

## A GRAMMAR GLOSSARY

### PARTS OF SPEECH

**Noun** – A form-class word that can usually be made plural or possessive, as in boy, boys, boy's. Nouns fill the headword slot in noun phrases (my old Kentucky home); they can also serve as adjectivals (the home team) and adverbials (They went home).

**Pronoun** – is a word that substitutes for a nominal, as *Sam tired to stop laughing, but he couldn't do it*. Types of pronouns include demonstrative pronouns (*this, these, that, those*), personal pronouns (*I, me, it, you, etc.*), indefinite pronouns (*every, everyone, many, any, etc.*) relative pronouns (*who, that, which*), and reflexive pronouns (*myself, yourself, himself, etc.*).

**Antecedent** – The word or phrase to which a pronoun refers (whose place it takes) is the *antecedent* of the pronoun. EX: Jim delivered the message. He had worked three days. Jim is the antecedent of he. Not all pronouns have antecedents. Pronouns and antecedents should agree. The matching number (whether singular or plural) of the pronoun to the number of its antecedent: *The boys did their chores; Each girl did her best.*

**Verb** – A form-class word that names an action, process, event, or state; that can always take both –s and –ing endings; and that can be signaled by auxiliary verbs: *It goes; she is going; we should go.*

#### Voice

**Active** – A feature of sentences in which the subject performs the action of the verb and the direct object is the goal or the recipient:

Example – **Ron killed the chicken hawk.**

**The mechanic fixed the car.**

**Passive** – A feature of sentences in which the object or goal of the action functions as the sentence subject and the main verb phrase includes the verb *to be* and the past participle. **AVOID WRITING IN THE PASSIVE VOICE!**

Example – **The chicken hawk was killed by Ron.**

**The car was fixed by the mechanic.**

#### Mood

Indicative – this mood makes a statement Examples: **He was here;**

**I need some help.**

Imperative – this mood expresses a command or request. Though it is not stated, the understood subject of imperative sentences is **you**. Examples:

**Be here at seven o'clock. Help me!**

Subjunctive – this mood is used in contrary- to-fact statements (after, if or as though) and instatements expressing a wish.

Examples: **If I were smart, I would call for help.**

**Adjective-** A form-class word that functions as a noun modifier. Adjectives can be made comparative and superlative (*tall, taller, tallest*) and can be qualified or intensified (*very tall*)

**Adverb** – A form-class word that generally modifies a verb, as in *I will be going soon*. Adverbs can also modify the sentence as a whole, as in *Unfortunately, I was out when*

*you phoned.* Some adverbs can be compared (*more quickly*) or intensified (*very quickly*). Their position in the sentence is often flexible (*I will soon be going; soon I will be going*).

**Preposition** –A structure-class word that combines with a nominal (the object of the preposition) for form a prepositional phrase, which functions adjectivally or adverbially, as in *On Tuesday, the circus came to town.* Prepositions can be simple (*above, at in, of for, from,* etc.) or phrasal (*according to, instead of,* etc.).

**Conjunction**-A structure-class word that connects two or more words, phrases, or clauses.

**Coordinating conjunction:** A conjunction that connects two words, phrases, or clauses as equals: **fanboys** – *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.*

*Ann and Jeff worked Tuesday.*

**Interjection** – is unrelated word or phrase that expresses emotion or exclamation.  
**Wow**, that was cool! **Aha!** You fell right into my trap.

## PARTS OF THE SENTENCE

**Subject** – The subject is the opening position in the basic structure of a sentence filled by a noun phrase or other nominal that functions as the topic of the sentence. Example:

*This old upright piano still sounds beautiful.* A **simple subject** is the key noun or pronoun that tells what the sentence is about. Example:

*Jane went to the party.* A **compound subject** is made up of two or more simple subjects that are jointed by a coordinating conjunction and have the same verb.

Example: *Jane and Alice went to the party.*

**Predicate** – It is one of the two principal parts of a sentence; it's the comment made about the subject. The predicate includes the verb together with its complements and modifiers.

Example: *The building finally collapsed after years of decay.* The **simple predicate** is the verb or verb phrase that expresses the essential thought about the subject of the sentence. Example:

*Jane sang at the party.* A **compound predicate** is made up of two or more verbs or verb phrases that are joined by a coordinating conjunction and have the same subject. Example: *Jane sang and danced at the party.*

## COMPLEMENTS

A complement is a structure that completes the predicate, such as a direct object, (*She planted roses.*), indirect object (*He gave her a kiss.*), a subject complement (*He became sleepy.*), and (*He is the king.*).

The **direct object** of the verb receives the action of the verb or shows the result of the action. It answers the question *what?* or *whom?* after an **action** verb. Example - *Gossip destroyed their relationship.* (Gossip destroyed **what?**)

The **indirect object** of the verb precedes the direct object and usually tells to whom or for whom the action of the verb is done.

Example: *His artistic skill won him any honors. The principal gave her the award.*

The **predicate adjective** is the adjective following a linking verb and functions as a subject complement. Example: *The sea is calm.*

The **predicate noun** or **nominative** is the noun that functions as a complement after a linking verb. Example: *She became an engineer.*

## PHRASES

A phrase is a word or group of words that functions as a unit in the sentence and is not a clause.

**PREPOSITIONAL** A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and usually ends with a noun or pronoun called the objective of the preposition. It can function as an adjective or an adverb. Example: *The girl with the blond hair laughed in class.* Here it acts as an adjective describing the girl.

**APPOSITIVE** - A structure that adds information to a noun or pronoun or is used to rename a noun or pronoun. *My grandfather Gus takes me fishing.* (Gus is an appositive) *C.S. Lewis, my favorite author, lived in England.* (My favorite author is an appositive phrase—**notice** the commas.) *My daily exercise routine, running around the track, sometimes gets very boring.*

**VERBALS** Another term given to nonfinite verbs—particles, gerunds, and infinitives—when their function is other than that of main verbs: as adjectivals, adverbials, or nominals.

**-Infinitive** – the base form of the verb often preceded by *to*: it can be used as a noun, adjective, or adverb. Example: *I never learned to dance.* (noun) *She has an errand to run.* (adjective) *I decided to sing.* (adverb)

**-Gerund-** An *-ing* verb functioning as a nominal—that is, as a noun functions: Example: *Skiing is a very exciting sport.* (as a subject noun) *A traditional at many professional sporting events is singing the national anthem.* (as a predicate nominative)

**-Participial-**a present (*ing*) or past (*ed*) participle together with its subject or complements and/or modifiers. It usually functions as an adjective. *Gary comforted the crying baby. Thanking everyone for coming, my uncle began to carve the turkey.* (Notice the commas)

**CLAUSES** A clause is a group of words includes a subject and a predicate. There are two types of clauses.

**INDEPENDENT** The main clause of the sentence, one that can stand on its own.. *I will not pass the test.*

**DEPENDENT/SUBORDINATE** A clause that fills a role in a sentence (such as adverbial, adjectival, or nominal) and that cannot stand independently as a sentence. *Unless I study hard*

**Adverb** – is a subordinate clause that modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb. It tells *when, where, how, why, to what extent, or under what conditions*. Example: *When the sun set, everyone watched from the window.*

**Adjective** – is a subordinate clause that modifies a noun or pronoun. Example: *The students who stayed after school for help aced the test.*

**Noun-** is a subordinate clause that is used as a noun. Example: *Who will become president has been declared.* (subject) *I wonder where I left my keys.* (direct object) *We were anxious about what would come next.* (object of the preposition)

## TYPES OF SENTENCE BY STRUCTURE

**SIMPLE** -- A sentence consisting of a single independent clause. It contains one simple or compound subject and one simple or compound predicate. **One I** (independent clause): *The singer bowed to her adoring audience.*

**COMPOUND** -- A sentence that contains **2 or more I** (independent clauses) joined by a conjunction or semicolon. *The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores.*

**COMPLEX** -- A sentence that contains **one I** (independent clause) and **at least one** dependent clause. *Because the singer bowed to the audience, they expected an encore.*

**COMPOUND-COMPLEX**-- A sentence that contains **2 or more I** (independent clauses) and **at least one** dependent clauses. *The singer bowed while the audience applauded, but she sang no encores.*

### **TYPES OF SENTENCE BY PURPOSE**

**Declarative** -- a sentence that makes a statement: e.g., *"The king is sick"*

**Imperative** -- a sentence that gives a command: e.g., *"Cure the king!"*

**Interrogative** -- a sentence that asks a question: e.g., *"Is the king sick?"*

**Exclamatory** -- a sentence that provides emphasis or expresses strong emotion: e.g., *"The king is dead! Long live the king!"*

### **TYPES OF SENTENCE BY SYNTAX**

**Periodic** -- a sentence in which the writer builds suspense by beginning with subordinate elements and postponing the main clause. e.g., Throwing her prom dress out the window, she vowed to spend the rest of her life as a welder.

**Cumulative** -- a sentence which is often described as the reverse of the periodic sentence because it begins with the sentence base containing the main subject, the main verb, and any bound modifiers (bound modifiers being articles, adjectives, participles, and prepositional phrases that cannot be freely moved around), and ends with the descriptors and subordinate elements. e.g., *"I could live two days in a den, curled, leaning one mouse fur, sniffing bird bones, blinking, licking, breathing musk, my hair tangled in the roots of grasses."* Anne Dillard

**Loose** -- a sentence in which the subordinate elements come in the middle, often set off by dashes. e.g., He learned to fix cars, as well as air conditioners, from Alice McMahon, an elderly spinster who used to spend her spare time partying with Volvo mechanics. Example 2: These students—selfish, deceitful, and sadistic—were evidence of their parents' muddled values. (Note: may be referred to as an interrupted sentence when set off by dashes.)

**Balanced** -- a sentence in which in which two parallel structures are set off against each other like the weights on a balanced scale. e.g., *"Many are called, but few are chosen."* (Matthew 22:14)