

## Glossary of Terms Used in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

### Teaching in Year 3

*I have tried to create a glossary for all of the SPAG terms that are used in Year 3. I hope that you find this useful!*

Adjective	A word which describes a <b>noun</b> .
Adverb	A word which describes how a <b>verb</b> action is being carried out.
Adverbial	A <b>phrase</b> built around an <b>adverb</b> – for example ‘as quickly as possible’, ‘very rudely’.
Apostrophe ,	A punctuation mark used to show possession or to represent missing letters in a contracted form. See also possessive apostrophe.
Article	Words which tell us if a noun is general or specific. ‘The’ is called the ‘definite article’ and refers to specific nouns: ‘The man’s hat is blue’. The ‘indefinite articles’ are ‘a’ and ‘an’, referring to general nouns: ‘A cow eats grass’.
Capital letter	A letter used at the beginning of a sentence and for proper nouns. They may also be used at the beginning of the important words in a title or sign, for example, ‘Keep Off the Grass’.
Clause	Clauses are the building blocks of a sentence. They are groups of words that contain a subject and a verb. They can be ‘main’ or ‘subordinate’.
Comma	A punctuation mark used in a sentence to mark a slight break between different parts of a sentence, or to separate clauses in order to reduce ambiguity and increase cohesion. Primary pupils are taught to use commas to separate items in a list, to demarcate clauses and before introducing direct speech.
Command	A type of sentence which instructs or orders an action to take place. Contains an imperative verb which does not need a subject. Often a command will begin with this imperative verb or with a time connective. For example, ‘Eat your dinner. Next add the eggs to the mixture’.
Common exception word	A word which does not follow the common phonetic spelling rules of the language, or where the usual rules act in an unusual way. Children have a list of these words which they are expected to learn by the end of each year in primary school.
Common noun	Describes a class of objects (e.g. dog, man, day) which do not have a capital letter (e.g. Rover, John, Tuesday). See also proper nouns.
Comparative	The comparative form of an adjective compares one thing with another. For example, ‘My cake is big but hers is bigger’. Usually formed by adding the suffix ‘-er’ (smaller, higher, happier) or the word ‘more’ (more beautiful). See also superlative.
Complex sentence	Formed by joining a main clause with a subordinate clause using a subordinating conjunction. They can also be called multi-clause sentences. The main clause can stand alone but the subordinate or dependent clause cannot. For example, ‘I burned dinner when I was on the phone’.
Concrete noun	Something you can touch. For example, ‘bed’, ‘pencil’, ‘cat’. Can be common nouns, or proper nouns that need a capital letter. For example, ‘Mr Jones’, ‘Blackpool Tower’.
Conjunction	A type of connective that joins clauses. Co-ordinating conjunctions include ‘and’, ‘but’ and ‘so’. Subordinating conjunctions include ‘because’, ‘if’ and ‘until’. See also subordinating clause.

Connective	Any word which joins two bits of text.
Consonant	Any letter of the alphabet other than the vowels (a, e, i, o, u).
Contracted form	Short words made by putting two words together and omitting some letters, which are replaced by an apostrophe. For example, 'did not' is contracted to 'didn't'.
Co-ordinating conjunction	A conjunction which joins two main clauses to create a compound sentence (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).
Direct speech	A sentence where the exact words spoken are represented, and shown in speech marks (also known as inverted commas). ("Tidy your room, please," said Mum).
Exclamation mark !	A punctuation mark used at the end of an exclamation - for example, 'What a fantastic day we have had!' It can also be used at the end of a statement or command to show something has been said with feeling or emotion, for example, 'That was a really scary film!' or 'Stop hitting your brother!'
Homophone	Words that sound the same but have different meanings. Some have different spellings and meanings but sound the same - for example, 'there/their/they're'; some are spelt the same but have different meanings - for example, 'fair' ('Let's go to the fair!'/'That's not fair').
Inverted commas	Punctuation marks used to demarcate direct speech in a sentence. Also known as speech marks, but in the 2014 National Curriculum children are taught the term inverted commas instead.
Main clause	The leading clause in a sentence which indicates the main subject and action of the sentence. It stands alone without any additional clauses. For example, 'Even though the weather is bad, I will still go for a walk'.
Noun	A naming word for things, animals, people, places and feelings. Can be common, proper, concrete, abstract or collective.
Noun phrase	A small group of words that does not contain a verb. A noun phrase contains a noun plus words to describe it - for example, 'the spotty, black dog'.
Paragraph	A distinct section of a piece of writing, which usually has a single theme. It is indicated by starting a new line or indenting the start of the first sentence.
Past perfect tense	A tense used to describe actions that were completed by a certain time in the past. For example, 'Yesterday I was late because I had walked to school'.
Possessive apostrophe	An apostrophe used before the letter s to show ownership. For example, 'This is Sally's coat'.
Preposition	A linking word in a sentence, used to show where things are in time or space. For example, 'under', 'after', 'next', 'behind'.
Prepositional phrase	A phrase which contains a preposition. For example, 'under the carpet', 'behind the door', 'after school'.

Subordinate clause	A clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence, but is linked to a main clause using a subordinating conjunction. It does not express a complete thought, and if read on its own it requires additional information. For example, 'I played out until it went dark'. Subordinate clauses contain a
Subordinating conjunction	A conjunction that connects a main clause to a subordinating clause. Examples include 'because', 'until', 'when', 'as', 'since', 'whereas', 'even though'.
Subordination	The joining of clauses and phrases in a way that links a main clause to a subordinate clause that does not stand alone.
Suffix	A string of letters that go at the end of a root word, changing or adding to its meaning. Suffixes can also show if a word is a noun, verb, adjective or adverb.
Superlative	A form of an adjective used to compare one object to all others in its class. Usually formed by adding the suffix '-est' or the word 'most'. For example, 'Mia ran fastest on Sports Day'. 'I am hungry, you are hungrier than me, but he is the hungriest of all'. See also comparative.
Verb	A word used to describe an action, occurrence or state. An essential part of a sentence.
Vowel	The letters a, e, i, o and u.
Word family	A group of words which may share a common root word or morphology. For example, 'happy', 'unhappy', 'happiness', 'happily', 'unhappiness', 'unhappily'.