

Language Study

The **Language Study** pages aim only at acquainting the students with some terms that are useful when we talk about language and how it works. The entries given here *should not* be treated as teaching items. The information given here *should not* be used for the purpose of evaluating the students' knowledge of grammatical definitions.

These pages are not meant to be read at a stretch. When opportunities of discussing language arise in the course of classroom teaching, the teacher can refer to the relevant entry or entries and also get the students to read them. The information should then be discussed with the help of examples drawn from the textbook or other familiar sources.

Students, too, can refer to this section from time to time. They may find this information useful while –

- (a) correcting their work
- (b) trying to understand a text, and
- (c) using dictionaries and other reference books
- (d) trying to write literary and non-literary compositions on their own.

If necessary, the teacher should show the students how to look up a word in these pages.

Some words in these pages are printed in colour. It means that they have been explained in these pages at the proper place.

abbreviation : a short form of a word, phrase, etc. Examples : *Mr* (Mister), *km* (kilometre/s), *V.I.P.* (very important person), *S.S.C.* (Secondary School Certificate), *etc.* (et cetera - meaning 'and other similar things', 'and the rest'), *WHO* (World Health Organisation).

Abbreviations are mostly used in writing. While reading aloud or in speech, we use the full forms of abbreviations like 'Mr' (Mister) or 'Dr' (Doctor). Some abbreviations are read aloud by pronouncing each individual letter, as for example, *V-I-P*. Some short forms are read as if they form a word. For example, *PIN* is read like the word, 'pin'.

- Note the abbreviations you come across and find their full forms.

act : one of the main parts into which a **play** is divided. A play may have two, three, even five acts or just one act.

active voice : See **voice**.

adjective : a word that tells us something more about a **noun** or **pronoun**. It may

tell us about the shape, size, colour, quality, material, origin, use, or other features of the noun it describes :

- shape : a *round* table, a *square* sheet
- size : The buildings were *huge*; *small* shoes
- colour : a *red* rose; Milk is *white*.
- quality : You are very *kind*; a *strong* medicine
- material : *wooden* chairs, a *silver* spoon
- origin : *Chinese* food, *Indian* birds
- use : *dining* room, *drinking* water

Many adjectives end with : -ful (*useful*), -less (*careless*), -able (*washable*), -y (*salty*), -ous (*famous*, *joyous*), -ive (*active*, *creative*), -al (*practical*, *optical*).

We can use 'very' before most of the adjectives : '*very happy*', '*very colourful*', '*very interesting*'.

Adjectives have **comparative** and **superlative** forms.

Example : big – bigger (comparative), – biggest (superlative).

We usually add ‘-er’, ‘-est’ to short adjectives and use ‘more’ and ‘most’ with longer adjectives :

high – higher – highest
nice – nicer – nicest
famous – more famous – most famous
interesting – more interesting – most interesting

Note that we use ‘the’ before the **superlative** : *the best, the most important.*

Sometimes, we use two or three adjectives together to describe a noun. In such cases, the order in which adjectives are used depends on the meaning. The adjectives that express/show your opinion about something are usually put first. The other adjectives are normally put in the following order :

- size, age, shape, colour, origin, material, use or purpose

Examples : a *nice little* basket, a *brave young* woman, a *big, red, plastic* bag, a *noisy, old, drilling* machine.

- Find phrases where more than two adjectives are used, and note the order in which they are used.

adjective clause : a clause that functions as an adjective and tells us more about a noun.
Example: • This is the house *that Jack built.*

adverb : a word that tells us something more about :

- a **verb** : He runs *fast*. She went *away*. The girl sang *sweetly*. *Suddenly*, the dogs started barking. She did *not* smile.
- an **adjective** : The tea was *too* sweet. The lion was *very* strong.
- another **adverb** : He ran *very* fast.
- a **phrase** or **sentence** : *Luckily*, he remembered the answer.

Adverbs give us information about:

- place, eg., Come *here*. Come *in*.
- time, eg., I saw a movie *yesterday*. I need a pen *now*.
- manner or the way something is done, eg., Read *aloud*. Stand *straight*. Run *fast*.
- degree, eg., The water was *too* hot.
- cause or reason, eg., She was tired and *therefore* unable to study.

Many adverbs end with -ly. Adverbs, too, have **comparative** and **superlative** forms. They are used for comparing the way something is done, the way something happens, etc.

Examples : Who will run *the fastest*?
Walk *more gracefully*.

- Find more examples of the comparative and superlative forms of adverbs.

adverb clause : a clause that functions as an adverb and tells us more about the main verb (action). Examples: • You can go out to play *after you have done your homework*.
• They got wet *because they didn’t carry an umbrella*.

adverbial : a phrase or clause used as an adverb. For example, Put it *on the table*.

alliteration : the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of words in a phrase, sentence, etc. Example : The *green grass grew* all around.

alphabet : a set of letters used for writing the words in a language. The letters have a fixed order in the alphabet. The set of letters we use for writing English is arranged from a to z. It is known as the Roman alphabet.

A, B, C, d, e, f, g, etc. are called letters, not alphabets.

antithesis : a figure of speech in which the same sentence includes a striking contrast between words. Example: *One man’s medicine is another man’s poison.*

antonym : a word that means the opposite of another word. *Strong* is an antonym of *weak*. *Up* and *down* are antonyms.

apostrophe : See **punctuation**.

article : The words ‘a/an’ and ‘the’ are called articles. They are used before a **noun**.

‘The’ is known as the **definite article**. It shows that the noun refers to a particular example of something, eg., I am looking for *the* blue pen. (And not the red one.)

‘A/an’ is called the **indefinite article**. It shows that the noun refers to a general example of something, eg., I want *a* pen. (Any pen.)

a + consonant
a pen

an + vowel
an apple

Before nouns beginning with a **consonant** sound, we use 'a'; and before nouns beginning with a **vowel** sound, we use 'an'.

We do this both when we speak and when we write. Examples : *a lion, a squirrel*, but *an ant, an elephant*.

If there is an adjective before the noun and after the article, the use of a/an depends on that adjective.

Examples: I ate *an egg* but I ate *a boiled egg*.

a story, but *an unending story*.

The definite article is always written as 'the'. But when we speak, we pronounce it as 'ð' before consonant sounds and 'ði' before vowel sounds, eg., 'ð' *lion* but 'ði' *elephant*.

aspect : a form of a verb that shows whether an action is complete or is still continuing. Or, it may show that it happened or was happening in the past but is still relevant. The two aspects are perfect (perfective) and progressive or continuous.

Verb forms show both tense (present, past, future) and aspect (perfect, progressive).

- progressive : be + v-ing

present progressive : They *are going*.

past progressive : They *were going*.

- perfect : have + v-ed/-en

present perfect : They *have gone*.

past perfect : They *had gone*.

- perfect progressive : have + been + v-ing

present perfect progressive : They *have been going*.

past perfect progressive : They *had been going*.

Sometimes all these forms are referred to as only tenses.

autobiography : a book/story that someone writes to tell about their own life.

auxiliary : helping verb used with the main verb.

It helps to show the tense, form questions and negative sentences ; and to show whether

something is possible, necessary, etc. There are two sets of auxiliary verbs.

(a) **be, have, do** :

I *am* going;

They *have* gone:

Did he go?

She *did not* go.

(b) **modal auxiliaries** : auxiliaries like can, should, may, must : It *can* fly; They *should* come back; *May* I come in? She *might* come; A student *must* work hard.

See **modal auxiliary** and **verb**.

biography : a book/story of someone's life written by others.

capitals : See **punctuation**.

characters : persons in a story, film, play, etc.

clause : a group of words that includes a **subject** and a **verb**. A clause can form a complete sentence or be a part of a sentence.

Example : In the sentence 'I went home because it was getting dark' ; there are two clauses : *I went home*, and *because it was getting dark*.

In the above sentence, if you read only 'I went home', it sounds complete. So, it is the main clause.

There are two types of clauses : **main** and **subordinate** :

(a) main clause : A main clause can stand by itself as a complete sentence. Even if you read just the main clause, it makes good sense.

(b) subordinate or dependent clause : It cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence. If you read just the subordinate clause, it does not make good sense. In the above sentence, '*because it was getting dark*' is the subordinate clause. If you read only this clause, you realise that it is incomplete and the sentence includes something else.

Subordinate clauses are further classified into adjective clauses, adverb clauses and noun clauses according to whether they act as adjectives, adverbs or nouns, respectively.

comedy : • a play or film with a happy ending

- entertainment such as a film, play, TV

programme, etc. that make you laugh.

comma : See **punctuation**.

comparative : See **degrees of comparison, adjective, adverb**.

complement : There are two types of complement : **Subject complement** and **object complement**. A subject complement is a word or phrase used after a **verb** and describing the **subject** of the verb. For example, in, 'I am *hungry*', *hungry* is a subject complement.

Other examples : She is *clever*. He is a *teacher*. She became a *doctor*.

An object complement comes after the **object** of a verb and gives us information about the object.

Examples : They made her *secretary*. She found the letter *interesting*.

complex sentence : See **sentence**.

compound sentence : See **sentence**.

compound words : When two or more words are linked together to produce a word with a new meaning, that word is called a compound. Examples : postman, red-headed.

conjunction : a word that joins words, phrases or sentences.

Examples : *and, or, but, because, if*, etc.

consonance : repetition of consonant sounds especially at the end of the words in a phrase or sentence. Example: *Think tank*.

Make collections of the examples of alliteration and consonance.

consonant : a **speech sound** like 'ब', 'श', 'ट', etc., which is not a vowel. A consonant **letter** is a letter that represents a consonant sound, eg., the consonant letter 'c' (सी) stands for the sound 'स्' in 'city' and 'क्' in 'come'.

The consonant letters we use for writing English are :

b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v w x
y z

definite article : 'the'. See **article**.

degrees of comparison : We use different forms of adjectives and adverbs to show

comparisons. They are known as degrees of comparison –

positive : He is **as tall as** his brother.

comparative : He is **taller than** his brother.

superlative : Their sister is **the tallest** amongst the three.

See **adjective** and **adverb**.

determiner : Determiners are words usually used before a noun. They 'determine' or 'specify' that noun. They include articles (a, an, the), numbers and words like: this, that, some, any, each, every, much, many, my, your, their, etc.

dictionary : a book that lists the words in a language in alphabetical order, and explains their meaning, use, pronunciation, etc.

direct object : See **object**.

epic : a long poem about the brave and exciting deeds of great men and women. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are epics.

essay : a short piece of writing about a particular topic.

euphemism : a mild word or expression used for something unpleasant. Example: Use of 'pass away' in place of 'die'.

exclamation : a sound, word, phrase or short sentence that shows sudden and strong emotion. For example, 'Oh!', 'What a surprise!', 'Too bad!'.

figure of speech : a word, phrase, etc. used in an unusual, imaginative way for a better effect. **Simile, metaphor, personification** are figures of speech.

finite verb : Finite verb forms show tense (past/present), number (singular/plural) or person (I **am** ..., You **are** ..., She **is** ..., etc.). They can be the main verb in a sentence—We **study** English. She **likes** mangoes. They **were** happy. He **came** home.

full stop : See **punctuation**.

future : It is the time after the present, the time after now.

- We use 'will' with a verb to show that something will happen in the future, eg., 'She *will tell* us a story *tomorrow*.' 'Next year, you'll be in Std X.'

- With 'I' and 'we', 'shall' is also used, especially in questions: *Shall we go?*
- We can also use (be + going to + verb) to talk about future plans, events, etc., eg., 'I am *going to learn* music in the next vacation'.

gender : the grammatical divisions of masculine, feminine and neuter into which nouns, adjectives, etc. are divided in some languages. English nouns are not grouped according to gender and normally they do not have special endings to show gender. Some exceptions are : actor-actress, prince-princess.

(Compare this with the nouns in your mother tongue.)

Note that the personal pronouns 'he', 'she' and 'it' show masculine, feminine and neuter gender respectively.

- Some nouns can be replaced by both he/she according to the context, eg., cook, teacher, doctor, cousin, singer, student.
- Some nouns can only be replaced by 'he' : king, father, boy. • Some nouns can only be replaced by 'she' : girl, mother, queen.
- Some nouns can be replaced only by 'it' : inanimate nouns like box, tree, table; names of plants and animals, eg., rose, bird, mouse.
- Sometimes, people use he/she for pets or other animals.

gerund : the '-ing' form of a verb, used as a noun. It is also called *verbal noun*.

Examples : I like *shopping*; *Swimming* is my favourite sport.

glossary : a list of difficult words with their meanings, especially one given at the end of a book or passage.

grammar : the study or use of the rules for changing the form of words and combining them to make sentences. Each language has its own grammar or set of rules.

hyperbole : use of exaggeration to achieve an effect. Example: If I can't get a smartphone, I will die.

idiom : a phrase or a sentence that has a special meaning as a whole, which may be

different from the meaning of the individual words.

For example, 'I want to *go through* the book'.

Here, 'go through' means read.

indefinite article : 'a/an'. See [article](#).

indirect object : See [object](#).

infinitive : the basic form of a verb : *come, go, be*. In English, this basic form can be used by itself or with 'to'. Examples : (a) bare infinitive (used by itself) : I can *swim*; You must *come*; He made them *cry*; I let the fish *go*. (b) to infinitive : Who wants *to come*?; I like *to sleep*; She learnt *to ride* a bike ; He asked us *to stand up*.

intonation : the rise and fall of voice that adds meaning to what is said. For example, the voice rises or goes up at the end in '*You need coffee?*' to show that it is a question.

intransitive verbs : verbs that do not need an object are intransitive verbs.

Example: *Dogs bark*.

irony : use of words to imply the opposite of what they mean.

Example: When Kapil broke the cup while washing it, his mother said, 'That's wonderful' !

letter¹ : a written/printed sign that stands for a speech sound. While writing English, we use **capital letters** (A, B, C, ...) and **small letters** (a, b, c, ...).

letter² : a written message that is usually sent by post.

link verb (linking verb) : a verb that connects the subject of a sentence with its complement. Examples: You *look* beautiful; He *is* a doctor; He *is* nice.

Forms of 'be' with the pronouns.

I	am	We	are
	was		were
	(have/had)been		(have/had)been
You	are	You	are
	were		were
	(have/had)been		(have/had)been
He/She/It	is	They	are
	was		were
	(has)been		(have/had)been

metaphor : an imaginative expression that refers to someone/something as another person or thing. It implies that the person or thing has some quality of that other person or thing. The words 'as' or 'like' are not used in a metaphor.

Examples : The child was *a fountain of joy* to them; He is a *gem*; The mango is the *king of fruits*.

modal auxiliary (modal) : a helping verb. The modal auxiliaries are : can, may, shall, will, could, might, should, would, must, ought to, used to, need, dare

- We do not use 'to' before a modal.
- We do not add '-ed' or '-ing' to a modal.
- We can form questions and negative sentences using modals without using the auxiliaries be, have or do.

Examples : *Can you swim? May I drink water? Must he complain? He cannot jump high. You must not cry. One may not like it.*

A modal auxiliary is always followed by an **infinitive**.

Examples : can *sing*, may *go*, shall *write*, etc. See **auxiliary** and **verb**.

Collect examples of sentences where modal auxiliaries are used. Translate them into your mother tongue, keeping in mind the context in which they are used.

noun : a word that is used to name :

- a person (*Rohan, Reshma* as also *girl, doctor, student*)
- an animal (*cow, hare*)
- a place (*Mumbai, mountain, school*)
- a thing (*table, house, milk*)
- an idea/quality (*anger, courage*), etc.

The names given to particular persons or places are known as **proper nouns** (eg., *Anand, Nagpur, Narmada*). The rest are **common nouns** (eg., *boy, city, river, book*).

Common nouns can be further classified into **concrete** and **abstract** nouns. Concrete nouns stand for things that you can actually touch or see.

Examples : *building, lion, plant, spoon*. Abstract nouns stand for ideas, qualities, feelings, etc. that you cannot actually touch or see. Examples : *bravery, wisdom, pity, poverty, thought, childhood, laughter*.

Some nouns stand for groups of things or people. Such a noun is known as a **collective** noun. Examples : a *crowd* of people, a *class* of children, a *herd* of cattle, a *flock* of birds, *lists* of names, *packs* of wolves.

Some nouns refer to something that can be counted, eg., *two spoons, three stars, four ideas*. They are **countable nouns**. Some nouns refer to something that cannot be counted, eg., *light, water, strength*. They are **uncountable nouns**.

A countable noun has two forms — **singular** and **plural**. When it refers to one thing, it is singular, eg., *moon, flower, man, cat*. When it refers to many things, it is plural, eg., *moons, flowers, men, cats*.

Many nouns end with -ness, -ity, -ment, -tion.

noun clause : a clause that functions as a noun. (As the subject, object or complement in a sentence.)

Example: I want to know *what you think*.

novel : a long written story, usually about imaginary characters and events. A novel is usually long enough to fill a book.

object : a word, phrase, or clause in a sentence that refers to the person, thing, etc. affected by the action of the verb.

Examples : She cooked *rice*;

He gave me *a pen*; She bought *a car*.

There are two types of object : **direct** and **indirect**. The **direct object** is directly affected by the action. For example, in 'He gave me *a pen*' ; a pen is the direct object.

Indirect object refers to the person or thing to whom/for whom the action is done. 'He gave *me* a pen', *me* is the indirect object.

Some verbs do not need any objects.

Examples : fly : Birds fly.

rain : It rained heavily.

They are called **intransitive verbs**.

Some verbs need an object/objects.

Examples : read : I read a book.

catch : He caught the ball.

These verbs are known as **transitive verbs**.

onomatopoeia : a word/s imitating the sound of what it refers to – *bang, hiss, splash*, etc.

paragraph : a part or section of a piece of writing. A paragraph starts on a new line. Usually, it has one main idea.

part of speech : In grammar, words are divided into classes known as parts of speech. They are : noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection.

participle : a word formed from a verb by adding ‘-ing’ (present participle) or ‘-ed/-en’ (past participle).

passive voice : See **voice**.

past : it is the time before the present time, the time that has gone by. We use past tense forms of verbs to show actions/ events in the past, eg., ‘She *took* my book yesterday.’ ‘I *was* in Std VII last year.’ ‘Long ago, there *lived* a king.’

pause : a temporary stop in speech. When we read aloud, we take a pause at a comma, semi-colon and full stop.

perfect : See **aspect**.

personification : referring to a thing or quality as if they can think and act like a person. Examples : Flowers danced in the meadow. Jealousy reared its ugly head.

phonetic symbols : symbols that show the different sounds in our speech.

In writing, we use letters to show sounds. But some letters stand for many sounds, for example, the letter ‘c’ stands for both ‘s’ and ‘k’ sounds – nice, city, cut, call.

On the other hand, some of the different letters stand for one and the same sound. The ‘a’ in all, the ‘aw’ in dawn, the ‘o’ in born, all stand for the same sound. The sound ‘f’ is shown by different letters in –fish, cough, graph and puff.

Therefore, sometimes a special system of writing is used in which one symbol (letter) stands for only one sound. These special symbols are called phonetic symbols. They are used in a dictionary to show the pronunciation of words.

phrase : a short, meaningful group of words; a meaningful part of a sentence.

play : a story/piece of writing which actors perform in a theatre. It includes the conversation between the characters and also the stage directions with sound and light effects, that is, description of what happens on the stage. You can perform a play on radio or TV, too.

plural : the form of a **noun**, **pronoun** or **verb** which refers to many persons or things, eg., *children, tigers, caps, we, they*.

In English, we do not use the plural pronoun ‘they’ to refer to an elderly or senior person. We use ‘he’ or ‘she’.

poem : a piece of writing, in which usually there are short lines with rhyming words at the end. Some poems may not have rhyming words at the end. The lines often have rhythm. Poems express deep emotions, memorable experiences or striking images in beautiful, fitting words. There are humorous poems, too.

predicate : a part of a sentence that tells us something about the **subject**. In ‘Birds fly in the sky’, ‘Birds’ is the subject and ‘fly in the sky’ is the predicate.

prefix : a letter or group of letters added to the front of a word to change its meaning and make a new word.

Examples : *un*+tie, *non*+stop, *dis*+like, *mis*+lead, *super*+man, *over*+eat, *mini*+bus, *counter*+attack, *inter*+national, *re*+wind, *tri*+angle, *vice*+president.

preposition : a word/group of words used before a noun or pronoun to show place, time, position, etc. Examples : *in* the park, *on* the table, *at* home, *from* Monday to Friday, *after* 5 pm, *in front of* the school, etc.

present : the time now. We use the present tense forms of verbs to show the actions/ events that are happening now, eg., She *goes* to school. It *looks* beautiful.

progressive : See **aspect**.

pronoun : a word that is used instead of a noun. The pronouns in English are *I, we, you, he, she, it, they* and their forms like *my, mine, me*.

pronunciation : the particular way in which words are said.

prose : written language in the ordinary form, not in the form of poems. Examples of prose are passages, stories, reports, etc.

proverb : a short, well-known sentence or phrase that gives advice or tells you what is generally true. For example, '*A stitch in time saves nine*' means 'If one does something in time or immediately, it saves a lot of work later'. A proverb is also known as a **saying**.

pun : a play on words based on their different meanings, for a humorous effect.

Example: Writing with a broken pencil is **pointless**.

Punctuation

In writing, we show words and sentences separately. We also show whether a sentence is a question or an exclamation or a statement. We show what each person has said in the course of conversation. We show these and many other things with the help of certain marks. Punctuation is a system of using these marks in writing. We use them to separate or specify certain items.

apostrophe : ', The apostrophe is a punctuation mark. It is used with 's' (or by itself) to show that a thing or a person belongs to somebody.

Examples : • Raju's toys
• My brother's bat • Her friend's father
• the cow's tail • the princess's ring
• a week's holiday

– Note that 's is used mainly with the names of living things and also in some phrases denoting time. Normally, it is not used with non-living things. We say –

• '*the leg of the table*' and not '*the table's leg*'.

• '*the surface of the wall*' and not '*the wall's surface*'.

With the pronoun 'it', we use only s and not 's.

Examples : *its horns, its cover*.

– With a plural noun ending with 's', we use only the apostrophe and not 's.

Examples : *Boys' School, rabbits' ears*.

– We can use either only ' or 's with names ending in 's'.

Examples : *Suhas's bag or Suhas' bag*.

• The apostrophe is also used to show that a letter / letters have been omitted.

Examples : *I'm* (I am), *He'll* (He will). It's means 'it is' or 'it has'.

• The apostrophe is sometimes used to show the plural of letters and numbers. Example : Dot your *i's* and cross your *t's*.

capital letters : Capitals or capital letters are used –

• to begin a sentence :

It is raining ; *Birds* fly ; *What's* your name? ;

How nice! *Go* home.

• to begin each line of a poem :

Into the sunshine,

Full of the light,

Leaping and flashing

From morn till night!

• to begin a proper noun and words derived from a proper noun : *Sushma, George, English, Indian, Himalaya, Pune*.

• In titles of books, films, stories, etc. : *Balbharati, Sleeping Beauty, The Last Leaf*.

• In some abbreviations : *B.A., Smt., PTO*

The pronoun 'I' and the exclamation 'O' are always in capital.

colon : : A colon is used –

• to introduce a list or examples :

– We need the following : a pen, a pencil, a ruler and a piece of paper.

– There are three types of volcanoes : active, dormant and extinct.

• between two closely connected sentences.

- to introduce a quotation, the speech of a character in a play.

comma : [,] Commas show a slight pause. They are used –

- to separate words in a list :
 - There were lions, tigers, horses, monkeys and dogs.
- to separate **phrases** or **clauses** :
 - ‘By the way, since you are interested in these little problems, and since you were good enough to record some of my experiences, you may be interested in this.’
- in writing conversations :
 - “Come here,” she said.
 - He said, “That’s right!”
- to separate an introductory word or phrase that applies to the whole sentence.
As a result, they lost the match.
- before or after the word or words used to address someone:
 - Elementary, my dear Watson!
 - Daddy, I have a question.

dash : [–] It is used to separate parts of a sentence :

- She was counting something in a very low voice – almost a whisper.
- Sometimes it is used in place of the colon.

exclamation mark : [!] It is used after an interjection or exclamation :

- Congratulations !
- Wish you all the best!
- Shocking!

full stop : [.] It is also known as ‘period’. It shows a longer pause. It is used :

- at the end of a statement or order :
 - Dogs are loyal.
 - Come in.
- in some abbreviations : B.Sc.

hyphen : [–] It is used to connect the parts of a compound word: double-click, easy-going.

It is also used to show that a word continues on the next line.

question mark : [?] It is used at the end of a question.

- What time is it?
- Do you know the answer?
- Why don’t you join us?

quotation marks : [‘ ’] They are also known as inverted commas. They are used :

- to mark a quotation, or a specially used word or phrase.
- Double quotation marks are used in writing conversations.

semi-colon : [;] It shows a pause. It is used to separate clauses, especially those which are NOT joined by a conjunction.

question : a sentence or phrase that you use to get information or to ask for something, etc.

register : language used in a particular context or subject matter.

rhyme¹ : a short poem or song for children.

rhyme² : If two words rhyme, they end with the same sound. For example, the word ‘king’ rhymes with ‘ring’ but you cannot rhyme ‘pack’ with ‘book’.

rhyme scheme : pattern of rhymes used in a poem at the end of lines in each stanza. This pattern of rhymes or rhyme scheme is shown with the help of letters of the alphabet as *aabb* or *abab*, etc.

rhythm : a regular repeated pattern of sounds or movement.

scene : a part of a play or film. The place and time of action (whatever is happening in the play or film) does not change in the same scene.

sentence : A group of words that expresses a complete idea — a statement, a question or a command.

Examples : • *My elder brother is in college.*

• *Do you know this address?* • *Be quick.*

Sentences can be classified into three types – simple, compound and complex. A

simple sentence is one that has only one

subject and one predicate. It has only one finite verb. Example: • *Margie was hurt.* Compound and complex sentences have two or more clauses.

A sentence made of two or more main or independent clauses is **compound sentence**. Example: • *Open your books and start reading the poem.* • *I called him, but he did not stop.*

A **complex sentence** consists of one main or independent clause and one or more subordinate (dependent) clauses.

Example: • *I went out because I wanted to play with my friends.*

These subordinate or dependent clauses cannot make independent sentences.

short story : a short written story about imaginary characters and events.

simile : an imaginative comparison of two different things which have something in common. A simile always includes the words 'as' or 'like'.

Examples : as playful as a kitten
as lovely as a flower.

simple sentence : See **sentence**.

singular : the form of a **noun**, **pronoun** or **verb** which refers to one person or thing, eg., *child, tiger, cup, I, it, he, she.*

sound : a sound is something that you hear.

stanza : A stanza is a part of a poem. The lines in a stanza usually have rhyming words at the end. Separate stanzas in a poem are shown by more space/distance between them, or by changing the arrangement of lines.

statement : a statement is something that you state, that is, say or write to give definite information. eg., *'The sky is blue.'*

stress : Stress is the extra force used when pronouncing or saying a **word** or **syllable**. For example, in the word '**Eng**lish', the syllable '**Eng**' is stressed. In the sentence, 'Say it in **Eng**lish!' the word English is stressed.

subject¹ : The subject of a sentence is the part which names the person, thing, etc. that

we speak about. The remaining part of the sentence is known as **predicate**.

subject² : a word or phrase in a sentence that shows who or what does the action (the action stated by the verb).

Example : *My mother* saw a peacock in the garden.

The glass fell from the table.

The subject usually comes first in a sentence.

The subject is left out in commands :

Example : Go home.

The **singular** or **plural** form of the **verb** depends on the subject:

She was sleeping. All the girls were sleeping.

Monica likes mangoes. Monica and her friends like mangoes.

He is going home. They are going home.

Raju has a sister. They have a cousin.

suffix : a letter or group of letters added at the end of a word to make another word.

Examples : cook+er, act+or, book+let, child+hood

friend+ship, king+dom, care+ful, read+able,

act+ion : action, simple+fy : simplify, scare+y : scary,

perfect+ion : perfection.

Sometimes, the last letter/letters of the word may be changed/dropped while adding a suffix.

superlative degree : See **degrees of comparison**.

syllable : a part of a word. There is one vowel sound in each syllable. It may have one or more consonant sounds at the beginning or at the end. The syllables in some words are shown here : a-go (ago), ac-tion (action), crea-ture (creature), jo-ker (joker), ex-pla-na-tion (explanation).

Words like *no, cat, ask, torn, school* have one syllable.

synonym : two or more words from the same language that have the same or more or less the same meaning :

good-nice-pretty, shut-closed-sealed.

tense : the form of a verb which shows the time at which an action happens — the **past** (She *went*), the **present** (She *goes*) or the **future** (She *will go*). See **aspect**.

thesaurus : a type of dictionary that lists words according to their meaning. Words and phrases with similar meaning are put together in a thesaurus. It is very useful for writers.

title : the name of a book, poem, story, picture, etc.

tragedy : • a play or film with a sad ending.

transitive verbs : Verbs that need an object are called transitive verbs.

Example: He *wrote* a poem.

verb : a word or group of words that shows action :

— what people or things do and what happens to them (*write, fall, float*).

— A verb may also describe a happening : It *rained* ; It *became* dark, or

— a state : She *was* unhappy.

Verbs have different forms that show **tenses**, the time of the action to which the verb refers. (**future**, **past** and **present**.)

Verbs have singular and plural forms only in the case of the present tense : *comes* (singular), *come* (plural).

- Note that we do not use singular forms with 'I' and 'you': *I come, You smile*; and NOT *I comes, You smiles*.

The verbs **be** (am/are, is/are, was/were, being, been), **have** (has, have, having, had) and **do** (does, do, doing, did, done) can be used as main verbs in a sentence.

Examples :

- be: I *am* twelve years old. They *were* ready.
- have : I *have* a brother. The dinosaur *had* a long tail.
- do : *Do* your best. She *did* some work.

These verbs are also used with the main verbs in a sentence to show certain

things. Then, they are called **auxiliary** or **helping** verbs.

- 'Be + main verb' shows that the action is not complete; it goes on, eg., I *am* running./It *is* raining. They *were* playing. (The present and the past progressive respectively.)

- 'Have + main verb' shows that the action about which we are talking now, is/was complete, eg., I *have* done my homework. She *had* read the book. (The present and the past perfect respectively.)

- 'Do' is used with the main verb –
(a) to form questions: *Do* you *know* the answer?

Did you *see* the bird?

What *do* you *want*?

What *did* the queen *tell* them?

- (b) to form negative sentences : We *did not go* back.

'Be' and 'have' auxiliaries can also form questions and negatives. 'Do' is not needed when these are used.

Examples :

- (a) Questions : *Are* you *writing* a story?

Have you *written* this?

Why *have* you *come* back?

- (b) Negatives : I *was not feeling* well.

She *had not seen* the book.

There are other verbs like *can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should, must, ought to, used to*, etc. which show whether something is possible, allowed, necessary, etc. These are known as modal verbs or **modal auxiliaries**. They, too, are used as auxiliaries with the main verbs.

Examples : I *can* swim.

You *may* come in. You *should* not work too hard. *Must* you go? See **tense**, **aspect**, **auxiliary**.

verse : • poems in general, or

- a group of lines forming a unit in a poem or song, eg., a song with four verses.

voice : the form of a verb that shows whether the subject of a sentence does an action (active voice) or has an action done to it (passive voice).

Examples: The policeman *stopped* the traffic. (active voice)

The traffic *was stopped* by the policeman. (passive voice)

Note that the **object** in the active sentence becomes the **subject** of the passive sentence and the verb form includes a form of 'be' + past participle.

We normally use the passive voice to emphasise what happened, happens, etc. rather than 'who' or 'what' does the action. In the passive sentence, the 'doer' of the action may or may not be mentioned. We use 'by' before it, when it is mentioned :

The nuts were cracked.

The nuts were cracked *by a squirrel*.

The nuts were cracked *by a squirrel with its teeth*.

vowel : a **speech sound** you make without closing any part of your mouth or throat. For example, 'अ', 'आ'. A vowel **letter** is a letter of the alphabet that stands for a vowel sound.

The vowel letters are : *a, e, i, o, u*. The letter 'y' too, sometimes stands for a vowel.

Note that one letter may stand for different sounds in different words. For example, the same vowel letter 'a' stands for different vowel sounds in the words : *all, ate, ant, arm*, etc.

word : a group of sounds/letters that has meaning. A word is a unit of language. A word is written by leaving spaces on both the sides.

Many times, new words are formed using different processes. They are affixation – adding a prefix or suffix to another word. (b) conversion – changing the class of a word without adding a prefix or suffix. Example: 'run' (verb) and 'run' (noun). (c) compounding – joining two or more words to produce a word with a new meaning. Example: tea + pot = teapot.

There are also certain other processes of word formation such as –

(a) forming reduplicatives by joining two similar sounding elements.

Example: *tick-tock*

(b) clipping a word.

Example: photography - photo, telephone - phone

(c) forming acronyms or new words from the initial letters of words.

Example: *TV* (television), *ISRO* (Indian Space Research Organisation.)

