

Figurative language

Figurative language is a type of descriptive language that isn't used literally. It uses words to compare something to something else or appeal to the imagination of the reader. The four main types of figurative language are similes, metaphors, hyperbole and personification.

metaphor

A metaphor compares two things by saying one of them **is** the other.

The sky was a glittery blanket.

The sun is a creature of habit.

The trees were rows of battle-worn soldiers.

The snow was a pure white blanket coating the world.



simile

A simile compares two things using the words 'like' or 'as'

Her eyes shone **like** diamonds.

The stars were scattered across the sky **like** grains of sugar.

Her eyes were **as** wide **as** saucers.

The lake was **as** clear **as** glass.

hyperbole

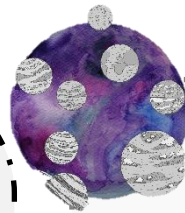
Hyperbole is over-exaggeration to make a point. Similes and metaphors can be hyperbole.

The fire spread at a million miles an hour.

There was enough food to feed an army.

He's about a thousand years old.

The pyramids have been around since time began.



personification

Personification gives human qualities to non-human things.

The stars danced across the night sky.

The volcano unleashed its anger in a burning avalanche of lava.

The ship steeled itself for battle.

The branches scratched cruelly at his face.

Speech punctuation

If you are writing a simple sentence and a reporting clause, the speech can go before or after the reporting clause.

Speech before the reporting clause

"Hello," said Colin.

"How are you?" asked Lisa.

"What a horrible day it is!"
exclaimed Jack.

Speech after the reporting clause

Colin said, "Hello."

Lisa asked, "How are you?"

Jack exclaimed, "What a horrible
day it is!"

Punctuating split dialogue depends on whether you have either one sentence or two being spoken.

The reporting clause is
interrupting the sentence.

**This is absolutely
unbelievable.**

"This," announced Timothy, "is
absolutely unbelievable!"

The reporting clause is
between two sentences.

**I really can't believe it. It just
isn't fair.**

"I really can't believe it," said
Oliver. "It just isn't fair."

Adding description to the reporting clause

"What are you doing?" asked Liam, **raising an eyebrow.**

"I'm really sorry," Callie whispered quietly, **scuffing her shoe along the floor.**

"That was weird," said Marcus, **scratching his head.** "I'm not sure what
happened."

Functions of sentences

Sentences fall into four different types: statement, question, exclamation and command.

Statements are sentences that tell you something. They contain a verb and a noun, and usually end with a full stop.

My cat is brown.
I play football on Saturdays.

Questions are sentences that ask something. They end with a question mark.

What is your name?
How old are you?

Commands are sentences that give an order. They are usually found in instructions and start with an imperative verb.

Add some water.
Stir the mixture.

Exclamations are sentences beginning with 'what' or 'how'. They are full sentences that include verbs and end with an exclamation mark.

What a lovely surprise this is!
What wonderful children they are!

Expanded noun phrases

An expanded noun phrase is a phrase made up of a noun and at least one adjective. It adds detail to the noun.

a **heavy,** **green** **backpack**

↑ ↑ ↑
determiner adjectives noun

comma



determiner
the
an
a
this
his
that

adjective	
small	bright
large	battered
shiny	new
waterproof	clean
dirty	green
fancy	canvas

noun
backpack
bag
rucksack
holdall
school bag
kit bag

Putting an expanded noun phrase into a sentence:

I put the bag on the table.

I put **the** **battered,** **dirty** bag on the table.

Expanded noun phrases

An expanded noun phrase is a phrase made up of a noun and at least one adjective. It adds detail to the noun.

a **heavy,** **green** **backpack** full of books

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

determiner adjectives noun detail after the noun
(prepositional phrase)

comma



determiner
the
an
a
this
his
that

adjective	
small	bright
large	battered
new	green
waterproof	clean
shiny	dirty
fancy	canvas

noun
backpack
bag
rucksack
holdall
school bag
kit bag

detail after the noun (prepositional phrase)		
with a red zip	covered in mud	with a large rip in it
covered in pen marks	full of rubbish	with strong straps

Putting an expanded noun phrase into a sentence:

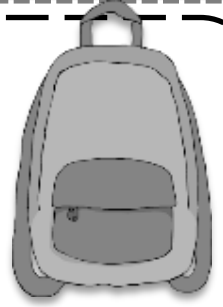
I put the **bag** on the table.

I put **the battered, dirty bag** with strong straps on the table.

Apostrophes for possession

You can use an apostrophe and the letter 's' to show that something belongs to something else.

The bag belonging to Joseph = Joseph's bag



The ball belonging to Tim = Tim's ball



The keyring belonging to my sister = my sister's keyring



The ship belonging to the captain = the captain's ship.



Pronouns don't have a possessive apostrophe.

e.g. The lion licked its paws.

Apostrophes for contraction

Apostrophes can be used to show where letters have been left out when words are joined together.

don't

do

not

shan't

shall

not

they've

they

have

isn't

is

not

mustn't

must

not

we've

we

have

he's

he

is

weren't

were

not

you'd

you

had

wasn't

was

not

aren't

are

not

you'll

you

will

can't

can

not

didn't

did

not

should've

should

have

they're

they

are

couldn't

could

not

could've

could

have

you're

you

are

shouldn't

should

not

I'm

I

am

we're

we

are

wouldn't

would

not

I'll

I

will

A or an?

'a' and 'an' are used to show a singular noun.

A

Use 'a' before a **consonant sound**.

a jaguar

a peanut

a uniform

a unicorn

Some words are tricky!
'u' is a vowel, but in the words
'uniform' and 'unicorn', it makes the
word start with a consonant sound.

An

Use 'an' before a **vowel sound**.

an egg

an ostrich

an hour

an honour

Some words are tricky!
'h' is a consonant, but in the words
'hour' and 'honour', it makes the word
start with a vowel sound.

Apostrophes for possession

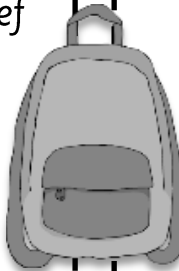
The rules for showing possession are different depending on whether the object belong to one or more than one subject.

To show singular possession:
Add an apostrophe and –s to
the **subject**.

The sails belonging to one ship
= the ship's sails



The bags belonging to the thief
= the thief's bags



The ball belonging to the child
= the child's ball



To show plural possession:
Turn the **subject** to a plural. For
plurals that end in –s, just an
apostrophe. For plurals that don't
end in –s, add 's (e.g. the children's
books)

The sails belonging to more
than one ship= the ships' sails

The bags belonging to more
than one thief= the thieves'
bags

The ball belonging to more
than one child = the children's
ball

Adjective order

1 Opinion	2 Size, length, height	3 Physical quality
amazing, awful, lovely	small, tall, huge	thick, smooth, rough
4 Age	5 Shape	6 Colour
ancient, young, mature	rectangular, square, circular	white, silver, brown
7 Origin	8 Material	9 Purpose
Spanish, English, French	wooden, plastic, cotton	cooking, sewing, cleaning

the lovely, old, wooden table

a small, rough, rectangular box

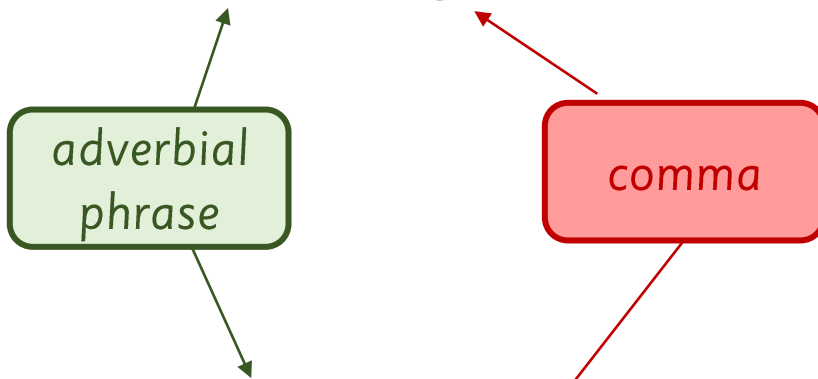
some shiny, square vanity mirrors

an ugly, brown, cotton bag

Fronted adverbials

A fronted adverbial is an adverbial phrase that has been moved to the beginning of a sentence.

Earlier that day, he had made a cake.



Deep in the forest, she found an abandoned house.

Time	Frequency	Place	Manner	Degree
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the morning,• After a while,• All of a sudden,• A few moments later,• That weekend,• In July,• Last week,• Next month	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Twice a week,• Every second,• Every few moments,• Every now and then,• Three times a year,• Every fortnight,• Once a minute,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the mountains,• Under the table,• By the river,• Wherever he looked,• Beside the field,• At the gate,• In the corner,• Between the two trees,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Without warning,• With a howl,• As quickly as possible,• With a frown,• Frantically,• Cautiously,• Bravely,• Anxiously,• Tentatively,• Rapidly,• Carefully,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very confused,• Completely unfairly,• Totally devastated,• Quite luckily,• Certainly deserved,• Potentially foolishly,• Somewhat upset,

Semi-colons

A semi-colon is a punctuation mark that can join loosely connected ideas together. One way to do this is using conjunctive adverbs.

however

Works in a similar way to 'but'

I missed the bus; **however**, I still arrived in time.

It was unfortunate; **however**, there was nothing I could do.

in fact

Strengthens the previous statement.

I like chocolate; **in fact**, I love it!

It was a bad day; **in fact**, it was the worst day of my life!

on one hand...; on the other hand

Shows two different perspectives.

On one hand, lengthening the school day would mean that there was more lesson time; **on the other hand**, it would be very exhausting for children and teachers.

consequently

Shows the consequence of the first statement.

He missed the bus; **consequently**, he was late for school.
I am allergic to milk; **consequently**, I can never eat chocolate.

as a result

Shows the result of the previous statement.

She refused to tidy her room; **as a result**, she was told off by her mum.

In 2015, a 10p charge for plastic bags was brought in; **as a result**, plastic bag demand dropped.

therefore

Shows the consequence of the first statement.

He worked very hard; **therefore**, he was given a promotion.

We were late for the film; **therefore**, we were not allowed in.

Capital letters

Capital letters are used for a variety of different reasons.

At the start of sentences

Where are we?

What a lovely day it is!

This is mine.

Proper nouns

names: **J**ane **A**usten, **M**ark **S**trong

cities: **L**ondon, **P**aris

countries: **E**ngland, **F**rance

companies: **G**oogle, **M**icrosoft

religions: **C**hristianity, **J**udaism

nationalities: **F**rench, **S**panish

Family titles

Only capitalise family titles if they are being used instead of names.

e.g. Can we go soon, **M**um?

My mum, dad and sister are going to be there.

The first letter in speech

That looks good," said Sandy.

Sandy said, **T**hat's good."

Days, months and holidays

days: **M**onday, **T**uesday

months: **S**eptember, **J**uly

holidays: **C**hristmas, **E**aster

but not seasons

spring, summer, autumn, winter

Titles of books, games, films and TV shows

The **C**urious **T**ale of **B**enjamin **B**rown

Pride and **P**rejudice

The personal pronoun 'I'

I

I'm

I'll

I've

I'd

Colons and semi-colons in a list

Colons and semi-colons are used to punctuate more complex and detailed lists.

A full sentence
before the colon

Colon to introduce
the list

I could see many things in front of me: tall, pointed mountains with snowy peaks; a selection of snowsuit-clad skiers going about their daily business; a slow, creaking ski lift rattling its way up the tallest mountain; and several cosy, wooden ski chalets, which were preparing to welcome chilly skiers in after their long day of exercise.

Semi-colons between
each item in the list

Semi-colon and 'and'
before the last item
in the list

Colons

Colons can be used to separate clauses within a sentence. A colon is used when the second independent clause explains or adds detail to the first independent clause.

They were in agreement: they should donate the money to charity.

She is my half sister: we have the same mother but different fathers.

We knew who would win the match: Manchester United.

He finally decided how to raise money: he would do a sponsored cycle.

A colon can be used to replace 'because' in a sentence where there are two independent clauses.

We decided to take umbrellas because it was raining heavily ✓
We decided to take umbrellas: it was raining heavily.

We decided to take umbrellas because of the rain. ✗
We decided to take umbrellas: of the rain

Fragments

A fragment is not a complete sentence because it does not contain an independent clause.

Missing a verb

A small cottage in the middle of the forest.

The children at the back of the class.

Some very suspicious looking clouds.

Missing a subject

Walking towards the town.

Feeling excited about the football match.

Investigated the cave.

Not a complete thought

After they had finished dinner.

Before they went outside.

In the middle of the night.

Sometimes sentence fragments can be used for effect.

It was just then that Jamie heard a voice. A quiet voice. A quiet, eerie voice.

They spent the morning doing what they always did on a Saturday. Walking the dog. Cleaning the kitchen. Battling the monster who lived under the stairs.

It finally arrived on a Tuesday. When they were least expecting it. This was not good.

Comma splices

A comma splice is a comma mistake that happens when a comma is used to join two independent clauses.

In each of these examples, there are two dependent clauses that could stand by themselves as complete sentences.

Dolphins are not actually fish, they are mammals.

He's finished all his homework, he's done really well!

He asked me to go with him, I didn't want to.

How to fix a comma splice

Add a conjunction (usually 'and', 'but' or 'so')

He asked me to go with him, but I didn't want to. ✓

The experiment was unsuccessful, they hadn't measured correctly. ✗

The experiment was unsuccessful as they hadn't measured correctly. ✓

Change the comma to a semi-colon (only if there is a close, logical link between the two independent clauses)

Dolphins are not actually fish; they are mammals. ✓

I have an early start tomorrow, I'll need plenty of sleep tonight. ✗

I have an early start tomorrow; I'll need plenty of sleep tonight. ✓

Make them into separate sentences

He's finished all his homework. He's done really well. ✓

They'll never finish, there isn't enough time. ✗

They'll never finish. There isn't enough time. ✓

Run-on sentences

A run-on sentence is where more than one independent clauses have been joined without punctuation.

In each of these examples, there are two dependent clauses that could stand by themselves as complete sentences.

It was too late they wouldn't get there in time.

The kitchen is really messy it isn't my responsibility to tidy it up.

It stopped raining we went outside.

I've owned five guitars in my life this is my favourite one so far.

How to fix a run-on sentence

Make them into separate sentences

It was too late they wouldn't get there in time. ✗

It was too late. They wouldn't get there in time. ✓

Use a comma with a co-ordinating conjunction

The kitchen is really messy it isn't my responsibility to tidy it up. ✗

The kitchen is really messy, but it isn't my responsibility to tidy it up. ✓

Use a subordinating conjunction

It stopped raining we went outside. ✗

When it stopped raining, we went outside. ✓

Separate the clauses with a semi-colon (only if there is a close, logical link between the two independent clauses)

I've owned five guitars in my life this is my favourite one so far. ✗

I've owned five guitars in my life; this is my favourite one so far. ✓