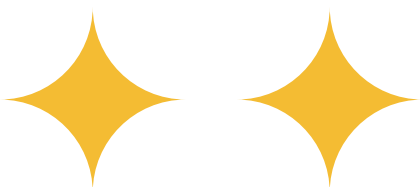




Revision Guides

Sentences

Simple, compound, and complex



Hello

Sentences are funny things. We use them everyday, but many people don't know what makes a sentence.

You may feel like you don't need to know what a sentence is. They won't come up in job interviews. But if you know, your writing and comprehension skills will improve greatly.

You can use this [guide](#) to help you.

Rule 1

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Rule 2

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Rule 3

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Rule 4

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Sentences

A sentence is a string of words. They must follow some special rules in order to count as a sentence, though.

1) Each sentence needs a subject

Jimmy loves cats.

The subject is what the sentence is about. It's usually a noun or pronoun - a person, place, or thing. We have two 'things' in this sentence - 'Jimmy' and 'Cats'.

The subject in this sentence is Jimmy, not the cats. We know this because we are told what Jimmy is doing. He is loving the cats. The sentence is focused on him.

Let's look at another sentence.

Jack and Jill went up Mount Everest.

What's the object? Well, we actually have two. 'Jack', 'Jill' and 'Mount Everest' are all nouns. But the sentence is focused on Jack and Jill - we are being told what they are doing. The sentence is all about them.

2) Each subject needs to do something

Let's look at Jimmy and his cats again.

Jimmy can't just sit by himself in a sentence and do nothing. He needs to do something.

We can show what the subject is doing by using a verb - an action or 'doing' word.

Jimmy loves cats.

In this sentence, the verb is 'loves', and that's what Jimmy is doing. Jimmy is loving cats.

Let's look at another sentence. What's the subject, and what is that subject doing?

Lucy ate all of the chips again.

Lucy is the subject, and she is eating. Nice and simple.

3) Every subject needs to do something to an object

Jimmy loves cats.

Jack and Jill went up Mount Everest.

Lucy ate all the chips again.

These are all sentences that have objects. They also tell us what those subjects are doing. The third part of a sentence is the object.

The object is usually a second noun that the subject is doing something with.

Jimmy loves cats.

Jimmy is the subject. What is he doing? Loving. What is he loving?

Jack and Jill went up Mount Everest.

Jack and Jill are the subjects. They are going up something. What are they going up?

Lucy ate all of the chips again.

Lucy is the subject, and she's eating. But what is she doing that to?

4) Sentences need to make sense

Here are a bunch of words:

**The President dinosaur store bought to
the eggs. flew and**

You know this isn't a sentence. But how do you know?

You might say it isn't a sentence because it doesn't make sense, and you'd be right.

Let's rearrange the words so they do make sense.

**The President flew to the store and
bought dinosaur eggs.**

Great - we have a subject (The President), we know what the subject is doing (flying and buying), and what they did that to (the store and dinosaur eggs).

But this doesn't make sense. Presidents don't fly. Is it really a sentence?

When we say it must 'make sense', we mean it should sound right and explain a clear idea or image. It doesn't have to be a realistic sentence.

Hang on

Sentences don't always have to follow these rules. For example:

I smiled.

This is a full, grammatically-correct sentences. It has a subject ('I', or me), and you can see what the subject is doing - smiling.

But where's the object?

There isn't one. We don't always need one.

You can even have one-word sentences, especially in stories. For example:

Simon opened the cellar door and poked his head into the room. **Darkness.** Nothing but darkness. He fumbled with his flashlight and managed to shine a pale, yellow light ahead of him.

In this extract from a story, the writer has used a one-word sentence, which is just a noun: 'darkness'. It's allowed in writing.



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