links a dependent clause to an independent clause or another dependent clause (eg that, which, who)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are four sentence structures:

- **Simple** - one subject and one predicate
- **Compound** - at least two independent clauses joined by a conjunction
- **Complex** - one independent clause joined to at least one dependent clause by a relative pronoun
- **Complex-Compound** - at least two independent clauses joined by a conjunction AND at least one dependent clause joined to an independent clause by a relative pronoun
EXTRA: Compound Sentences vs Participle Phrases

- A **compound sentence** has at least two independent clauses linked by a conjunction. Such as …

- Our car got stuck **and** it broke down in the mud.

- Our team was inspired by our victory, **so** our team challenged the league leaders to a game.

- In both examples, the subject is the same for both clauses. If these cases, you can remove the conjunction and add the second clause as a **participle phrase**. Verbs ending in “-ed” are **past (perfect) participles**, and those with in “-ing” are **present (imperfect) participles**. The sentences become …

- Our car got stuck, **breaking down in the mud**.

- **Inspired by our victory**, our team challenged the the league leaders to a game.
**EXTRA: Omitting the Relative Pronoun in a Complex Sentence**

- A typical *complex sentence* would read as follows:
  - Even printed sentences, **which** appear on bound pages, remain unsettled organisms.
  - The road, **which** is long and treacherous, was closed due to poor weather.
  - The embedded clauses, which start with a relative pronoun - like “that” or “which”, can sound more elegant if the relative pronoun is omitted.
    - Even printed sentences, **appearing on bound pages**, remain unsettled organisms.
    - The road, **long and treacherous**, was closed due to poor weather.
Can you find examples of each sentence structure in the following passage?
Can you find examples of each sentence structure in the following passage?

years old on his last birthday, Salva was a good student. He already knew the lesson, which was why he was letting his mind wander down the road ahead of his body.

Salva was well aware of how lucky he was to be able to go to school. He could not attend the entire year, because during the dry season his family moved away from their village. But during the rainy season, he could walk to the school, which was only half an hour from his home.

Salva’s father was a successful man. He owned many head of cattle and worked as their village’s judge – an honoured, respected position. Salva had three brothers and two sisters. As each boy reached the age of about ten years, he was sent off to school. Salva’s older brothers, Ariik and Ring, had gone to school before him; last year, it had been Salva’s turn. His two sisters, Akit and Agnath, did not go to school. Like the other girls in the village, they stayed home and learned from their mother how to keep house.

Most of the time, Salva was glad to be able to go to school. But some days he wished he were still back at home herding cattle.

He and his brothers, along with the sons of his father’s other wives, would walk with the herds to the water holes, where there was good grazing. Their responsibilities depended on how old they were. Salva’s younger brother, Kuol, was taking care of just one cow; like his brothers before him, he would be in charge of more cows every year. Before Salva had begun going to school, he had helped look after the entire herd, and his younger brother as well.

The boys had to keep an eye on the cows, but the cows did not really need much care. That left plenty of time to play.

Salva and the other boys made cows out of clay. The more cows you made, the richer you were. But they had to be fine, healthy animals. It took time to make a lump of clay look like a good cow. The boys would challenge each other to see who could make the most and best cows.
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Sentence Features

- Sentences and clauses are made up of parts. In particular, the organisation of these parts creates meaning. The following are ways to refer to parts in a sentence:

  - Words
  - Phrases
  - Clauses (defined in Sentence Structures)
Words

• Words in a sentence can be broken up into parts of speech or word classes. There are two categories within word classes: open class and closed class.

• The parts of speech in the open class are nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. We call this an open class, because it is open to new words being added to it as time goes by, such as the noun “Internet”.

• The parts of speech in the closed class are pronouns, prepositions, articles, and conjunctions. We call this a closed class, because few - if any - new words are added to this class of words.
Open Classes

• nouns - are words that refer to **people, places, things** and **ideas**.

• verbs - are traditionally said to be words that describe **action**. This is not always the case, and we will create our own definition in our study. Verbs refer to time in regards to **tenses** and they refer to number in regards to the **subject-verb agreement**.

• adjectives - are words that **describe nouns**

• adverbs - are words that **describe verbs**
Closed Classes

- **pronouns** - are words that replace nouns, such as “he”, “it” and “they”

- **prepositions** - are words that show position ("above", “in”), direction ("to", “through”), time ("after", “before”), manner ("with", “against”), and agency ("by")

- **articles** - are the words “the”, “a” and “an”

- **conjunctions** - are words that link words, phrases and clauses together, such as “and”, “or”, “but” or “because”
Nouns

- **Nouns** are words that refer to **people**, **places**, **things** and **ideas**. For example, the words “lawyer” (person), “Canberra” (place), “computer” (thing) and “peace” (idea) are all nouns.

- There are three types of nouns: **common**, **proper** and **abstract**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>common nouns</strong></td>
<td>refer to general people, places and things, such as “doctors”, “brothers”, “parks”, “cities”, “pens” and “trains”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>proper nouns</strong></td>
<td>refer to specific people, places and things and begin with a capital letter, such as “Ned Kelly”, “John Howard”, “Sydney”, “Opera House”, “Apple Computers”, and “Kleenex Tissues”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>abstract nouns</strong></td>
<td>refer to ideas and concepts that can’t be touched or seen, such as “peace”, “happiness”, “curiosity”, “faith” and “love”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbs

• **Verbs** - are traditionally said to be words that describe **action**, but they also describe the **more difficult concept of “being”**.

• In addition, verbs refer to time in regards to **tenses**. The basic tenses will be described in this “word” section, while the more complex will be discussed in the “phrase” section.

• Verbs also refer to number (plural or singular) in regards to the **subject-verb agreement**, which was discussed in the “sentence structure” section.
Verbs: Action

- Verbs of action are used to express - just that - *action*, whether the action has completed, is currently happening or might be happening in the future. It is the action that is done by the *subject*.

- The following are all action verbs:
  - to jump, to see, to stare, to hide, to think, to complement, to deny, to forget, to write, to imagine, to explain, to understand, to try, to play, ...

- The *action verbs* are underlined in the following sentences:
  - The student *presented* his report to the class.
  - Doctor Franco *visited* the patient at his home, because the illness *threatened* the patient’s life.
**Verbs: Being**

- Action verbs are easier to think about than being verbs.

- What is it “to be”? What is it “to exist”? Being is not an action, but rather a state that we point to and the most common being verb, which we use every day, is “to be”. We don’t write “to be”, though.

- The forms of “to be” are: is, are, am, was, were ...

- The being verb are underlined in the following sentences:
  - The grass is green.
  - The actor was very famous in the 1980s.
  - I am confident that he is the right person for the job.
The basic verb tenses are the present and past tenses. They are basic because they only require one word to express the action or being. The following are examples of the two tenses:

- I am a student (present:being) / I was a student (past:being)
- He talks a lot (present:action) / He talked a lot (past:action)

Other verb tenses - such as future tense - require multiple words to express the action or being, and are called verb phrases. Therefore, these tenses will be discussed in the “phrases” section of the presentation.
Verb Phrases: Complex Tenses

Past: had finished, finished, was finishing
Past Perfect: had finished
Past Imperfect: finished
Past: was finishing, have finished
Past Perfect: have finished
Past Imperfect: finishing
Present: finish, am finishing
Present Perfect: finish
Present Imperfect: finishing
Future: will have finished, will finish
Future Perfect: will be finishing
Future Imperfect: finishing
Adjectives

• An adjective is a word that describes a noun, such as big, small, long short, red, blue, evil, compassionate ...

• Certain comparative adjectives tell us how we should think about different nouns. We see this with the adjectives ending in “-er” and “-est”, such as (tall, taller, tallest), (kind, kinder, kindest) and (good, better, best).

• The adjectives are underlined in the following sentences:

  • The courageous hero defeated the evil though intelligent villain.

  • The taller man of the two is the kindest man that I know.

  • The film is the best film that I have ever seen!
Other adjectives indicate possession, such as “her book” “John’s coat”. The most common possessive adjectives are “my”, “our”, “your”, “his”, “her”, “its”, and “their”.

Some (demonstrative) adjectives allow us to point, such as “this man” “that play”. The main demonstrative adjectives are “this” and “that” (singular) and “these” and “those” (plural).

Other (interrogative) adjectives allow us to ask questions, such “what play ...?” and “which person ...?” and “whose decision ...?”

The adjectives are underlined in the following sentences:

• Which book of these books is her book?

• This situation is ridiculous. His excuses are not acceptable.
An adverb is a word that describes a verb, or rather how an action (or being) is being done or completed. In most cases, an adverb ends in “-ly”. Example adverbs are quickly, carefully, slyly, happily ...

The adverbs are underlined in the following sentences:

- He completed his homework quickly and well, because he really wanted to go to the cricket game.

- The thief moved stealthily through the quiet museum.
Closed Classes

- **pronouns** - are words that replace nouns, such as “he”, “it” and “they”

- **prepositions** - are words that show position (“above”, “in”), direction (“to”, “through”), time (“after”, “before”), manner (“with”, “against”), and agency (“by”)

- **articles** - are the words “the”, “a” and “an”

- **conjunctions** - are words that link words, phrases and clauses together, such as “and”, “or”, “but” or “because”
A pronoun is a word that is used in the place of a noun.

There are six main types of pronouns. Five are new and two have been mentioned in previous sections:

- personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, indefinite pronouns, possessive pronouns, and reflexive pronouns
- interrogative pronouns (see “sentence types”) and relative pronouns (see “dependent clauses”)
Personal Pronouns

- **Personal pronouns** are what we think of first when think of pronouns. The personal pronouns are “I”, “we”, “you”, “she”, “he”, “it” and “they”, as well as “me”, “him”, “her”, “it”, “us” and “them”.

- The **personal pronouns** are underlined in the following sentences:

  - *You* and *I* do not want to go see that film, so *we* are going to suggest that the group sees this one.

  - Alice, *you* need to go to the doctor. *You* need to see *him*!

  - When Stephanie arrives, *she* will see what *you* have done to *me*.

  - Even though the boys love the dog, *they* will not be happy that *it* destroyed their group project.

  - Will *you* tell *us* what *we* should tell *them*?
Demonstrative Pronouns

- Demonstrative pronouns provide another way to briefly refer to things you have just written about or will write about. The demonstrative pronouns are “this” and “that” (singular) and “these” and “those” (plural).

- The demonstrative pronouns are underlined in the following sentences:

  - The neighbour decided to dump his trash on my lawn. This infuriated me.

  - That does not make sense. The diagram is too cluttered to tell me anything.

  - Over by the ladder are some gloves. Can you bring those here?
Indefinite Pronouns

- Indefinite pronouns don’t refer to anything in specific, but rather they refer to something or nothing that is or is not out there. I have underlined the indefinite pronouns that have already been used.

- Some indefinite pronouns are “someone”, “somewhere”, “nothing”, “anybody”, “one” ...

- The indefinite pronouns are underlined in the following sentences:

  - **Someone** must be able to solve this puzzle.

  - I am afraid that **nothing** will happen to the person who committed this horrible crime.

  - **One** must always take time to enjoy life.
Possessive pronouns refer to possession and are different than adjectives that refer to possession. The possessive pronouns are “mine”, “ours”, “yours”, “his”, “hers”, “its” and “theirs”

- The possessive pronouns are underlined in the following sentences:
  - The book is **mine**. That one is **yours**. Those are **hers**.
  - Please, drop the computer. It is not **yours**. It is **theirs**.
Pronouns

- **REVIEW:** The interrogative pronouns are used in questions. They are “who”, “whom”, “whose” and “what”. The interrogative pronouns are underlined in the following sentences:

  - **Who** is at the door?
  
  - **What** is the cause of accident?
  
  - **REVIEW:** The relative pronouns are used in dependent clauses. The most common relative pronouns are “who”, “which” and “that”. The relative pronouns are underlined in the following sentence:

    - The sun, **which** had just risen, spread its golden rays over the countryside **that** had a shepherd, **who** had lost his sheep, in it.
Prepositions

- Anything you can do with a cloud ... you can go in a cloud, above a cloud, below a cloud, outside a cloud, be near a cloud, be by a cloud ... each of these prepositions show position.

- Preposition can also show direction. “I am going to a cloud.” “I am going toward a cloud.” “I am going away from the cloud.” “I looked at the sun.”

- Preposition also help show the manner of something. “I am with the cloud. I support it 100%. I am against the sun, though. I treat the moon with suspicion. I look at it in a cautious manner.

- Lastly, preposition can help indicated agency (who did something and for whom or what it was done). “I was deceived by the cloud. It agreed to rain on me out of revenge.”
Conjunctions

- A **conjunction** is a word which join words, phrases or clauses. The most common conjunctions are “and”, “but”, “or”, “nor” and “yet”.

- **Joining words:** “apples, oranges and pear”, “truth or dare”, “everyone but him”

- **Joining phrases:** “over the hill and through the woods”, “He completed his math homework but left his English incomplete.”

- **Joining sentences:** “The monkey enjoyed the attention, yet it never got used to the camera flash.” “The festival will be perfect or it will rain and everything will be ruined.”
Conjunctions (cont.)

- Other common conjunctions are “although”, “because”, “if”, “unless”, “so that”, “while”, “whenever” or “until”. These conjunctions join independent clauses together to form compound sentences.

- The conjunctions are underlined in the following sentences:

  - Although the race was postponed, the athletes still ran in
  
  - The class relaxed, because the test was cancelled.
  
  - The project will not be complete until you interview your local politician.
Closed Classes

- **pronouns** - are words that replace nouns, such as “he”, “it” and “they”

- **prepositions** - are words that show position ("above", "in"), direction ("to", "through"), time ("after", "before"), manner ("with", "against"), and agency ("by")

- **articles** - are the words “the”, “a” and “an”

- **conjunctions** - are words that link words, phrases and clauses together, such as “and”, “or”, “but” or “because”
Other Words

• **Gerunds** - are words that look like a verb’s present participle form but acts like a **noun** in a sentence.

• A gerund is a word that in most all cases ends in “-ing”, like “running”, “jumping” and “thinking”

• BUT acts as a **noun** in a sentence, such as:

  • Running is good fun; Thinking hurts my head.

• **Interjections** - are words that show surprise or exclamation, such as “Ah”, “Wow”, “Ha ha”, “Oh”, and “Aha”
Sentences and clauses are made up of parts. In particular, the organisation of these parts creates meaning. The following are ways to refer to parts in a sentence:

- Words
- Phrases
- Clauses (defined in Sentence Structures)
Phrases

- A phrase is a grammatical unit that has more than one word. Most phrases are two or more words that serve a role in a sentence similar to the single words that we have just covered.

- The main phrases are the noun phrase, the verb phrase, the adjective phrase, and the adverb phrase. In other words, a phrase is two or more words that serve the role of a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb.

- The other phrases are the prepositional phrase, the gerund phrase, the participle phrase, transitional phrases and the infinitive phrase.
Main Phrases

- **noun phrase** - two or more words that serve the purpose of a noun and that has a **noun as its head word** (such as “ice cream”)

- **verb phrase** - two or more words that serve the purpose of a verb that has a **verb as its head word** (such as “was running”)

- **adjective phrase** - two or more words that serve the purpose of an adjective (such as “blood red”). In other words, an adjective phrase is two or more words that describe a noun.

- **adverb phrase** - two or more words that serve the purpose of an adverb (such as “in a careless way” instead of “carelessly”). In other words, an adverb phrase is two or more words that describe a verb.
noun phrase - two or more words that serves the purpose of a noun and that has a noun as its head word (such as “ice cream”)

The following are three examples of noun phrases in sentences:

• The raggedy dog was sleeping on the carpet.

• The sumo wrestler did jump on top of the little boy.

• Doctor Franco was laughing at the sad clown.
Verb Phrases

- verb phrase - two or more words that serves the purpose of a verb that has a verb as its head word (such as “was running”). These verb phrases tend to form our more complex verb tenses.

- In the following examples, the head verbs are in red and the verb phrases are underlined.

- Even though it is raining, the athletes will run the race.

- The committee has decided the fate of the football club.

- Head verbs ending in “-ed” are called past (perfect) participles, and those ending in “-ing” are called present (imperfect) participles. This will be more important in the “participle phrase” section of the presentation.
## Verb Phrases: Complex Tenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past perfect and imperfect</th>
<th>Present perfect and imperfect</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Future perfect and imperfect</th>
<th>Conditional / conditional perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>had finished (perfect)</td>
<td>have finished (perfect)</td>
<td>will finish</td>
<td>will have finished (perfect)</td>
<td>would finish (conditional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was finishing (imperfect)</td>
<td>is finishing (imperfect)</td>
<td></td>
<td>will be finishing (imperfect)</td>
<td>would have finished (perfect)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verb Phrases: Complex Tenses (cont.)

Verb Phrases:

- Past Perfect: had finished
- Past Imperfect: finished
- Past: was finishing
- Present Perfect: have finished
- Present: finish
- Present Perfect: am finishing
- Future Perfect: will have finished
- Future: will finish
- Future: will be finishing
“Give yourself the assignment of writing a sentence in which three or four time zones - past perfect, past, present, future - are structured into an account of related action.”

Stanley Fish, *How To write a sentence; and how to read one.* (2011), pg 30
So far I have made it seem that a subject can only have one predicate verb. In fact, a subject can perform a number of actions in one simple sentence and, therefore, have many predicate verbs, but still have only one subject and one predicate.

The following sentences have multiple verbs with one subject:

- The fighter pilot banked, spun and lifted his jet above the clouds.
- Outside the house, the wind gathered then scattered the leaves.
- In the above sentences, “banked, spun and lifted” and “gathered then scattered” are verb phrases.
**Adjective & Adverb Phrases:**

- **adjective phrase** - two or more words that serve the purpose of an adjective (such as “blood red”). In other words, an adjective phrase is two or more words that describe a noun.

- **adverb phrase** - two or more words that serve the purpose of an adverb (such as “in a careless way” instead of “carelessly”). In other words, an adverb phrase is two or more words that describe a verb.

- The following are three examples of adjective phrases and adverb phrases in sentences:

  - The pitch black night came in a sudden way.

  - The tired and old elephant walked in our direction very slowly and painfully.

  - The wicked, beastly man yelled at me in a loud and vicious manner.
Other Phrases

• **prepositional phrase** - is two or more words that contains a **preposition** and the **object of the preposition** (such as “through the forest” and “above the house”)

• **gerund phrase** - is two or more words that has a **gerund** as its **head word** (such as “Learning a language is fun; Playing cricket requires patience and determination”)

• **participle phrase** - is two or more words that has either a **present** or **past participle** as its **head word**.

• **infinitive phrase** - is two or more words that has a “unconjugated, infinitive” form of a verb as its **head word**. The unconjugated, infinitive form of a verb is the word “to” followed by the verb, such as “to run” and “to disagree”.

• **transitional phrase** - is two or more words that join words, phrases, or clauses and sentences together.
Preposition and Gerund Phrases

- **prepositional phrase** - is two or more words that contains a preposition and the object of the preposition (such as “through the forest” and “above the house”)

- **gerund phrase** - is two or more words that has a gerund as its head word (such as “Learning a language is fun; Playing cricket requires patience and determination”)

- The following are three examples of prepositional phrases and gerund phrases in sentences:

  - **Learning cello** in the dark is very difficult.

  - William enjoyed **kicking pineapples** in the park.

  - Above the house, in a plane, on a seat sits a boy who likes **eating peanuts**.
**Participle Phrases**

- **participle phrase** - is two or more words that has either a past or present participle as its head word.

- Head verbs ending in “-ed” are called past (perfect) participles, and those ending in “-ing” are called present (imperfect) participles.

- The participle phrases are identified in the following sentences:

  - Our car got stuck, **breaking down in the mud**.

  - **Inspired by our victory**, our team challenged the winners of the highest division to a game.
Participle Phrases (cont.)

- Participle phrases are a good way to join sentences together when the subject of two consecutive sentences are the same. Compare the following examples:

- The politician voted in favour of the bill. At the time, he was thinking he was doing the right thing.

- Thinking he was doing the right thing, the politician voted in favour of the bill.

- Ghandi was a very thoughtful supporter of change. He is respected for his patience and perseverance.

- Respected for his patience and perseverance, Ghandi was a very thoughtful supporter of change.
**Infinitive Phrases**

- **infinitive phrase** - is two or more words that has an “unconjugated, infinitive” form of a verb as its head word. The **infinitive form** of a verb is the word “to” followed by the verb, such as “to run” and “to disagree”.

- An **infinitive phrase** can be part of a verb phrase or, like a gerund, can perform the role of a noun; in this case a noun phrase.

  - The student decided **to submit his essay** early. (part of a verb phrase)

  - **To fly a plane** is an exhilarating experience. (as a noun phrase)
**Transitional Phrases**

- **Transitional phrase** - is two or more words that join words, phrases, clauses and sentences together. Transitional phrases can create fluent flow between sentences, clauses, phrases and words.

- Transitional phrases vary widely in nature. The following is a list of common and useful **transitional phrases** to show:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addition</th>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Contrast</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Cause and Effect</th>
<th>Concluding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as well as</td>
<td>in the same manner</td>
<td>in contrast</td>
<td>for example</td>
<td>as a result</td>
<td>in summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in addition</td>
<td>on the contrary</td>
<td>on the contrary</td>
<td>for instance</td>
<td>for this reason</td>
<td>in short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>along with</td>
<td>on the other hand</td>
<td>even though</td>
<td>for these reasons</td>
<td>in order to</td>
<td>in conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transitional Phrases**

The Literacy Bug     | info@theliteracybug.com     | www.theliteracybug.com
The speaker impressed the adults as well as the children. In fact, she received a standing ovation. As a result, she thanked everyone for being such a great audience, even though she was not greeted with a warm reception. In short, she won the crowd over.
• **prepositional phrase** - is two or more words that contains a preposition and the object of the preposition (such as “through the forest” and “above the house”)

• **gerund phrase** - is two or more words that has a gerund as its head word (such as “**Learning** a language is fun; **Playing** cricket requires patience and determination”)

• **participle phrase** - is two or more words that has either a present or past participle as its head word.

• **infinitive phrase** - is two or more words that has a “unconjugated, infinitive” form of a verb as its head word. The unconjugated, infinitive form of a verb is the word “to” followed by the verb, such as “to run” and “to disagree”.

• **transitional phrase** - is two or more words that join words, phrases, or clauses and sentences together.
I. Introduction

II. Define key areas:
   a. Sentence types
   b. Sentence structures
   c. Sentence features
   d. Sentence (or Syntax) trees

III. Enhancing meaning in Sentences

IV. From a developmental Perspective
Sentence / Syntax Trees

Example of a sentence / syntax tree

For more examples, refer to:

The boys were streaming up the ladder.
Harry didn’t say anything.
Basic Sentence Tree

\[(NP + VP) = S\]

\[\begin{array}{c}
S \\
NP \quad VP \\
\text{Harry} \quad \text{was passionate about Quidditch.}
\end{array}\]
Basic Sentence Tree

\[(\text{NP} + \text{VP}) = S\]

Fear is the root of all evil.
Learning our language means becoming enculturated.

These above trees are designed to express a point. For detailed trees, refer to:

I. Introduction

II. Define key areas:
   a. Sentence types
   b. Sentence structures
   c. Sentence features
   d. Sentence (or Syntax) trees

III. Enhancing meaning in Sentences

IV. From a developmental Perspective
Enhancing Sentences

“Sentence writers are not copyists; they are selectors.”
(Fish, 2011, pg 38)

“If you learn what it is that goes into making of a memorable sentence - what skills of coordination, subordination, allusion, compression, parallelism, alliteration ... are in play - you will also be learning how to take the appreciative measure of such sentences.” (Fish. 2011, pg 8 - 9)

– Stanley Fish, How To write a sentence; and how to read one. (2011), pg 18
Enhancing Sentences

- **Horizontal (syntax) - adding meaning by lengthening the sentence**
  - The children were playing.
  - The children were playing + **Where?**
  - The children were playing in the paddock.

- **Vertical (diction) expansion - adding meaning by selecting the right words**
  - marched
  - The man **walked** through the door.
    - strolled
    - sauntered
    - ambled
Enhancing Sentences

● **Emphasis through mobility**

  - The wind blew *high overhead* in the tops of the pine trees.
  - *High overhead* the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees.
  - In the tops of the pine trees the wind blew *high overhead*.
  - The wind blew in the tops of the pine trees *high overhead*.

● **Expansion by coordination and balance** - focusing on rhetorical elegance.

  - The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed. (a balanced sentence from “Araby” by James Joyce)
  - Even printed, on pages that are bound, sentences remain unsettled organisms. (an example of elegant subordination from “My Life’s Sentences” by Jhumpa Lahiri)
Recommended Book


Style: lessons in grace and clarity (10th Ed.).

New York: Longman.
I. Introduction

II. Define key areas:
   a. Sentence types
   b. Sentence structures
   c. Sentence features
   d. Sentence (or Syntax) trees

III. Enhancing meaning in Sentences

IV. From a developmental Perspective
“When a child learns language it learns at the same time what is to be investigated and what not.” (Wittgenstein, On Certainty #472)

“Nothing could seem less remarkable than a one-year-old child requesting ‘More juice’ or commenting ‘Doggie gone’ … From an ethological perspective, perhaps the most astounding fact is that something on the order of 80 percent of all Homo sapiens cannot understand these utterances at all.” (Tomasello, 2003, pg 1)
Developmental Milestones

- Semantic roles are expressed in one-word speech = 12 - 18 mths
- Direct statement/request (e.g. There mummy) = 12 - 24 mths
- Express a state of affairs (e.g. There [is] doggie, Go [to] shops) = 15 - 30 mths
- Prevalent relations expressed (e.g. agent–action) = 18 - 24 mths
- Request something / Provide initial explanations = 21 - 42 mths
- Understanding and use of questions (about objects) = 24 - 30 mths
- Grammatical morphemes appear: -ing, in, on, s. = 24 - 30 mths
Developmental Milestones (cont)

• Use the indirect voice (e.g. I thought that …) = 24 - 51 mths

• Begins making explanations, expressing attitude, using “because”, formulations = 27 - 57 mths

• Uses Why? questions = 30 - 36 mths

• Uses spatial terms (in, on, under) = 30 - 36 mths

• Uses semantic relationship between adjacent and conjoined sentences, including additive, temporal, causal, contrastive = 36 - 42 mths

• Emergence of embedded sentences. First complex sentence forms appear. Auxiliary verbs are placed correctly in questions & negatives = 36 - 42 mths
Developmental Milestones (cont)

• The conditional form is used (if, when) = 33–60+ mths

• Embedded clauses that use the reflexive profound = 39–60+ mths

• Use and understanding of passive sentences emerges = 5 - 7 yrs old

• Children are entering into the written world (reconstruction of the world in language) (NB: children’s written language may lag up to 3 years behind oral language) = 6 - 9 yrs old

• Pronouns used to refer to nouns previously named = 7 - 9 yrs old

• Literate syntax for academic participation develops = 7 - 9 yrs old
Developmental Milestones (cont)

• Syntax in school is more complex than in oral = 9 - 12 yrs old

• Use of perfect aspect (have/had +[verb]) increases. Syntax used in writing is more complex than that used in speech = 12 - 14 yrs old

• Complexity in written language is greater than in spoken language. Full adult range of syntactic constructions reached = 15 - 18 yrs old

Milestones from ...


Ways to Help

1. Use everyday activities as the context for practice.

2. Vocalise thoughts and describe ongoing actions.

3. Use parallel talk to describe what others are doing.

4. Use modelling to provide practice on a specific language skill.

5. Use recasting to reframe a learner response in a more fully developed way.

6. Use expansion to demonstrate how an idea can be expressed more completely.

7. Use “build ups” and “break downs” to emphasise the components of a message.

IN SUMMARY: It is important to model the complex syntax and vocabulary diversity that we want children to develop. For older students we want to create situations that allow them to engage in complex discussion and debate.
**Mode Continuum**

Any message has a:

field (content) + **mode (form)** + tenor (tone/audience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most spoken-like</th>
<th>Most written-like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Topic:** Making Toast

We put them in there for a while. They popped up, and were ready.

We put the pieces of bread in the toaster and waited. The bread popped up, and the toast was ready.

In the morning, we were making toast for breakfast. We put the pieces of bread in the toaster, pushed down the lever and waited. When the toast was ready, the bread popped up.

Toast is a popular breakfast food, thereby making a toaster an essential household appliance. To make toast, place two pieces of bread in the toaster, push down the lever and wait. When ready, the toast will automatically “pop up”. Be careful when removing the toast from the toaster. The pieces of toast will be hot.

---

**Spoken language benefits from additional context (pointing, shared experiences)**
How can I build rich sentences? What sort of questions can I ask myself?
The Prime Minister released a policy to Parliament yesterday, because he wanted to address the problem of littering.

You can switch the sentence order but you still ask similar questions

Because he wanted to address the problem of littering, the Prime Minister yesterday released a policy to Parliament.
“There is the person or thing performing an action, there is the action being performed, and there is the recipient or object of the action. That’s the basic logical structure of many sentences: X does Y to Z.”

– Stanley Fish, *How To write a sentence; and how to read one. (2011)*, pg 18
Subject (the what)

Three children


is this about? is it? is it doing? is occurring?
Subject (the what) + Verb (doing what)

Three children were playing.
Three children were playing at the edge of a paddock.
One day three children were playing at the edge of a paddock.
One day three children were playing at the edge of a paddock when they saw something extraordinary.
One day in the middle of the nineteenth century, three children were playing at the edge of a paddock when they saw something extraordinary.
One day in the middle of the nineteenth century, three children were playing at the edge of a paddock when they saw something extraordinary.
Subject (the what)


What's important? What is valuable? What is next?

is this about? is it? is it doing? is occurring?
Subject (the what) + Verb (was doing what)

He lay.
Subject + Verb + How

He lay, his chin on his folded arms.
He lay on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms.
He lay on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and
He lay on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and the wind blew.
Subject + Verb + Where + How + conjunction + Where + Subject + Verb

He lay on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew.
He lay on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the trees.
He lay on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the trees.
Subject (the what)

Speech therapists
Subject (the what) + Verb (doing)

Speech therapists use

Subject: who? what?

is this about?

is it? is it doing? is occurring?

what?

when? where? to whom?

how? why?

What's important? What is valuable? What is next?

, . ? ! " ""
Speech therapists use well-designed cards.
Speech therapists often use well-designed cards.

Subject (the what) + Verb (doing) + What? + When?
Speech therapists often use well-designed cards to convey actions, sequences, time-relations and comparisons.
Speech therapists often use well-designed cards to convey actions, sequences, time-relations and comparisons, and these can be adapted to other situations.
Speech therapists often use well-designed cards to convey actions, sequences, time-relations and comparisons, and these can be adapted to other situations.
REMEMBER: when analysing (or writing) strong sentences:

1. Identify the subject and the verb
2. Ask questions to examine/write the sentence
3. Reflect on the “picture” or “sense” that is expressed.
Don’t Be Fooled, Though …
“There are many kinds of sentences.” Say assertions, questions, and commands. -- there are countless kinds: countless different kinds of use of what we call “symbol”, “words”, “sentences” … Review the multiplicity of language-games in the following examples:

• Giving orders --
• Describing the appearance of an object --
• Reporting an event --
• Speculating about an event --
• Forming and testing a hypothesis --
• Making up a story; and reading it --
• Making a joke, telling it --
• Requesting, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying.

It is interesting to compare the multiplicity of tools in language and of the ways they are used, multiplicity of kinds of word and sentence, with what logicians have said about the **structure of language.**

“Grammar does not tell us how language must be constructed in order to fulfill its purpose, in order to have such-and-such an effect on human beings. It only describes and in no way explains the use of signs.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Philosophical Investigations*, 496
• Grammar only tells us how to construct clear statements and questions.

• Grammar does not tell us how/why one sentence should follow or precede another.

• The sequence of our utterances is not governed by the neat structural rules of grammar.

• The sequence of our utterances is governed by the nature of our discourse, which is to say the conventions and questions that underpin our conversations.

• A learner must become aware of the logic of our grammar and of our discourse.
“It's as though there were a custom amongst certain people for one person to throw another ball which he is supposed to catch and throw back; but some people, instead of throwing it back, put it back in their pocket.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Culture and Value*

“In one case we make a move in an existent game, in the other we establish a rule of the game. Moving a piece could be conceived in two ways: as a paradigm for future moves, or as a move in an actual game.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Zettel #294*
“If Wittgenstein and Saussure agree in using ‘grammar’ descriptively, they disagree about ... other matters. One is that Wittgenstein’s grammar has to do with uses of language (discourse conditions and discourse continuation) rather than forms and their combinations (morphology and syntax) ....”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSAY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay Topic:</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay Question</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restate the Question:</td>
<td>interpreting question in your own words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define the general concept</td>
<td>identity the general concept raised in the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Statement:</td>
<td>Brief statement of your main argument in the essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation / Outline:</td>
<td>Points you will make in the essay that will satisfy your argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST BODY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Topic:</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Topic Statement:</td>
<td>The first point you intend to make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and background features/ details / ideas:</td>
<td>You first provide general information and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific evidence:</td>
<td>Details that show where you are drawing your points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the point:</td>
<td>and how it contributes to your argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECOND BODY</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Topic:</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Topic Statement:</td>
<td>The second point you intend to make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and background features/ details / ideas:</td>
<td>You first provide general information and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific evidence:</td>
<td>Details that show where you are drawing your points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the point:</td>
<td>and how it contributes to your argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THIRD BODY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Topic:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Topic Statement:</td>
<td>The third point you intend to make</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Writing a Review Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the review state the author’s name and work(s)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review include the date of publication and publishing company?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review give a clear and powerful statement of the writer’s opinion of the work (i.e., a thesis)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the review geared towards a particular audience?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review summarize the important points of the work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- For fiction: consider plot, character, setting and theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- For nonfiction: consider focus and factual information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- For poetry: consider style, language, and theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is quoted and/or paraphrased material included to support the points and reactions toward the work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review include, if appropriate, background information on the author?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review include, if appropriate, comparisons and connections with other similar works.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is factual information included? Have facts been checked carefully for accuracy?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review’s style establish and communicate the reader’s voice?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review incorporate a rating system with a key that explains the ranking?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the review leave the reader with a sense of whether he/she will want to read the work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the review been carefully proofread? Have all errors in spelling, grammar, and mechanics been corrected?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Version #2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turns</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paragraph #1</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Mention the title, author, source, topic and purpose of the text being reviewed.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;2. Summarise/recount the text. In a fictional text, this can involve retelling the plot. In a news article, this will involve a presentation of the information.</td>
<td>&lt;br&gt;_________________________ is a film about _____________________________. It is directed by ___________________________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paragraph #2</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Initial verdict of the text (a few sentences on strengths and weakness)&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;2. General reasons for your verdict that will establish the criteria you employed to assess the text.</td>
<td>Overall, the film ___________________________.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;First, ___________________________.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Second, ___________________________.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Paragraph #3**<br>1. Introduce the first aspect to be evaluated, such as plot<br>2. Identify strengths and weakness; likes and dislikes<br>3. Provide examples to illustrate your points<br>4. State how the evaluation of this element fits within your overall evaluation. | ___________________________.<br><br>_________________________.<br><br>_________________________.<br><br>_________________________.
## DEBATE RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Claim</th>
<th>Reasoning</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Discussion Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Highly Effective Argument</strong></td>
<td>Student makes a compelling argument that strongly supports a claim, selects relevant evidence that supports that claim, and explains the connection between the evidence and the claim. A student's argument anticipates potential rebuttal(s). Student spontaneously uses academic words and phrases in the argument.</td>
<td>Student spontaneously explains his/her thinking, accurately attributes the ideas of others, and questions, builds on, or rebuts those ideas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>An Effective Argument</strong></td>
<td>Student makes an argument that supports a claim using clear reasoning and relevant evidence. Student uses academic words and phrases in the argument.</td>
<td>Student anticipates what others need to know to understand his/her ideas, and questions or challenges the ideas of others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Developing Argument</strong></td>
<td>Student makes an argument that is not well developed with relevant evidence and reasoning to back up the claim. Student refers to the text to support ideas with prompting by the teacher or other students. Student uses academic words or phrases by relying on prepared sentence starters, sentence frames, or word walls.</td>
<td>Student discusses only his/her own ideas, with some effort to clarify meaning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>An Ineffective Argument</strong></td>
<td>Student states an opinion without reasoning or evidence. Student uses informal and imprecise language.</td>
<td>Student discusses only his/her own ideas, with little effort to clarify meaning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING RUBRIC

**CCSS Writing Standard grades 4-5:** Write opinion pieces on topics or text, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

**CCSS Writing Standard grades 6-8:** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emerging (1)</th>
<th>Developing (2)</th>
<th>Proficient (3)</th>
<th>Exemplary (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Argumentation</strong></td>
<td>The writing presents only a vague or confusing claim.</td>
<td>The writing presents a clear and relatively precise claim but provides little or no evidence or reasoning to support it.</td>
<td>The writing presents a clear claim and provides evidence to support it, but perhaps no clear articulation of the reasoning relating the evidence to the claim.</td>
<td>The writing presents a clear claim, provides evidence to support it, and makes clear the reasoning relating the evidence to the claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>No evidence is presented.</td>
<td>Some appropriate evidence is presented.</td>
<td>Sufficient and compelling evidence is presented.</td>
<td>Sufficient and compelling evidence is presented, and evidence that counters alternative claims is included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Claim, support, conclusion, and structure are absent.</td>
<td>The evidence presented is not linked to the claim; the conclusion simply restates the claim.</td>
<td>The claim, evidence, and reasoning linking them are presented in a logical order, with a conclusion reiterating the reasoning.</td>
<td>The claim, evidence, and reasoning linking them are presented in logical order, and the conclusion effectively strengthens the claim by displaying the relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Academic language forms (including focus words) are used incorrectly, or not at all.</td>
<td>Academic language forms (including focus words) are attempted, but they are sporadic and mostly not correct.</td>
<td>Academic language forms (including focus words) are used frequently and mostly correctly, but not consistently.</td>
<td>Academic language forms (including focus words) are used correctly and consistently, except for cases where conversational language is used for specific effects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“When the boy or grown-up learns what one might call specific technical languages, e.g. the use of charts and diagrams, descriptive geometry, chemical symbolism, etc. he learns more language games. (Remark: the picture we have of the language of the grown-up is that of a nebulous mass of language, his mother tongue, surrounded by discrete and more or less clear-cut language games, the technical languages ... Here the term ‘language game’ is meant to bring into prominence the fact the speaking of language is part of an activity, or a form of life ...”

Ludwig Wittgenstein
"If you understand anything in language, you must understand what the dialogue is, and you must see how understanding grows as the dialogue grows ... For language is discourse, is speaking. It is telling people things and trying to follow them. And that is what you try to understand ... You understand when it adds to your understanding of the discussion. Or of what the discussion is about."

Some Questions to Reflect On

1. How can I support learners to express rich, meaningful sentences?

2. How do I support learners to comprehend rich, meaningful sentences (of a range of complexity)?

3. How do I draw learners’ attention to word choice?

4. How do I draw learners’ attention to different ways to structure an idea? In a sentence? In a text?

5. How can I draw learners’ attention to the conventional structure of “our conversations”?

6. How can I help learners’ utilise this understanding in their own composition and comprehension?
The purpose of the presentation was to:

- emphasise how our sentences allow us to express and understand states of affairs;
- explore the elements of traditional, English grammar;
- allude to elements which add clarity and grace to our sentences;
- outline a child's path toward grammatical competence (and how to support this development);
- address what CANNOT be explained through traditional grammar; and
- provide recommended readings.

Keep Wittgenstein's observation in mind, “grammar does not tell us how language must be constructed in order to fulfil its purpose, in order to have such-and-such an effect on human beings. It only describes and in no way explains the use of signs."

Also, bear in mind that this presentation does not address Halliday's functional grammar.
## Presentation “Cheat Sheet”

### Structures

In traditional grammar, there are four **types** of sentences:

- **Declarative** - are statements that consist of a subject and a predicate to make a claim on the world.
- **Interrogative** - are questions that includes some form of who, what, where, when or how.
- **Imperative** - are commands, such as “close the door” or “describe the experiment”. The subject of the sentence is the implied “you” (e.g. you close the door). You will notice that essay questions are not really question. They are commands, such as “analyse the poem”.
- **Exclamatory** - are exclamations and are set apart by their emphatic tone, such as “He is alive!”

In traditional grammar, there are four **structures** for declarative sentences:

- **Simple** - consist of one independent clause made up of a subject and predicate, such as “Mr Williams walked across the road.”
- **Compound** - consist of at least two independent clauses that are joined by a conjunction, such as “Mr Williams, who is my English teacher, walked across the road, and Mr Black followed him.”
- **Complex** - consist of at least one independent clause with at least one dependent clause, such as “Mr Williams, who is my English teacher, walked across the road, and Mr Black followed him.”
- **Compound-Complex** - consist of at least two independent clauses that are joined by a conjunction and which include at least one dependent clause, such as “Mr Williams, who is my English teacher, walked across the road, and Mr Black followed him.”

In traditional grammar, there are four **three** elements in a sentence:

- **Words** - self-explanatory
- **Phrases** - a group of words which serve the function of a grammatical category, such as prepositional phrase or a noun phrase like “the red car”
- **Clause** - consists of a subject and predicate. An independent clause is a simple sentence, and a dependent clause is a clause that starts with a relative pronoun that links to an independent clause.

### Types of Words/Phrases

In traditional grammar, there are **open classes** of words and **closed classes** of words. **Open classes** grow as the language grows. **Closed classes** are finite. The follows are CLOSED CLASSES:

- **Articles** - including words like the, a, and an
- **Pronouns** - including common pronouns, like I, you, they, we, as well as possessive pronouns like mine, yours, my, their, as well as relative pronouns like that, which, whose.
- **Prepositions** - include all words that indicate position such as on, next to, above, before, below, beside, through. In school, I was told that a preposition was anything you do with a cloud, such as going through a cloud, above a cloud, above a cloud, beneath a cloud.
- **Conjunctions** - are joining words such as and, but, because, or, if, meanwhile, therefore, etc.

**OPEN CLASSES** include:

- **Nouns** - refers to “things” both concrete items and abstract ones like chair, emu, rock, girl, freedom, sadness
- **Verbs** - refers to actions (both concrete items and abstract actions) like jumping, running, stirring, thinking, feeling, resting
- **Adjectives** - words that describe a noun, such as red, deep, beautiful
- **Adverbs** - words that describe an action, such as slowly, quickly, thoroughly, falsely

A phrase might consist of multiple types of words, but its main focus is on a particular grammatical function.

- **Noun phrase** - “the red car” describe a thing (the car)
- **Verb phrase** - walked slowly and carefully describes the action (walking)
- **Prepositional phrase** - “on the pine needle floor on the forest” describes the position of events.
- **Adjectival phrase** - “red as the dawn of the day” collectively provides a description.

Ultimately, we arrange the words and phrases to make statement about the world. We use many types of words. Some hold deep meaning, and others are more functional in nature.

### In Discourse

Some sentences do not comply with the traditional logical order of actor-action-consequence. In particular, there are times when the object of an action becomes the grammatical subject of a sentence. This is known as the passive voice, as illustrated below:

- **Active** - “The boy kicked the ball.”
- **Passive** - “The ball was kicked by the boy.”

At first, English language learners may struggle with the passive voice; that is, they struggle until this pattern is pointed out to them. The **indirect form** is also a unique sentence structure, which is encountered regularly.

- **Direct** - “The president lied to Congress.”
- **Indirect** - “It is believed that the president lied to Congress.” or “Mr Brown said that the president lied to Congress.”

A statement of fact becomes something much more subjective.

Whilst there are many ways to add meaning to a sentence, the following are three categories which might help analysis:

- **Horizontal** - involves adding elements to a sentence in order to expand meaning. For instance, “The car has a dent in it.” can become “The red car that is parked on the sidewalk has a large dent on the bonnet.”
- **Vertical** - involves selecting a more specific or apt word in order to convey more exact or deeper meaning. For instance, “The red sedan that is perched on the sidewalk has a large dent on the bonnet.”
- **Conventional (Rhetorical)** - involves some conventional stylistic element of which the audience is familiar. For instance, “Aghast! You won’t believe what I saw. I just saw a red sedan perched on the sidewalk in front of Gary’s house. It has a large dent in its bonnet, probably from hitting a tree or something.”

A sentence expresses a **sense** and a **meaning**. In concrete sentences, the sense is often clear enough; however, the meaning is caught up in the speaker and listener’s assessment of the context and intention of the utterance. Consequently, one requires much more than formal proficiency to understand a sentence. That said, an understanding of grammatical convention doesn’t hurt. For further insights, please visit: [https://www.theliteracybug.com/commanding-sentences](https://www.theliteracybug.com/commanding-sentences). Please explore and enjoy.
**Presentation “Cheat Sheet”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORDS</th>
<th>SENTENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction</strong>&lt;br&gt;words consist of:&lt;br&gt;* sounds; represented by&lt;br&gt;letters; grouped into&lt;br&gt;syllables; which also feature&lt;br&gt;prefixes (to alter meaning) and&lt;br&gt;suffixes (to indicate function or type).&lt;br&gt;*</td>
<td><strong>How a word mean?</strong>&lt;br&gt;It refers&lt;br&gt;It is associated with&lt;br&gt;It appears in a system/spectrum&lt;br&gt;It indicates judgement (e.g. pretty is not beautiful)&lt;br&gt;It distinguishes&lt;br&gt;It indicates mood&lt;br&gt;It expresses concepts&lt;br&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Presentation “Cheat Sheet”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISCOURSE</th>
<th>TEXT TYPES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Categories</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exchange Types</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrumental - express need; regulatory - direct action</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactional - develop rapport</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal - reinforce feelings, identity</td>
<td>Embedded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heuristic - to gain knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>imaginative - speculate</td>
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<tr>
<td>representational</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>convey facts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Move types**

- Initiating
- Responding
- Deviating

**Function**

- Request …
- Check …
- Give …
- Qualify …
- Clarify …
- Extend …
- Exemplify …
- Repeat …
- Acknowledge
- Reject
- Evaluate
- Reformulate

**Subgenres**

- recount
- narrative
- anecdote
- autobiography
- biography
- history
- sequential
- explanation
- causation
- explanation
- procedure
- procedural
- recount
- descript report
- analytical report
- exposition
- review
- recording
- classifying
- explaining
- contesting
Further Reading
Fish, Stanley. (2011).

How to write a sentence: and how to read one.


Style: lessons in grace and clarity (10th Ed.).

New York: Longman.
Crystal, David (2017).

Making Sense: The Glamorous Story of English Grammar


Tractatus logico-philosophicus.

London: Routledge
Further (more practical) readings


THANK YOU
Slides Available for Download at:


Also, please visit:

https://www.theliteracybug.com/commanding-sentences