

# Language and Literacy Levels

## Glossary



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**abstract doing or happening**

see 'doing process'.

**active (voice)**

In clauses in the active voice, the actor (the 'do-er') comes before the verb/process as the subject, for example, *The children washed the windows* as opposed to *The windows were washed by the children* (passive voice), or *The dog bit me* (active voice) as opposed to *I was bitten by the dog* (passive voice).

**adverb**

a word class that may modify a verb (*beautifully* in *She sings beautifully*), an adjective (*really* in *He is really interesting*) or another adverb (*very* in *She walks very slowly*). In English many adverbs have an -ly ending. See also 'circumstances'.

**apostrophe ( ' )**

a punctuation marker used to:

- indicate possession: Rosie's cup (an apostrophe is not used with possessive pronouns her, his, its, theirs, ours);
- indicate missing letters/numbers in a contracted expression: He's gone. It's new. 1990s = '90s

**article**

there are three articles in the English language: *a*, *an* and *the*. Articles are placed before nouns and form part of the noun group as pointers. *The*, known as 'the definite article' is used when referring to a specific person or thing, while *a* or *an*, known as 'indefinite articles' are used to refer to a nonspecific person or thing.

**binding conjunction**

see 'subordinating conjunction'.

**circumstance**

part of a clause which gives the details of when, where, how, why, with what, with whom, for whom and according to whom/what. They can be categorised according to the type of detail they provide:

- place: He knocked the clock *off the shelf*.
- time: I finished it *this morning*.
- accompaniment: He left *with his friend*.
- manner – quality: She opened it *carefully*.
- manner – means: She opened it *with a can-opener*.
- manner – comparison: She opened it *like an expert*.
- matter: He was concerned *about the clock*.
- cause: – reason: The man died *of heart failure*.
- cause: – purpose: He ate it *for breakfast*.
- cause: – behalf: She opened it *for his mother*.
- role: She worked *as a doctor*.
- angle: *According to his doctors*, his heart was very weak.
- contingency: – condition: *With a modified diet and exercise program*, he could have lived for years.
- contingency: – concession: *Despite the warnings*, he continued to work long hours.

Circumstances are sometimes called 'adverbials' and usually have the form of:

- an adverb or adverb group/phrase: *carefully* or *very carefully*
- a prepositional phrase: *off the shelf*; *like an expert*; *according to doctors*; *despite the warnings*
- a noun group/phrase: *this morning*; *one sunny afternoon*

### classifier

an element of the noun group which functions to classify the 'thing' (key noun). More than one classifier can be used eg *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation* and *ECOSAC Degradable Dog Tidy* Bags. Classifiers are spoken as one tone group and, therefore, do not have any punctuation separating them. Note that the classifying words can be realised using adjectives (degradable, tidy) or nouns (ECOSAC, dog) or verbs (eg *distilling* in distilling process).

### clause

a unit of meaning grouped around a verb group (process). In terms of meaning a clause represents: a state or happening (a process expressed by a verb group); who or what is participating in the state or happening (the participants, typically expressed by nouns, noun groups and pronouns) and the surrounding circumstances (typically expressed by adverbs, adverb groups and prepositional phrases).

*The netball team won the grand final last week* (happening). Here, meaning centres around the verb (process): *won*, with *The netball team* and *the grand final* as the participants (the who or what participating in the winning) and *last week* providing the circumstance of time.

*The cartoon is an animation* (state). In this example, the meaning centres around the verb (process) *is* and *The cartoon* and *an animation* are the participants. No details of circumstances have been given.

See also 'coordinate clause', 'subordinate clause', 'embedded clause' and 'interrupting clause'.

### cohesion

relationships that bind or tie together different parts of a text and give a text unity or help it 'hang together' making it cohesive. Cohesion is achieved through various devices such as:

- text connectives that link sentences: *Therefore*, *However* (See also 'text connectives'.)
- pronouns that link to other parts of the text: The house was incredible. *You* should've seen *it*. (See also 'reference' and 'pronouns'.)

### colon ( : )

a punctuation convention used to:

- separate a general statement from one or more statements that provide additional information, explanation or illustration. The statements that follow the colon do not have to be complete sentences: *One consequence is inevitable: costs will increase.*
- signal a list, including a list of dot points: *Every Christmas is the same list of pressures: buying and wrapping presents, decorating the tree, sending cards, stocking up with food and drink and so on.*
- separate a title and subtitle: *English as a second language or dialect: Teacher resource*

### complex sentence

a term used in the Australian Curriculum and many other curriculum and assessment documents, including this one, to refer to sentences that are grammatically complex, having at least two clauses with one or more being a subordinate (dependent) clause. See also 'subordinate clauses'. In the following examples, the subordinate clauses are indicated in italics:

- I took my umbrella *because it was raining*.
- *Because I am reading Shakespeare*, my time is limited.

- *If an animal is in a good zoo, then it will have a good life because there are no hunters.*
- *My brother, who recently passed away, loved that piece of music.*
- *My idea of a perfect zoo is one similar to the Dubbo Zoo, where animals are able to run free.*
- *The life expectancy of many animals can be greatly decreased when taken from the wild.*

Note that being grammatically complex does not necessarily indicate ‘written-ness’. The first example above could be considered a basic complex sentence. The second is more developed, having the dependent clause in first position. The third is an extended complex sentence having multiple dependent clauses. The fourth and fifth have a dependent ‘relative clause’, which is typically later developed than those using a subordinating conjunction as in the first three examples (*because, if*). The last is a sophisticated sentence, using a nominalisation (*expectancy*) in an expanded noun group.

### compound sentence

a term used in the Australian Curriculum and many other curriculum and assessment documents, including this one, to refer to sentences having two or more coordinate clauses of equal or parallel grammatical status, usually joined by a coordinating conjunction (see also ‘coordinating conjunction’). In the following examples, the coordinate clauses are separated by two forward slashes:

- *Jill came home this morning // but she didn't stay long.*
- *Kim is an actor, // Pat is a teacher, // and Sam is an architect.*

Compound sentences can vary in their ‘written-ness’ since they can be basic, extended or sophisticated as shown by the following three sentences, each of which is a compound sentence:

- *Birds can be kept in small cages // but other animals can go into the zoo.*
- *People can become obsessed by games // and spend far too much time and money on them.*
- *In many countries around the world, zoos lack sufficient funding // and as a consequence animals suffer in terrible, cramped areas.*

Note: Direct or quoted speech and thought is an additional form of compound sentence not considered in the *Language and Literacy Levels*. The clause indicating that someone is saying or thinking something and the clause that tells us what is said or thought are of equal or parallel status: *She whined from the back seat, // “I’m hungry!”; “I’m hungry!” // she whined from the back seat.*

### conjunction

a word whose primary function is to join two parts of language together and indicate a relationship between them: addition; comparison; time and cause. They can function:

- between clauses within the sentence — coordinating (linking) conjunctions join clauses to set up a relationship of equal status and subordinating (binding) conjunctions join clauses to set up a relationship of unequal status where one is subordinate to or dependent on the other. (See also ‘compound sentences’ and ‘complex sentences’.)
- between sentences and between paragraphs — text connectives (cohesive conjunctions)
- between paragraphs to organise the text — text connectives (rhetorical conjunctions)

See also ‘coordinating conjunction’, ‘subordinating conjunction’ and ‘text connective’.

### connective

see ‘text connective’.

## coordinating conjunction

a small set of conjunctions (eg *and, or, so, but*) that join two clauses forming an equal (coordinated) grammatical status or a relationship of independence: We bought the car on Saturday *but* we couldn't collect it until Tuesday.

## demonstratives

a term used to refer to the words: *this, these, that* and *those*. These words can be used as:

- pronouns to refer to an object or idea eg *That* was the best idea I'd had.
- pointers in a noun group to help identify which 'thing/s' is/are being referred to eg *These* problems need fixing.

Because they refer to something, they are part of reference (the reference system). *This* (singular) and *these* (plural) are used to refer to things in close proximity, while *that* (singular) and *those* (plural) are used to refer to things which are further away.

## dependent clause

see 'subordinate clause'.

## describer

an element of the nominal group which functions to describe the 'thing' (key noun) in terms of qualities such as appearance, size, age and colour (eg a quite *beautiful, deep reddish* colour).

Generally, subjective describers come before objective ones. Describers are generally realised by adjectives. Other choices, however, are evident when using hyphenated groups or phrases: 'a *jaw-breaking* tackle', 'a *never-to-be-forgotten* experience'

## digital text

audio, visual or multimodal text produced through digital or electronic technology which may be interactive and include animations and/or hyperlinks. Examples include DVDs, websites, e-literature.

## digraph

two letters that represent a single sound:

- vowel digraphs have two vowels (*oo, ea*)
- consonant digraphs have two consonants (*sh, th*)
- vowel/consonant digraphs have one vowel and one consonant (*er, ow*).

## doing process

often referred to as action process. Doing processes are expressed through verbs and represent actions which may be concrete or abstract:

- concrete actions in the physical world: She *blew* on her porridge, *to cool* it before she *ate* it.
- physical bodily actions: I *was* either *coughing* and *sneezing*, or *yawning* and *falling asleep*.
- abstract doings and happenings: the Australian dollar *rallied* today despite the stock market *slumping* as commodity prices *fell* and housing prices *rose*.

## elaborated tense

see 'tense'.

## embedded clause

a clause that is part of (embedded within) another clause. The examples below show four common types with the embedded clauses indicated by a double square bracket. Embedded clauses acting as:

a qualifier in a participant noun group: *The woman [[who won the race]] is my mother.*

a qualifier in a noun group within a circumstance: *I live in the house [[that my grandfather built]].*

a participant itself: *[[Winning the race]] has been a lifelong goal; [[Being good]] isn't easy.*

a qualifier in an attribute (adjective) participant: *She was happy [[that it was over]]; We will be sad [[to see you go]].*

## expressing opinion directly

a term used in this document to refer to instances where the writer/speaker states an opinion and indicates that it is their personal opinion. That is s/he makes their subjective stance clear through language resources such as: *'I think it is cruel to keep animals in cages'; 'I am of the opinion that it causes great suffering to the animals'; 'I believe ... , I agree/disagree ...; In my opinion, ...; From my perspective, It is clear to me that ... etc.*

See also 'expressing opinion indirectly'.

## expressing opinion indirectly and with implied judgements

a term used in this document to refer to instances where an opinion is provided without reference to it being the writer/speaker's personal opinion. This can make the information presented appear to be more objective or 'factual' and can be achieved in a number of ways such as:

- attributing opinion to another source:
  - a person or group: *Dr Brown stated ...; Climate study scientists are adamant that ...*
  - research/evidence: *Studies have shown...; All the evidence points to ...*
- presenting opinion as fact with language choices implying judgement: *'It is cruel to keep animals in cages'; 'This causes great suffering to the animals'. 'Nelson Mandela has been hailed as South Africa's greatest son'.*

See also 'expressing opinion directly'.

## evaluative language

positive or negative language that judges the worth of something. It includes language to express feelings and opinions, to make judgments about aspects of people such as their behaviour, and to assess the quality of objects such as literary works. Evaluations can be made explicit for example, through the use of adjectives as in: *'She's a lovely girl', 'He's an awful man', or 'How wonderful!'*. However, they can also be left implicit. For example, *'He dropped the ball when he was tackled',* implying that he is not a competent player; or *'Mary put her arm round the child while she wept',* implying that the child is sad and that Mary is a caring person.

## finite

the first element of the verbal group which expresses either tense or modality, for example:

- tense (temporal finite): *I was going home; I am going home; I will be going home.*
- modality (modal finite): *I might go out; I must go home.*

## foregrounding

to create the focus or the orientation by choosing what to place at the beginning of a sentence, paragraph or text; for example:

- foregrounding the time: *After five minutes,* place the mixture in the oven
- foregrounding the process: *Place* the mixture in the oven after five minutes
- foregrounding the non-human participant: *The mixture* was placed in the oven after five minutes

- foregrounding the human participant: *We placed the mixture in the oven after five minutes.*
- Foregrounding appropriately is one of the requirements of a coherent text. See also ‘sentence opener’, ‘paragraph opener’ and ‘text opener’.

### formulaic

this refers to expressions that are so common at certain stages of an exchange that they can be memorised and used almost instinctively (*Good morning, 'Bye, Excuse me, Thank you, How're ya going?*).

### grammar knowledge

within this document and based on the Australian Curriculum General Capability of Literacy, this term refers to:

- how different types of sentence structures – including simple, compound and complex sentences – are used to structure ideas and present ideas and information in different learning areas
- how punctuation is used to assist in structuring ideas and presenting ideas and information
- how different types of words and groups/phrases – including processes (along with aspects such as tense and subject-verb agreement), noun groups, nominalisations and circumstances – are used to convey information and ideas in different learning areas
- how opinion and point of view are presented subjectively and more objectively through specific word choices (including modality) in different types of texts.

### group/phrase

the terms ‘group’ and ‘phrase’ are used by different schools of linguistics to refer to units intermediate between the clause and the word. In the Australian English curriculum, ‘group/phrase’ is used to recognise these different usages. For example, the units enclosed in brackets in the following sentence are examples of a group/phrase: ‘(The carnival) (had made) (the two little girls with the red shirts) (very tired)’.

In the example, *the carnival* and *the two little girls with the red shirts* are called noun groups/phrases because they are focused around a noun (*carnival* and *girls*) as their major element; similarly, *had made* is a verb group/phrase and *very tired* an adjective group/phrase.

### homophone

a word identical in pronunciation but with another spelling and a different meaning (*bear* and *bare, air* and *heir*).

### intensifier

an element within the describer part of the nominal group which functions to alter the degree of the describer (a *somewhat* unlikely person; a *quite* stunning view; an *absolutely* stunning view) or classifier (*100%* goose down coat).

### intensity

refers to the forcefulness or focus with which a speaker or writer expresses an opinion feeling, judgement or evaluation. Choices in evaluative language can grade or graduate the message.

The force of the message can be increased or decreased:

- by adding:

intensifiers (adverbs of degree): They are *really* healthy; People began to feel *quite* bored

describers (adjectives): There was a *slight* increase

- by choosing a word that has ‘inbuilt’ force

nouns: They wreaked *havoc*; She’s an *angel*!

processes (verbs) The entire area was *ruined*; I *dislike* him; I *loathe* him

- through repetition: I'm *really, really* hungry; We *laughed and laughed*
- by quantifying: The *entire* area was damaged; *Millions and millions* of people world-wide were affected
- in terms of extent: Millions of people *world-wide* are affected; It's expensive *in the short-term*.

The focus of the message can also be sharpened or softened with intensifiers and/or describers:

- sharpened: an *actual* battle; the *real* Australian touch; *100%* truth; *proper* burial; *true* friendship
- softened: a *sort of* success; *almost* an adult; *kind of* handsome; *about* an hour later

### interrupting clause

a clause which 'interrupts' another clause or the connection between two clauses. Hence, they should have a comma before and after them to separate them from the clauses they interrupt and correspond to the intonation.

- The Prime Minister, *who usually resides in Canberra*, is moving to Sydney.
- The meeting ended in turmoil, *which, if you are a cynic*, is what was deserved.
- The PM traditionally lives in Canberra but, *if he wants to*, he can remain in his private residence.

Interrupting clauses are read/said with an intonation pattern that indicates they are an aside. Hence, they are separated by commas from the clauses they interrupt, to correspond to the intonation pattern. Interrupting clauses should not be confused with embedded clauses as qualifiers, which provide essential specifying or restricting information rather than an aside and are said/read as one tone unit, indicating they are part of the noun group.

### intonation

the distinctive patterns of the pitch, tune or melody of a clause eg the rising tone contour of a question as opposed to the falling tone contour of a statement.

Punctuation can be defined as the 'written form of intonation', hence the importance to consider intonation when teaching punctuation.

### key noun

the central 'thing' being referred to in a noun group. It is the noun (thing) being described. See also noun group.

### layout

the spatial arrangement of print and graphics on a page or screen including size of font, positioning of illustrations, inclusion of captions, labels, headings, bullet points, borders and text boxes.

### linking conjunction

see coordinating conjunction.

### macro-genre

defined as text which are comprised of other elementary text types. For example, a text on skin cancer might have the purpose of persuading the reader or listener to agree with their thesis that skin cancer is a problem and that they should take some action to avoid it. If it includes within the text an explanation on the process of how cancerous cells develop on the skin or a report giving detailed statistics about skin cancer, then the text is considered to be a macro-genre. Since macro-genres are longer, more complex texts, they are prevalent in the later years of schooling.

Elementary text types that are valued and common in formal schooling contexts include procedures recounts, descriptions, reports, explanations, narratives, arguments and discussions.

### metaphor

an expression which replaces a literal (congruent) meaning with a more figurative one: 'The news *hit* me *right between the eye's*' instead of the more congruent 'I *was shocked* by the news'.

### modal

within this document, this term is used to refer to the part of a multi-word verb group (a modal auxiliary) which expresses a degree of certainty (I *might* come home) or a degree of obligation (You *must* give it to me). See also multi-word groups.

### modality

this refers to the elements of the language that express the speaker's judgment or assessment of certainty, frequency, obligation or inclination. These include:

- modal auxiliaries such as: *may, might, should, could, must, have to* (That *might* be the one; You *must* always cover it)
- modal adjuncts (adverbs) such as: *probably, certainly, always* (She *always* wins)
- sensing and saying processes (verbs) such as: I *think, I believe, I suggest; I urged*
- modal qualities (adjectives) such as: *certain, probable, likely* (I am *certain*; It's a *likely* outcome)
- modal verbs such as: *permit, oblige, require, necessitate*
- nominalisations (nouns) such as: *likelihood, possibility, requirement* (There is a strong *possibility*)

### multi modal text

a text combining two or more communication modes, for example print (writing), visual image and spoken text as in film or computer presentations

### multi word verb groups

a verb group where the process (happening or state) is expressed through more than one word. Multiword verb groups include:

- phrasal verbs: verbs where a preposition is included as part of the verb, since it combines with the verb to make a new meaning. A phrasal verb has a non-literal meaning and needs to be interpreted as a unit. It can generally be replaced with a more precise word: I will *put you out* (*inconvenience*); I will *put it off* (*postpone*); I will *put you up* (*accommodate*); I will *put up with you* (*tolerate*). See also 'phrasal verbs'.
- those with two verbs, one of which may express a desire, inclination or intention: *like to play; tried to help; loved to dance; need to change; was supposed to receive; decided to go; wanted to spread*
- those with a verb that tells more about the timing/duration of an action: *began to spurt; was about to start playing; stopped typing; continued dancing*

### nominalisation

The process of changing non-noun word forms into nouns. For example:

- from verbs: **reaction** from *react* or **departure** from *depart*
- adjectives: **length** from *long*; **eagerness** from *eager*
- conjunctions: **cause** or **reason** from *because*; in **addition** from *and*
- modals: **possibility** or **likelihood** from *might*; **obligation** or **requirement** from *must*
- *The crowd applauded wildly* can have its process nominalised to get *The crowd's wild **applause** was*

*brehtaking*

- *I wanted to keep trying because she was so patient with me* can have its adjective nominalised to get *Her **patience** made me want to keep trying*
- *People usually vote for the sitting member* can have its modal element nominalised to become *There is a **tendency** for people to vote for the sitting member*
- *They were late because there was a train strike* can have its conjunction nominalised to become *The **cause** of the delay was a train strike.*

Nominalisation is a way of making a text more compact and is often a feature of texts that contain abstract ideas and concepts.

## non-finite clause

a non-finite clause has no subject and carries no tense as it has a non-finite verb. Since they have no subject or tense, they cannot be a main (independent) clause and operate either as a sub-ordinate (dependent) or embedded clause. Embedded clauses are indicated with double square brackets: [[...]]

There are two types of non-finite verbs:

- infinitives: the 'to' form of the verb: *to write* (It took ten years *to write her first book*. *To write her essay*, she needed peace and quiet. You were the first one *[[to write your name on the card]]*.)
- participles: - ing: *writing*; and – ed (en) forms: *written* (*Writing in her favourite café for several hours each day*, she was finally able to finish her first novel. Hating Alison Ashley, *written by popular author Robin Klein*, is an absolutely hilarious read for young and old. (*[[Writing her first book]]* was like giving birth.)

The use of 'having' as a non-finite auxiliary is another common form of non-finite clause: *having written*; *having been written* (*Having written her first book*, she now felt she could do anything. *Having been written by Robin Klein*, we can expect it to be another great read.)

In a finite clause, participles are accompanied by an auxiliary verb as the finite, which carries the tense:

- *is writing*; *was writing*; *will be writing*
- *has written*; *had been written*; *is written*

## noun

a word class that names or refers to a 'thing': a person, object, or concept. Nouns includes:

- *concrete nouns* – those denoting physical objects such as *man, woman, boy, girl, diamond, car, window* etc.
- *abstract nouns* – those expressing intangibles such as *love, anger, democracy, courage, success, fact, idea* etc

Most nouns can be marked for:

- plural, for example, *dog–dogs*; *woman–women*; *child–children*
- possessive for example, *dogs–dogs'*; *woman–woman's*'; *children–children's*

There are three major grammatical types of nouns: common nouns, proper nouns and pronouns.

- *common nouns* do not name a particular person (*boy, woman*), place (*city, school*), thing (*desk, building, movie*), quality (*happiness, kindness*) and so on. They can be concrete or abstract nouns.
- *proper nouns* serve as the names of particular persons (*Billy*), places (*Adelaide, Seaside College*), days/months (*Monday, May*) and festivals (*Moon Festival*). As such, they require capital letters.
- *pronouns* include words such as *I, we, you*, which refer directly to the speaker or addressee(s), and *he, she, it, they*, which typically refer to a previously mentioned noun group/phrase. (See also 'pronoun'.)

## noun groups (nominal groups)

consist of a noun as the major element, alone or accompanied by one or more other words that serve to define or describe that noun. The noun functioning as the major element may be a common noun, proper noun or pronoun. Note that most participants are noun groups but not all noun groups are participants. Some noun groups come in the circumstances eg 'the shelf' in 'She took it *off the shelf*'.

Which one?	How many/much?	What is it/are they like?	What kind?	Who/what is being talked about?	Which one/s more specifically?
Pointer	Numerative	Describer	Classifier	Thing	Qualifier
<i>the</i>	<i>four</i>	<i>incredibly lucky</i>	<i>X-lotto</i>	<i>winners</i>	<i>chosen this month</i>

## numerative

the element of the noun group which functions to quantify the thing eg those *four* people; *three cups of* sugar; a *pair of* socks. A numerative can also come before the pointer, in which case it is technically referred to as a pre-numerative eg '*Three of* those four people'.

## objective/objectivity

See 'expressing opinion indirectly and with implied judgement'.

## paragraph opener

a term that refers to foregrounding at the paragraph level. This typically, in the form of a sub-heading or an opening sentence/s that predicts the content of the remainder of the paragraph (topic sentence/s). These sub-headings or topic sentences can also be called hyper-themes.

## participant

the element of the clause that identifies who or what is participating in the process of the clause —expressed with a noun group: *The man* knocked *the clock* off the shelf; an attribute (adjective): He was *clumsy*; or an embedded clause: *[[What the man knocked off the shelf]]* was the clock.

## passive voice

refers to the organisation of a clause so the 'done to' rather than the 'do-er' of the action comes first. For example, *the car was washed by the children* is passive, as opposed to *the children washed the car*, which is active.

The passive voice is used when the speaker/writer chooses to foreground the goal or receiver of the action (done to), as in the examples below:

- *The dried ingredients* are added to the mixture.
- *The car* gets serviced at the garage.
- *Taxes* were raised after the election.

Using passive voice allows for the actor (do-er of the action) to be omitted for reasons such as: the do-er being unimportant (who adds to the mixture), or unknown (who services the car); or wishing to remain unknown (who raised the taxes).

## phrasal verb

a term, as used in this document, to refer to a process made up of a verb and another word, typically, a preposition, that work together as one entity. The meaning they make is usually difficult to predict from looking at the verb and preposition separately:

- Can you *look it up* in the dictionary? (*find*)
- Why don't you *look them up* when you're there? (*contact*)
- They were *set up* by the police (*framed*)
- She *put her off* just as she was getting ready to swing (*distracted*)
- They *put out* the fire before it could spread (*extinguish*)
- *Put up* your hand (*raise*)
- The things I have to *put up with* (*endure*).

Usually the elements of the verbal group can be split without a change in meaning: They *put* the fire *out* before it could spread; *Put* your hand *up*.

## phrase

see group/phrase.

## point of view

refers to the viewpoint of an individual or groups such as the writer/speaker, experts, interest groups, audience or characters in a text.

## pointer

the element of a noun group which functions to point to the 'thing': *the, this, those, my, Australia's*.

## possessive

a form indicating that something belongs to someone or something.

The possessive is generally marked by the suffix 's': *woman's, Anne's*. The main exception is that in plural nouns the possessive is marked by the apostrophe alone. With proper nouns ending in 's' there is variation between the regular possessive form and one marked by the apostrophe alone: compare *James's house* and *James' house*. The irregular form is often found with names of religious, classical or literary persons: *Moses' life, Sophocles' ideas, Dickens' novel*.

Pronouns also include possessive forms: *my, her, his, your, our, its*. See 'pronoun'.

## prefix

a meaningful element (morpheme) added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning: *un* to *happy* to make *unhappy*

## preposition

a word class that usually expresses the position of something in terms of space or time –

- space: *below, in, on, to, under, down, through, over*
- time: *after, before, since, during, throughout, until*
- those that do not relate to space and time express some form of logical connection between things, for example, *because of, due to, apart from, besides, except, despite*, and so on: He ate all the beans *except* the purple ones; The game was cancelled *because of* the heat.

Prepositions usually combine with a noun group/phrase to form a prepositional phrase, for example, *in the office*;

*throughout the long winter; besides these two articles.*

### **prepositional phrase**

typically consists of a preposition followed by a noun group/phrase. Typically, prepositional phrases are used to express one of two main functions:

- a circumstance: We met *on the train*.
- a qualifier in a noun group/phrase structure: *Couples **with two children*** are eligible.

### **process**

the element of the clause that is the core of the clause and expresses doing, saying, sensing (thinking or feeling), or relating (being, having and causing). The processes are the 'goings on': the actions that go on, the talking that people do, the mental processes that go on in people's heads, and the way things are related in our world.

Processes are expressed in a text by verbs and verb groups. They can be categorised as representing processes of:

- doing (action): *kicked, ran, drove, smiled, sneezed, listened*
- saying: *told, said, replied, exclaimed*
- sensing (thinking, feeling and sensing): *believe, think, know, realise, hope, feel, hate, enjoy, saw*
- relating (being, having and causing): *are, become, turn into, mean, represent, consist of, has, includes, causes, results in.*

See also 'doing process', 'saying process', 'sensing process' and 'relating process'.

### **proper noun**

see 'noun'.

### **pronoun**

an element which can be used to refer to one or more people, objects or ideas. They are one kind of reference item. There are two main categories:

personal pronouns to refer to people: I, you, she, he, we, they, me, her, him, us, them, my, our, your

impersonal pronouns to refer to objects and ideas: *it, its, they, them, their, theirs*

See also 'relative pronouns'.

### **qualifier**

an element of the noun group which follows a noun (the *thing*) and functions to qualify it: to provide additional information which specifies the *thing*, or restricts the *group of things* being talked about.

Qualifiers usually belong to one or other of the following:

prepositional phrases eg *the way to Adelaide; work in progress; the houses at the end of the street*

subordinate clauses, eg *the woman who wrote it; people living near the coast; a verb group that contains a preposition*

See also 'noun group'.

### **reference – grammatical reference**

a term used to refer to a system of devices that make a text cohesive. A pronoun is an example and is used as a substitute for a noun group. See also 'reference item'. Other reference items are the definite article and comparative forms.

### **reference item**

an element of language that refers to another word, word group or even larger section of the text and as such helps to tie parts of a text, making it cohesive. The reader retrieves the meaning of the reference item by going to another part of the text and sometimes even outside the text.

Three main elements are considered within this document:

pronouns: South Australians are proud of *their* state; The girls were pleased *they* had won.

demonstratives: It was *those* men and they ran out of *that* house.

substitution: I am making a coffee. Would you like *one*? Milk and sugar? Yes *both* thanks.

The definite article (*the*) is another example of a reference item since it refers to a specific 'thing', that which is mentioned elsewhere in the text, or which the writer/speaker presumes the reader/listener understands from the context. eg We finally came to a monument. It was a monument to *the* Queen. In front of *the* monument was ....

### register

a term used to refer to combined aspects of specific situations or contexts which influence language choices and meanings. The three aspects which combine to form the register are:

*what* the subject matter is (field)

*who* is taking part and their relative roles and relationships (tenor)

*how* language is organised to create a cohesive text, the medium or channel of communication and whether language is used to accompany action or as reflection (mode)

### relating process

expressed by verbs or verb groups, they represent a relationship rather than a happening, such as a relationship of:

being – identifying what something is and/or what qualities it possesses: She *was* Ms Fisher; She *will be* a teacher; I *am* tired; It *is* a member of the eucalypt family; The flowers *were* expensive

having – expressing ownership or part/whole relationships: He *has* three sons; They each *have* a car; He *had* dark hair and blue eyes; It *comprises* a string and horn section

causing – The strong winds *caused* trees to be uprooted; This *resulted in* damage to several houses; Power *was* also *affected* in areas as a number of powerlines were brought down

existing – There *are* three types of mammals; There *was* a lot of pollution in the area.

### relative clause

a clause which begins with a relative pronoun (eg who, which, that. See 'relative pronoun').

provide additional (non-essential/non-restrictive) information as an aside or comment: *The lift, which had only just been fixed, stopped between menswear and furniture; The lift got fixed after about an hour, which was one hour too late for me.* These are referred to as 'interrupting' or 'included' clauses and should always be separated by commas.

provide essential (specifying/restrictive) as a qualifier in a noun group: *The lift that was fixed yesterday has just broken down again. The man who fixed it is now on holidays.* These are embedded clauses because, rather than operating as a separate clause, they function as part of another clause, in this case, as qualifiers in noun groups expressing a participant.

### relative pronoun

pronouns (who, which, that, whose, whom) whose function it is to relate information back to a preceding person, object or idea: *The woman who* told me is sitting over there; *Kidman, who* got her break in BMX Bandits, has really blossomed.

### rhetorical question

expressions that have the usual grammatical structure of questions but whose function is not to seek information but instead to give information, provoke thought or even help to organise the text. For example, *What is the government's policy on drugs in schools* could be used in a formal oral presentation to inform the audience that the speaker is now going to speak about the government's policy on drugs in schools. They are not asking the audience to give them the answer.

### **saying process**

represents the processes of telling and saying, expressed as a verb or verb group eg *said, shouted, whispered, told, retorted, was asking, would have replied*

### **scaffolding**

this term describes the structured nature of support and guidance that adults or knowledgeable peers provide that leads to learning or, more specifically, language development. As the learner develops control of new understandings, concepts and abilities through developing language, the support is progressively withdrawn: new support is then provided for extended or new tasks, understandings and concepts.

### **sensing process**

expressed through a verb or verb group it represents a sensing or mental process: a process going on in a person's head. Sensing processes express meanings that, unlike action processes, are not observable. They include processes of:

thinking: He *knew* the clock fell off the shelf; I *think* that you should

feeling: I *like* that clock; I *enjoyed* the film

sensing: I *smell* the blood of an Englishman; I *heard* that you're going

### **sentence opener**

a term that refers to foregrounding at the sentence level: the sentence beginning. It can also be referred to as theme. It indicates what the sentence is about and orients the reader to the message. The theme is:

in most statements – whatever is placed before the verb (process): *I cast my line; The native's aggression grew; In the first scene, Miss Honey is at her desk; In my opinion, mining must be stopped.*

in commands – the verb (process) and anything placed before it: *Add the liquid; Carefully pour ...*

if a sub-ordinate clause is placed before the main clause – the whole sub-ordinate (dependent) clause and whatever has been placed before the verb (process) in the main (independent) clause: *Because we had made some errors in our recording, we needed to begin again.*

A pattern in the themes contributes to the method of developing the ideas or information for the text as a whole. Such patterns help the flow of the text.

### **semicolon ( ; )**

a punctuation convention used to:

join clauses that could stand alone as sentences: The installation of closed circuit television cameras will make teachers and students more self-conscious; schools will no longer be comfortable places. In this way, clauses that have a close relationship with one another may be linked together in a single sentence.

separate complex items in a list: In the event of a fire, staff must: leave the building immediately; not attempt to take any materials with them; assemble in the car park with their work team.

### **simile**

an expression where one thing or idea is likened to another and usually introduced with *like* or *as*: My skin felt *like parchment*; The moon was *as big as a beach ball*.

### simple sentence

a term used in the Australian Curriculum and many other curriculum and assessment documents, including this one, to refer to 'grammatically simple' sentence structures. Grammatically simple sentences contain only one central verb group (process) and, therefore, have only one clause. Simple sentences can be basic, developed or sophisticated as indicated by the three sentences below, each of which is a simple sentence because it each has only one verb group (process).

Some animals *could die*.

Last year, thousands of poor animals *were treated* badly in zoos around the world.

Recent studies of animals in captivity *have led to* an appeal for the immediate closure of substandard zoos.

### specialised fields

topics studied within a particular learning area, where students are expected to take on the particular perspectives of the learning area, moving away from everyday ways of experiencing and considering the topic to more specialised and technical standpoints. For example, the way an artist, historian, mathematician or scientist would view the topic; asking the questions they would ask and producing the texts they would produce; and using the language they would use.

### specialist meanings

the particular meanings that words have within a given subject when used by subject specialists/experts. These may be quite different from the meanings the same word has in an 'everyday' context and/or in another subject.

#### specialist/subject-specific vocabulary

the particular shared, 'specialist' or 'expert' language that is used within a subject or field of study. It is characterised by the use of specific terminology, that is particular words (vocabulary) and particular ways those words are put together (phrasings).

### stereotype

when a person or thing is judged to be the same as all others of its type. Stereotypes are usually formulaic and oversimplified stylistic features: *the tall, dark stranger swept her off her feet*.

### subject-verb agreement

describes the relationship between the subject and verb (or finite), where the singular or plural form of one determines the form of the other. This is evident when using:

verbs to be: *A chair was ...; The chairs were ...; He is ...; They are ...*

simple present tense: *It hops, They hop; One has ...; Two have ...*

Note also that when using existing processes, the verb must agree with what follows it eg *There are three reasons; There is one way out*. If a more complex noun group follows an existing process, the verb agrees with the first element eg *There is a table and two chairs in that room; There are two chairs and a table in that room*.

### subjective/subjectivity

See 'expressing opinion directly'.

### subordinate clause

also referred to as a dependent clause, it is a clause which is subordinate to, or in a relationship of dependency with, either a main (independent) clause or another subordinate clause.

There are several language resources that can be used to create subordinate clauses as shown below, with the subordinate clause underlined.

subordinating conjunctions *Because we ran out of petrol, we had to walk in to town; We had to walk in to town because we ran out of petrol after the fuel line got a leak*

relative pronouns to include clauses as:

- interrupting clauses (providing additional, non-essential information about the subject/the noun before the verb): *The Prime Minister, who usually resides in Canberra, is moving to Sydney. Pandas, which are an endangered species, should be kept in zoos.*
- included clauses (providing additional, non-essential information about the object/the noun after the verb or about the clause as a whole): *Animals can live safely in the zoo, where there are no hunters. Animals in cages can't hunt, which can lead to boredom and lack of exercise.*
- \*embedded clauses (providing essential information as a qualifier in a noun group): *The day that the rains came was the best day ever. The girl who saved my life was given a medal. She was proud of the medal that she was awarded for her bravery.*

non-finite clauses as

- adverbial clauses: *Sitting by the window, the woman waited nervously. Having run out of petrol, we had to walk into town. The Prime Minister was today met by an angry crowd of protesters, having announced work reforms last week.*
- interrupting clauses: *The Prime Minister, having announced work reforms last week, was today met by an angry crowd of protesters. Pandas, being an endangered species, should be kept in zoos.*
- \*embedded clauses: *The girl receiving the medal saved my life. She was proud of the medal awarded for her bravery.*

indirect speech and thought to report:

- statements, typically with the structural element 'that', although it can also be omitted: *I know that he is will. I said (that) I couldn't go.*
- questions, typically using 'whether', 'if' or a 'wh' question: *I wonder whether/if she's right. I asked when it would be ready. I know what to do. I asked who was going.*

\* Note also that in the Australian Curriculum and other curriculum and assessment documents, including this one, sentences using embedded clauses are considered as complex sentences since this is generally a later developed resource. Hence, they are included with subordinate clauses, even though some schools of linguistics would not consider them to be so.

## subordinating conjunction

also referred to as binding conjunctions, these are a large set of conjunctions (*because, after, when, if, as, since*) that join two clauses, forming a relationship of dependence eg We went and bought the car *after* we'd asked the bank for a loan. The clause that is 'bound' with the conjunction is a subordinate clause and can be moved to the front of the sentence eg *After* we'd asked the bank for a loan, we went and bought the car. The sentences formed are labelled complex sentences. Compare with 'coordinating conjunctions'.

Subordinate conjunctions add adverbial clauses that non-essential information about the various circumstances of the happening or state described in the main clause. They can be categorised according to the type of detail they provide, for example:

- time: Nero fiddled *while Rome burned*. Keats' reputation grew substantially *after his death*.
- cause: – reason: He jumped up *because the bell rang*.
- cause: – purpose: She raced home *in order to confront her brother*.
- contingency: – condition: It will break *if you push it*.
- contingency: – concession: She went to work *even though* she was not feeling well.

## substitution

refers to the use of words such as *one*, *do*, *so* such to provide cohesion and avoid repetition. Such words can be used to replace:

a noun: Have you read any of good books lately? Yes, I'm reading *one* now.

a verb: I worried that I'd sleep in and then I *did*; Will you put the kettle on? Yes, will *do*.

a clause: It was very loud. Yes, I thought *so* too.

## suffix

a meaningful element added to the end of a word, for example to show tense: *ed*; to indicate a plural: *s/es*; and to change the part of speech: *ly* to change from adjective 'quick' to adverb 'quickly'. Other common suffixes include: *ing*; *ness*; *less*; *able*, *tion*.

## syllable

a unit of sound within a word: the word 'syllable' has three syllables – syll/a/ble; the word 'unit' has two syllables: u/nit; and the word 'sound' has one syllable.

## tense

the setting in time of a clause. English has three simple (primary) tenses: past, present and future:

past: I *played*; I *ate*; I *said*; I *thought*; I *was*; I *had*

present: I *play*; I *eat*; I *say*; I *think*; I *am*; I *have*

future: I *will play*; I *am going to eat*; I *am going to say*; I *will be*; I *will have*; I'm *going to have*

These tenses locate an event in time. For example, present tense *has* in *Sarah has a headache* locates the situation in present time, while past tense 'had' in 'Sarah had a headache' locates it in past time. However, the relation between grammatical tense and (semantic) time is not always as simple as this. For example, present tense is typically used to talk about:

present states: He *lives* in Darwin

actions that happen regularly (habitually) in the present: He *watches* television every night

'timeless' happenings, as in information reports: Bears *hibernate* in winter

references to future events where the tense is present but the time future: The match *starts* tomorrow.

Similar complex relations are evident in 'I thought the match started tomorrow' where the subordinate clause 'the match started tomorrow' has past tense but refers to future time.

Beyond these so-called 'simple' tenses, in English it is possible to express other aspects of time through elaborated (secondary) tenses. Common examples include those that:

express an on-going 'progressive' nature of a process to indicate it is unfinished or temporary

- past continuous (the present happening in the past): I *was eating* my dinner
- present continuous (the present happening in the present): I *am eating* my dinner
- future continuous (the present happening in the future): I *will be eating* my dinner

indicate a process is finished or complete, generally in relation to a subsequent event

- present perfect (the past happening in the present): I *have eaten* dinner (so now ...)
- past perfect (the past happening in the past): I *had eaten* my dinner (and then ...)
- future perfect (the past happening in the future): I *will have eaten* my dinner by then.

## text

the means for communication. Text forms and conventions have developed to help us communicate effectively with a variety of audiences for a range of purposes. Texts can be written, spoken or multimodal and in print or

digital/online forms. Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communication, such as print text, visual images, soundtrack and spoken word as in film or computer presentation media.

### **text cohesion**

see 'cohesion.'

### **text connective**

a broad term to describe elements of the language that join various parts together. Connectives relate ideas to one another and help to show the logic of the information. Connectives are important resources for creating cohesion in texts. They can be grouped according to their two main functions: conjunctions (rhetorical) and elements that function to organise a text: *To begin, Secondly, In addition, Finally, In conclusion, One of the reasons ...* instead of *Firstly, ...* They are used at the beginning of the stages of a genre. conjunctions (cohesive) which link paragraphs and sentences in logical relationships of, for example: time; cause and effect; comparison; and addition.

The logical relationships can be grouped as follows:

temporal – to indicate time or sequence ideas: *First, Second, Next*

causal – to show cause and effect: *As a result, Therefore, Consequently*

additive – to add information: *Also, Besides, Furthermore*

comparative – to indicate comparison or contrast: *Rather, Alternatively, Likewise,*

conditional/concessive – to make conditions or concession: *Yet, Though, However*

clarifying – to provide an example or clarification: *In fact, For example*

### **text knowledge**

within this document and based on the Australian Curriculum General Capability of Literacy, this term refers to: how texts (genre) have different purposes and are accordingly structured differently to present ideas and information in different learning areas

how texts are made cohesive through layout, foregrounding and reference.

### **text opener**

a term that refers to foregrounding at the 'whole-text' level. This is typically, in the form of a heading or an opening paragraph/s (introduction) that helps a reader predict the content of the remainder of the text. These headings or introductions can also be called macro-themes.

### **text structure**

the distinctive way that a text of a particular genre is structured, having identifiable stages which enable it to achieve its purpose. For example, a recount has an orientation (sets the time, place and people involved), a series of events (ordered by time and perhaps evaluated) and an evaluation or re-orientation to conclude and evaluate eg *It was a great day; Finally, at four o'clock, we all went home..*

It can also refer to the ways in which information is organised within text eg chapter headings, subheadings, tables of contents, indexes and glossaries; and/or in terms of the logic: sequencing, taxonomies, cause and effect. Choices in text structure and language features together define a text type and shape its meaning.

### **topic vocabulary**

the language related to a given topic of study, which is not necessarily subject specific. For example, terms such as global warming, rising sea levels, climate change and carbon emissions may need to be understood in relation to a topic being studied in the arts, economics, English, environmental studies or science.

### **verb/verb group/verb phrase**

a word class that expresses a process as a happening eg 'climbed' in 'She climbed the ladder' or a state eg 'is' in

'The koala is an Australian mammal'. (See 'process' for a fuller explanation of process types.)

Verbs:

- are essential to clause structure because all clauses contain a verb, except in certain types of ellipsis: Sue *lives* in Sydney, her parents (*live*) in Melbourne
- carry tense: (See tense for a fuller explanation)
- can take a negative form: She lives in Sydney. Her parents *don't live* in Sydney; I am going. I *am not going*.

Auxiliary verbs and modal verbs are two elements of the verb group:

- auxiliary verbs are also referred to as 'helping' verbs. They precede the main verb: *has drawn*. They:
  - create an aspect of tense: She *is working* at home; I *have seen* him before
  - create passive voice: A photo *was taken*
- modal verbs express a degree of modality:
  - probability: I *might* come home
  - obligation: You *must* give it to me; You *should* not smoke in here.

See also 'multi-word verb groups', 'tense' and 'verb.'

### word knowledge

within this document and based on the Australian Curriculum General Capability of Literacy, this term refers to:

- how subject-specific and learning area vocabulary is used to convey ideas and information in different learning areas
- how spelling is developed across schooling to express ideas and information in different learning areas.