

Understanding English glossary

active voice	focuses on who does the action – the subject usually comes before the verb , unlike in the passive voice Example The burglars stole the painting from the museum. (subject: the burglars)
adjective	a word that tells you more about a noun and helps to describe or add detail
adverb	a word that gives extra information about verbs or events described in a sentence.
adverbials	words like however help to link together ideas in separate sentences or across paragraphs – they show how ideas fit together or follow on
antonym	words with completely opposite meanings
apostrophe	apostrophes have two completely different uses: an apostrophe of omission can be used to show where a letter has been missed out (don't); a possessive apostrophe can be used to show when something belongs to someone or something (Freya's book)
article	the and a (or an) are called articles – use a before a word that begins with a consonant and an if the word begins with a vowel
clause	a special type of phrase that includes a verb and tells us the most important information Example In a far and distant land, there once lived a wise man with three sons.
cohesion	some words and phrases help to link ideas and give your writing cohesion : conjunctions, adverbs, determiners, pronouns and ellipsis are all cohesive devices
conjunction	a word that links or connects together ideas within a sentence
consonant	most of the letters of the alphabet represent consonants apart from the letters a, e, i, o, u
determiner	the word before the noun – it can be just the article a(n) , or a precise determiner (such as the, that, this, my)
ellipsis	(...) is used to show that a sentence is incomplete or that something has been missed out
fronting	moving a word or phrase before the verb
future tense	to talk about things that are yet to happen, we use present tense main verbs with other verbs such as will, shall, is/are going
homophone	words that sound the same, but are not spelt the same and have completely different meanings Example stairs (steps up and down) and stares (looks very hard)
main clause	a simple or basic sentence has one main clause , often with just a subject and a verb Example The tadpole wiggled.
modal verb	verbs such as will, can, could, may, might, shall, must are used with other verbs to show different levels of possibility Example He will come. (certain) He might come. (possible, not certain)
noun phrase	a phrase is a group of words that go together; a noun phrase includes words that go with a noun
nouns	words that name things.
object	the person or thing affected by the action Example Miss Peabody lost her umbrella .

Understanding English glossary

passive voice	in a passive sentence you can hide the 'doer' of the action. This can be useful when you don't want the reader to know who it is or when it is not important Example The painting was stolen from the museum. (subject: the painting)
past tense	used to talk about something that has already happened
perfect tense	perfect tense verb forms use have, has, and had before the main verb to show events that happened sometime in the past Example Emily has broken her leg.
phrase	a group of words that go together
plural	more than one of something
possessive	a possessive can be a noun followed by an apostrophe (Marika's bag); it can also be a possessive pronoun (his guitar)
prefix	a group of letters that can be added to the beginning of a word that changes the meaning, but not the spelling
preposition	little words that add extra detail to sentences (for example in, on, at, by, over, under) are all prepositions
preposition phrase	a preposition and a noun (or a noun phrase) together make a prepositional phrase Example by the post office
present tense	we use the present tense to talk about things that are happening now
progressive	the -ing or progressive form of verbs is used with am, are, is (in the present tense) or was, were (in the past tense) to show that an event is or was in progress Example She is laughing . He was singing .
pronoun	used in place of nouns or noun phrases (for example I, she, him, it are all pronouns) Example Jack tried to carry his bag but it was too heavy for him .
punctuation	shows which words go together to form chunks of meaning – common punctuation marks include . , ; : ? ! - - () “ ” ‘ ’ ,
relative clause	a special sort of subordinate clause that begins with a relative pronoun (who, which) and gives extra information about a noun Example Chloë, who was the oldest , took charge of the money.
root word	many words are formed from a root word with other bits added to the start or end Example played (the root word is play)
sentence	a group of words which are linked to each other – some sentences are statements , some are questions and some are commands
Standard English	is used in most writing – you might use other forms when you speak, but it is important to use Standard English in your writing Example them books ✗ those books ✓ (Standard English)
stress	a syllable is stressed if it is said more forcefully than the syllables next to it
subject	the 'doer' of the action Example The children are going to the park.
subjunctive	in formal writing, the subjunctive form 'were' is often used instead of 'was' in if-clauses Example If I were rich ...

Understanding English glossary

subordinate clause	gives extra information about the main clause and does not make sense if you read it without the main clause Example The man became angry when no-one would let him in.
suffix	lots of words are formed by taking a root word and adding a group of letters called a suffix to the end
syllable	sounds like a beat in a word
synonym	words that mean the same or nearly the same
tense	refers to the time when something happens
verb	a word that tells us about actions – what someone or something is doing
vowel	the letters a, e, i, o, u are all vowels , the letter y can sometimes be used as a vowel
word	a unit of grammar – it can be selected and moved around a sentence, but cannot easily be split
word class	types of words, for example nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, determiners, pronouns and conjunctions are all word classes
word family	words in a word family share the same root word and have related meanings