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# SPAG Definitions

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A Reference Guide for Parents

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	Feature	Definition	Example
<b>PARTS OF A SENTENCE</b>	Subject	<b>The who or what in a clause that is performing the verb.</b>	<u>The girl</u> ran home.  The apple was pecked by a <u>bird</u> .
	Object	<b>The who or what in a clause that is acted upon by a verb.</b>	The girl ran <u>home</u> .  The <u>apple</u> was pecked by a bird.
	Phrase	<b>A group of words that <u>does not</u> contain a verb.</b>  <i>(Also see Noun Phrase, Adverbial Phrase and Prepositional Phrase.)</i>	the shy girl  in the deep, dark forest  at the beginning of the week
	Clause	<b>A group of related words containing a subject and a verb.</b> The subject can be implicit.  <i>Main Clause</i> A group of words containing a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.  <i>(for Subordinate Clause and Relative Clause see <b>Subordinating Conjunctions</b>)</i>	the dog was barking  which caught it  <u>It was raining but the sun was shining.</u> (two <u>main</u> clauses)  The man told me <u>that it was true.</u> (one main clause containing a <u>subordinate</u> clause)
	Sentence	<i>Simple Sentence</i> <b>Has one main clause (subject and verb)</b>  <i>Compound Sentence</i> <b>Has main clauses that are linked by a co-ordinating conjunction.</b> Both clauses carry equal weight.  <i>Complex Sentence</i> <b>Has 2 or more clauses, in which one clause is dependent on the other (eg. a main and subordinate clause).</b> The clauses are linked in a way that shows interrelationship.	The boy ran away.  The boy ran away and all the dogs barked.  The boy ate alone because all the children ran away.
	Statement	<b>A sentence that declares (states) something that is true or false.</b>	The sun is blue.  I am going to the beach.

	Exclamation	<p><b>A sentence (so it contains a verb) that begins with <i>how</i> or <i>what</i> and ends in an exclamation mark.</b> If it does not contain a verb (eg. How lovely!) it is an exclamatory phrase.</p>	<p>What a hot day it is! How colourful you are!</p>
	Question	<p><b>A sentence that could be responded to and ends in a question mark.</b></p>	<p>Where are we going? Who are you?</p>
	Command	<p><b>A sentence that contains an imperative verb which means the sentence requires an action in response (it asks for something to be done).</b> The subject can be implied (eg. a sentence that ‘talks’ to <u>you</u>) or it can be explicit.</p>	<p>Go away! Adam, put that down! Cut the carrot diagonally.</p>
	Parenthesis	<p><b>A word or phrase that is added into a sentence to give additional information.</b> Brackets, dashes or commas are used.</p> <p>Parenthesis does not have to appear in the middle of a sentence.</p>	<p>The boat (<u>a wooden canoe</u>) won the competition. The teacher, <u>a young woman</u>, taught the class. Her latest song – <u>Wild Thoughts</u> – was number one. They will be taking Jamie, <u>a young man from London</u>.</p>

<b>WORD TYPES &amp; CLASSES</b>	Noun	<p><b>Words that name a person, place, thing or idea.</b> These can be described as either Common or Proper. <i>Test for common nouns: use 'a' or 'the' in front of it.</i></p> <p><i>Singular Nouns</i> A noun that refers to one person, place thing or idea.</p> <p><i>Plural Nouns</i> A noun that refers to more than one person, place, thing or idea.</p> <p><i>Common Nouns</i> A noun that describes types of objects or concepts</p> <p><i>Proper Nouns</i> A noun that describes people, places or 'times'.</p> <p><i>Collective Nouns</i> A noun that describes a group. (can be considered plural)</p> <p><i>Abstract Nouns</i> A noun that describes a feeling or concept you cannot touch or see.</p>	<p>cat, tree, kitchen, Monday, Jane, Paulton, bunch, team, swarm, truth, hope, guys, dogs</p> <p>cat, Jane, hope</p> <p>guys, dogs, (some nouns are both singular and plural e.g. sheep)</p> <p>cat, tree, kitchen</p> <p>Monday, Jane, Paulton</p> <p>bunch, team, swarm</p> <p>truth, hope</p>
	Noun Phrase	<p><b>A phrase (group of words) built around a noun that <u>does not</u> contain a verb.</b></p> <p><i>Expanded Noun Phrase</i> Longer noun phrases that give extra detail, with modifying adjectives, nouns and prepositional phrases.</p>	<p><u>The tall girl</u> walked away. <u>Adult foxes</u> like to run.</p> <p><u>Almost all healthy adult foxes in this area</u> can jump.</p>
	Pronoun	<p><b>Words to replace a noun.</b></p> <p><i>Singular Pronouns</i> Pronouns to describe one thing or person.</p> <p><i>Plural Pronouns</i> Pronouns to describe more than one thing or person.</p>	<p>it, you, she, he, I, mine, yours, his, they, we, ours, their, who, which, that</p> <p>it, you, she, he, I, mine, yours, his</p> <p>they, we, ours, their</p>

	<p><i>Possessive Pronouns</i> Pronouns to show possession.</p> <p><i>Relative Pronouns</i> Pronouns that relate/refer to the subject (noun). (also see 'Relative Clause'.)</p>	<p>his, ours, theirs</p> <p>who, which, that</p>
Determiner	<p><b>Words to introduce a noun or noun phrase.</b></p> <p><i>Article</i> The most common determiners</p>	<p>a, an, the, every, this, those, one, some, many</p> <p>a, an, the</p>
Adjective	<p><b>Words to describe a noun or pronoun.</b></p>	<p>A <u>shy</u> child, <u>blue</u> notebook and <u>rotten</u> apple.</p> <p>The jumper was <u>enormous</u>.</p>
Verb	<p><b>Words to describe an action or state.</b> <i>Test: can you change when it was done?</i></p> <p><i>Auxiliary Verb</i> Verbs used with main verbs</p> <p><i>Modal Verb</i> A type of auxiliary verb (it's used with another verb) which can express meanings such as certainty, ability, or obligation</p> <p><i>Imperative Verb</i> A type of verb that creates an imperative sentence (a sentence that gives an order or command).</p>	<p>The film <u>was</u> exciting. (state)</p> <p>Jane <u>baked</u> a cake. (action)</p> <p>be, have, do, might, should</p> <p>I <u>am</u> going to the shops.</p> <p>will, would, can, could, may, might, shall, should, must, ought</p> <p><u>Give</u> me that pen.</p> <p>John, <u>put</u> that down!</p>
Subjunctive Verbs THEY GET THEIR OWN BOX!	<p>Used to set a formal mood. It expresses things that could or should happen and can express wishes, hopes, commands, demands or suggestions.</p> <p><b>1) Use of be and were instead of am, is, are, was.</b></p>	<p>I advise We demand You suggested It is important</p> <p>If only I <u>were</u> ten years younger. (instead of was) I demand they <u>be</u> released. (instead of are)</p>

		<b>2) Skips the -s on the verb when using he, she, it.</b>	I suggested he <u>face</u> up to the bully. (instead of faces)
Adverb (Adverbial)	<p><b>Single words that modify (change or add to the meaning of) verbs, adjectives and adverbs</b> (and clauses). Note: they <u>do not</u> modify nouns.</p> <p><i>Ad verb - adds to the verb</i></p> <p><i>-ly adverbs</i> Adjectives with the suffix -ly to modify into adverbs.</p> <p><i>Express time, place or cause.</i></p> <p><i>Indicate degrees of possibility</i></p> <p><i>Linking across paragraphs</i> Using adverbs of time, place and number. <b>Time Connectives</b></p>	<p>He moved <u>slowly</u> down the path. (modifying verb – move)</p> <p>That match was <u>really</u> exciting. (modifying adjective – exciting)</p> <p>We don't get to dance <u>very often</u>. (often modifies verb – dance AND very modifies adverb – often)</p> <p><u>Fortunately</u>, it didn't rain. (modifying clause – it didn't rain)</p> <p>bravely, loudly</p> <p>then, next, soon, therefore</p> <p>perhaps, surely</p> <p>later, nearby, secondly</p>	
Adverbial Phrases	<p><b>A phrase (group of words) that modifies the meaning of a verb or clause.</b> It explains how, where or when something happens.</p> <p><i>Fronted Adverbials</i> Adverbial phrases/adverbs that begin a sentence followed by a comma.</p>	<p>The teacher screamed <u>in front of the mirror</u>.</p> <p>The squirrel climbed <u>at the break of day</u>.</p> <p><u>Carefully</u>, the frog jumped.</p> <p><u>In the deep, dark jungle</u>, the lion prowled.</p>	
Preposition	<p><b>Words that show a nouns relationship to another word in the sentence.</b> Shows the <b>position</b> in space or time.</p>	<p>behind, throughout, on, into, yesterday, this morning.</p>	
Prepositional Phrase	<p><b>A phrase (group of words) built around a preposition.</b> <u>Prepositional</u> phrases can act both as adjectives and adverbs</p>	<p>The sweet potatoes <u>in the vegetable bin</u> are rotten. (acting as an adjective)</p>	

		and is considered a type of adverbial phrase.	<u>Before class</u> , Josh went for a walk. (acting as an adverb)
<b>Conjunction</b>	<b>Words that join together phrases or clauses.</b> <i>Junction of phrases or clauses</i>	<i>Subordinating Conjunctions</i> Conjunctions that show cause and effect.  <i>Co-ordinating Conjunctions</i> Conjunctions that join main clauses (sentences).	when, because, if, so, while, after, and, but, or  when, because, if, so, while, after  and, but, or
Subordinate Clause	<b>A clause that is dependent of a main clause and begins with a subordinating conjunction.</b> This clause does not make sense on its own.		The frog jumped <u>because the boy splashed the water.</u>  <u>Before washing his hands</u> , the boy found some soap.
Relative Clause	<b>A type of <u>subordinate clause</u> that begins with a relative pronoun.</b> Commas go around the clause.		<i>Relative Pronouns:</i> who, which, that, when, whom  The dog, <u>who was barking</u> , jumped up at the window.
Simile	<b>A figure of speech that compares two things by using the words 'like' or 'as'.</b>		White as a ghost.  Swims like a fish.
Metaphor	<b>A figure of speech that describes a place, subject or object as something unlikely and not literal.</b>		Drowning in debt.  The world is a stage.

<b>TENSES &amp; VOICES</b>	Simple Tense	<b>A verb is used in its present or past form without any other verbs modifying it.</b>	Jane <u>works</u> hard. (present)  Bill <u>jogged</u> to school. (past)
	Progressive Tense	<b>Used to describe actions happening over a period of time. The verb (always in its present tense with a suffix of –ing) is accompanied by a ‘to be’ verb.</b>  <i>Progressive Verbs</i> Refers to the verbs used to indicate the progressive tense.	am, are, is + verb-ing (present) was, were + verb-ing (past)  I <u>am walking</u> home. (present)  Dave <u>was eating</u> an apple. (past)
	Perfect Tense	<b>Used to describe actions that are/have been completed. The verb (always in its past tense) is accompanied by a ‘have’ verb.</b>  <i>Perfect Verbs</i> Refers to the verbs used to indicate the perfect tense.	have, has + past verb (present) had + past verb (past)  I <u>have eaten</u> cake. (present)  They <u>had danced</u> all night. (past)
	Present Perfect Progressive Tense	<b>A combination of both the progressive and perfect tenses. Used to describe actions happening over a period of time and are/have been completed. The verb (always in its present tense with a suffix of –ing) is accompanied by a ‘have’ verb and the ‘to be’ verb - been.</b>	have, has + verb-ing (present) had + verb-ing (past)  It <u>has been</u> raining. (present)  Sue <u>had been practising</u> for an hour when I called. (past)
	Active Voice	<b>A sentence in which the subject (a noun) <i>actively</i> performs the verb.</b> Subject mentioned first	Jane caught the ball.  Mum baked a cake yesterday.
	Passive Voice	<b>A sentence in which the object (a noun) is <i>passively</i> having something done to it.</b> Object mentioned first	The ball was caught by Jane.  A cake was baked by Mum yesterday.

<b>PUNCTUATION</b>	Capital Letter	<b>Used to begin a sentence, important words in titles, proper nouns, acronyms, and *contractions.</b> *see example	London, Lovington C of E Primary School  SciFi = Science Fiction
	Full Stop	<b>Used at the end of a sentence and abbreviations.</b> If an abbreviation ends a sentence a second full stop is not required.	Dec. = December  Mr.
	Comma	<b>Used:</b> <i>to separate items in a list</i>  <i>after a fronted adverbial (see fronted adverbial)</i>  <i>after a reporting clause when beginning speech</i>  <i>to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity</i>  <i>to show parenthesis</i> see parenthesis	I would like bacon, cheese, lettuce and tomato.  In the forest, I ran for my life.  Jane said, "Hello."  Let's eat Grandma. Let's eat, Grandma.  The teacher, <u>a young woman</u> , taught the class.
	Apostrophe	<b>Used:</b> <i>to show contraction</i>  <i>to show singular possession</i> Belongs to a singular noun. Add an apostrophe and –s (only add an apostrophe if the noun ends in –s)  <i>to show plural possession</i> Belongs to a plural noun. Add just an apostrophe if it ends in –s (add an apostrophe and –s if the plural noun does not end in –s)	can't, she's, I'll  Liam = Liam's hat. Cat = The cat's hat. Jones = Mrs Jones' hat.  Actresses = The two actresses' roles. Guys = The guys' night out. Children = The children's slide.
Exclamation Mark	<b>Used to show emotion, emphasis or surprise.</b> Can be used at the end of a statement, command or exclamation.	That is amazing! (statement)  Go away! (command)  How lovely it is! (exclamation)	

	Question Mark	<b>Used at the end of a sentence to show a direct or rhetorical question.</b>	Will you go with me?  I wonder if he would go with me. <b>OR</b> I wonder: would he go with me?
	Inverted Commas	<p><b>Used to show direct speech.</b> Indirect speech is reporting what someone says without quoting them directly (no “ “ required).</p> <p><i>Full Speech Punctuation</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Change in speaker = new line.</li> <li>2) Begin speech with “</li> <li>3) Begin each sentence of speech with a capital letter.</li> <li>4) End the speech with a . , ! or ?</li> <li>5) Include a reporting clause</li> </ol> <p><i>Reporting Clause</i> If beginning speech it begins with a capital letter and a comma is required after. If ending speech it begins with a lower case letter and a full stop is required after. If the reporting clause is in the middle of the same speaker’s speech it begins with a lower case letter and can either end in a , followed by “ then lower case letter or end in a . followed by “ and a capital letter.</p>	<p>“I am hungry” – <i>Direct speech</i></p> <p>He told his friends how excited he was. – <i>Indirect speech</i></p> <p>“I am so hungry,” said Jane. “Me too. I am famished!” replied her sister. “What should we get?” asked Jane, “maybe, sushi?” “I don’t like sushi,” her sister said. “It’s disgusting!” Jane replied, “Well I fancy sushi now, so that is what I am going to get.”</p>
	Ellipsis	<b>Used when is a missing word or phrase and to express hesitation, changes of mood, suspense, or thoughts trailing off.</b>	Pride is one thing, but what happens if she ...?  "I really... don't ... understand this," he panted.
	Brackets	<b>Can be used to show parenthesis.</b>	The boat ( <u>a wooden canoe</u> ) won the competition.

	Dash	<p><b>Used:</b> <i>to show parenthesis</i></p> <p><i>to mark the boundary between independent clauses.</i></p>	<p>Her latest song – Wild Thoughts – was number one.</p> <p>She might come to the party - you never know.</p>
	Hyphen	<p><b>Used to join two or more words together to avoid ambiguity.</b></p>	<p>man eating shark man-eating shark</p> <p>recover re-cover</p>
	Bullet Points	<p><b>Used to list information.</b> If the text that follows the bullet point is not a proper sentence, it does not need to begin with a capital letter or end with a full stop. However, if you choose to begin one bullet point with a capital letter they all should for consistency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text books</li> <li>• scissors</li> <li>• tray labels</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will buy text books.</li> <li>• I will borrow the scissors.</li> <li>• You will laminate tray labels.</li> </ul>
	Colon	<p><b>Used:</b> <i>to introduce an item or list (avoid using after a verb)</i></p> <p><i>between independent clauses when the second sentence explains, illustrates, paraphrases, or expands on the first sentence</i></p>	<p>Ingredients:</p> <p>He got what he worked for: he really earned that promotion.</p>
	Semi-colon	<p><b>Used:</b> <i>to mark the boundary between independent clauses</i></p> <p><i>in descriptive lists</i></p> <p><i>within lists when commas are used within the items of the list</i></p>	<p>Call me tomorrow; you can give me an answer then.</p> <p>At the circus we saw a clown juggling with swords and daggers; a lion who stood on a ball; a fire eater with flashing eyes; and an eight year old acrobat.</p> <p>You should choose ham, chicken, or char-grilled vegetable sandwiches; cups of tea, Bovril, or coffee; or red wine.</p>

<b>SPELLING</b>	Root Word	<b>A word in its simplest form, to which prefixes and suffixes can be added to change the meaning.</b>	unemployment employ = root word un = prefix ment = suffix
	Prefix	<b>Letters added to the beginning of a word to modify its meaning.</b> All prefixes hold meaning by themselves; however they are not considered words.	unhappy happy = root word un = prefix
	Suffix	<b>Letters added to the end of a word to modify its meaning.</b> All suffixes hold meaning by themselves; however they are not considered words.	tasteless taste = root word less = suffix
	Compound Word	<b>A word containing two root words.</b>	blackboard, daydream, outgrow, bone-dry
	Word Families	<b>A group of words that are related to each other.</b>  <i>Common root word.</i>  <i>Common feature.</i>	help, helpful, helper  cat, mat, hat, pat
	Antonym	<b>Two words with opposite meanings.</b>	hot – cold
	Synonym	<b>Two words with the same/similar meanings.</b>	talk - speak
	Homophone	<b>Two words that sound exactly the same, but are spelled differently and have different meanings.</b>	hear, here  some, sum
	Homonym	<b>Two words that are spelled and sound exactly the same, but have different meanings.</b>	Has he <u>left</u> yet? Yes – he went through the door on the <u>left</u> .  The noise a dog makes is called a <u>bark</u> . Trees have <u>bark</u> .
	Idiom	<b>A group of words which together do not hold their typical meanings.</b>	over the moon = very happy