

# The Whitby High School



## Literacy Guide for Pupils, Parents and Staff

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## Overview

At The Whitby High School, our aim is to ensure that all pupils are equipped with the literacy skills that will not only enable them to succeed throughout their school career, but also throughout their adult lives. Good literacy skills mean that pupils can read, write and communicate effectively. It is important to have a confident grasp of these key areas because they are skills that we all use in our everyday lives, but they are also extremely important when completing assessment work and examinations. All teachers view themselves as teachers of literacy, regardless of subject specialism, and as a school, we aim to develop pupils' abilities to use language to read, write, think and express themselves effectively.

The aim of this guide is to provide pupils, parents and staff an overview of key terms, spelling, punctuation and grammar so that literacy skills can be reinforced at school and home.

## Useful Definitions

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Adjectives	<p>A word that describes an object.</p> <p>For example, the girl wore a <b><u>red</u></b> coat.</p>
Adverbs	<p>Words that describe how an action was carried out.</p> <p>For example, <b><u>slowly</u></b>, she peered through the window.</p>
Conjunctions	<p>Words that combine sentences.</p> <p>For example, The door was open <b><u>but</u></b> he was too nervous to enter.</p>
Exclamation mark	<p>Used to punctuate a sentence that includes strong emotion.</p> <p>Stop! We were stuck in the airport for four days!</p>
Nouns	<p>The name of an object, place or person.</p> <p><b><u>London</u></b> is a <b><u>city</u></b>. <b><u>Kate</u></b> is getting the <b><u>bus</u></b>.</p>
Prepositions	<p>Words that describe where the noun is.</p> <p>The dog sat <b><u>under</u></b> the table. <b><u>Since</u></b> you have listened carefully, you can go.</p>
Pronouns	<p>Words that can replace nouns.</p> <p><b><u>She</u></b> is getting the bus. <b><u>You</u></b> are going to be very happy with the result.</p>
Verbs	<p>Words that carry out an action.</p> <p>The gymnast <b><u>landed</u></b> on the mat. The cat <b><u>chased</u></b> the mouse.</p>




Apostrophe	<p>Apostrophes have two functions:</p> <p><b><u>To show ownership</u></b></p> <p>The <b><u>shop's</u></b> sign illuminated the sky.  The <b><u>girl's</u></b> bag was broken.  <b><u>Thomas'</u></b> team won.</p> <p><b><u>To indicate that letters are missing</u></b></p> <p><b><u>It's</u></b> too late to ring now.  The passports <b><u>didn't</u></b> arrive in time.</p>
Comma	<p>Commas have two functions:</p> <p><b><u>To indicate a pause in a sentence</u></b></p> <p>Despite the wet weather, they still went for a walk.</p> <p><b><u>To separate items in a list</u></b></p> <p>The trip was fascinating, inspiring and exciting.</p>
Full stop	<p>Full stops are used to indicate the end of one sentence and the beginning of another.</p> <p>The expedition was tiring. It required participants to hike for ten hours a day.</p>
Semi colons	<p>Semicolons are used to link to independent sentences together that are closely related.</p> <p>George is delightful pupil; he has been a pleasure to teach.</p>
Speech marks	<p>Speech marks are used to indicate when someone is talking.</p> <p>"I will be back soon," Kate shouted to her mum.</p>
Question mark	<p>A question mark is used to indicate when there has been a request for information.</p> <p>Can I sit here?  Is this finished with?</p>
Simple sentence	<p>Simple sentences contain a subject, verb and an object.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[The group] [danced] on [the stage.]  (subject) (verb) (object)</p>
Compound sentence	<p>Compound sentences are two simple sentences combined with a conjunction.</p> <p>The group danced on the stage <b><u>but</u></b> they could not hear the music.</p>

Complex sentence	<p>Complex sentences contain two parts. They have a main clause and a subordinate clause.</p> <p>[Subordinate clause]  <u>Despite the music being too quiet</u>, the group carried on with their dance routine.  [Main clause]</p>
Paragraph	<p>A paragraph is a section of text, which focuses on a particular topic. A paragraph may occasionally be one sentence to make a particular effect.</p>

## Literacy Marking Policy

### Literacy, Marking and Presentation codes

Those symbols and their meanings as outlined below are not negotiable however departments may add in additional presentation targets.

Symbol		Meaning
✓		You have made a good/relevant point.
CL		You are missing, or do not need a capital letter. The error will be circled.
^		You are missing something/more detail is required here.
R		Reward given – merit Years 7-9; Commendation years 10-11.
sp	Error circled in text eg: 	You have spelt something wrongly.
?	Error indicated in text 	This does not make sense/wrong word or term used.
P	Error underlined in text 	You have made a punctuation error.
//		You need to use a new paragraph.
To improve:		Your target is...
		Insert department target here
		Insert department target here

## Sentences

### What is a Sentence?

A sentence can stand on its own and make sense. It should have a subject and a verb. A sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

### Making Sense of Language

We communicate by putting words into a particular order.

Kate invited David to the cinema.

It's the structure of the sentence that makes them make sense. The same words in a different order would give a different meaning.

David invited Kate to the cinema.

### A Simple Structure

In English there is a simple structure for making a sentence.

The main building blocks are:

Subject, verb and object

Any type of sentence can be created by using combinations of these building blocks.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Verb</u>
The singer	howled.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Object</u>
The singer	howled	her lines.



## Different functions of sentences

We use different types of sentences for different functions. There are four main types of sentences:

### **Statement sentences**

Statement sentences are the most common. They are sometimes called declarative sentences and they tell us something.

- Dylan passed his music exam.
- Your cakes are delicious.
- The party began with a speech and then a meal.

### **Questioning sentences**

Questioning sentences look for information or answers. They end in a question mark and are sometimes called interrogatives.

- What is the time?
- Could I have a lift?
- Where did you put the passports?

### **Exclamatory sentences**

Exclamatory sentences express strong emotions. They usually end with an exclamation mark.

- What a brilliant show it was!
- How I wish you weren't leaving!
- How dare you!

### **Commanding sentences**

Commanding sentences are used to give instructions. They are sometimes called imperatives.

- Leave your bag on the floor, please.
- Put your donation in the pot.

## Simple sentences

Simple sentences make sense on their own and contain the basic features of a sentence. They must include a subject, verb and object. A simple sentence also contains one unit of meaning that is often referred to as a clause.

- The park was full of children.
- Kate likes chips.
- The cat opened the door.
- The dishes are in the sink.

## Compound sentences

If you use too many simple sentences, your writing can become repetitive. Try to vary it by using some compound sentences. These are two clauses that are connected by a conjunction. Conjunctions are words such as and, but, or and so.

- The park was full of children, but the squirrels didn't seem to mind.
- The cat opened the door, so it could escape into the garden.

## Complex sentences

Complex sentences contain two parts. They have a main clause and a subordinate clause. They can be quite tricky to use at first.

### The main clause

The main clause is a sentence that makes sense on its own.

(The group) (carried) on with (their dance routine).

[subject]      [verb]                      [object]

### The subordinate clause

The subordinate clause is the weak part of the sentence that does not make sense on its own. It requires a comma to separate it from the main clause.

Despite the music being too quiet,

When you put the clauses together, this is the finished product:

**Despite the music being quiet, the group carried on with their dance routine.**

The following words could help you start a complex sentence:

- When
- If
- Whilst
- Although



## Punctuation

When you write, it is important that you punctuate your piece accurately. If you don't, your intended meaning could become confused.

Use the following table to recap the functions of different types of punctuation marks.


<b>Punctuation Mark</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example</b>
Apostrophe  ,	An apostrophe is used to show that a word has been shortened or to show possession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georgia's dog is a Labrador.</li> <li>• The pupils' books are in the cupboard.</li> </ul>
Colon  :	A colon is used in several ways to introduce things within a sentence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She had brought lots of treats for the picnic: iced buns, cream cakes, sponges and treacle tarts.</li> </ul>
Comma  ,	A comma is used to separate words and phrases within a sentence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natalie, can you answer the phone?</li> <li>• Whilst on holiday, the family saw a dolphin.</li> </ul>
Exclamation mark  !	An exclamation mark is used to express emotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wow!</li> <li>• Don't slam the door!</li> </ul>
Full stop  .	A full stop is used to mark the end of a sentence and for certain abbreviations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The library is open.</li> <li>• Don't go in there.</li> </ul>
Question Mark  ?	A question mark is used at the end of a sentence that asks a question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is the map?</li> <li>• Can you ride a bike?</li> </ul>
Semi colons  ;	Semicolons are used to link to independent sentences together that are closely related.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• George is delightful pupil; he has been a pleasure to teach.</li> </ul>
Speech Marks  "....."	Speech marks are used to indicate when someone is talking.	"I will be back soon," Kate shouted to her mum.

## Punctuation Marks

### Full stops

These are full stops

The shop has a lot of products. You will struggle to make a decision.



The job of a full stop is to:

- Show the boundaries between sentences.
- Make sense of your work.

### Example

Look at the following text that is missing full stops and capital letters. Can you see how

once there were four children they were called susan, edmund, peter and lucy this story is about what happened to them during the war, they were sent to live with a professor in the countryside at first, the children weren't happy about this but soon they began to realise that there was more to the dusty, old house than they first thought

difficult it is to read with full stops and capital letters?

Now try reading it with the full stops and capital letters. Hopefully, it should sound fluid and clear.

Once there were four children. They were called Susan, Edmund, Peter and Lucy. This story is about what happened to them during the war. They were sent to live with a professor, in the countryside. At first, the children weren't happy about this but soon they began to realise that there was more to the dusty, old house than they first thought.

## Exclamation Marks

Wow!

Stop!

We were squashed in like sardines!



These are all examples of exclamation marks.

## What are they used for?

- An exclamation mark is used at the end of a sentence.
- They are used to show strong feelings, for example anger, shock or happiness.
- You should avoid using exclamation marks in formal writing tasks.
- Do not use more than one exclamation mark in a row.

## Question marks

Question marks are used sentences that require an answer or request information. You need to ensure that you begin your sentence with a capital letter and end it with a question mark.

What time is it?



This is an example of a question mark.

## Quiz

Which of the following sentences require a question mark?

- Can you open the dishwasher for me?
- It is Friday today?
- Have all the biscuits been eaten?
- It is cold?

## Commas

Despite the wet weather, the  
went out to play.

children still



This is an example of a comma.

The following sentences all contain different types of comma usage.

- I went to the shops and I bought cheese, bread and milk.
- Jane, furiously, opened the front door.
- Caitlin, owner of the local shop, has won an award.
- Nevertheless, his pay is still above average.
- Despite the wet weather, visitors still flocked to the zoo.

## Commas in lists

Commas are useful when you have a long list of items or people. They help to separate the elements and make it easier for the reader.

- Jenna is studying English, French and biology.
- For this recipe you will need milk, flour and eggs.
- This puppy is lively, caring and likes children.

## Commas to highlight additional information

Some sentences include additional information, which could be removed and would not alter the meaning of the sentence. The commas highlight the additional information.

- Johanna, the oldest elephant at the zoo, has had her first set of twins.
- Jennifer, aged eight, peered through the window.

## Commas to separate connective adverbs from the rest of the sentence

Adverbs provide additional information about the verb.

- Energetically, the little girls danced.
- Frantically, the dog scratched at the door.
- Firstly, the main issue is the weather.

### Commas to separate the subordinate clause in a complex sentence

Hopefully, you have already read the section on complex sentences. However, just to recap, complex sentences have two parts. To highlight these different parts a comma is used to separate them.

- If the shop is shut, you will have to collect the item next week.
- As the bride walked into the church, the whole congregation clapped.
- The elephants scattered, when the tigers appeared.

### Speech Marks

These are speech marks.

“Close the door quietly,” whispered the teacher.

- They help to separate the direct speech from the rest of the sentence.
- They highlight when someone is speaking.
- Speech marks can also be called inverted commas.
- You will need to use a comma to separate the direct speech from the rest of the sentence.

### How do you punctuate speech?

If you are going out tonight, wrap up warmly, said the weatherman.

“If you are going out tonight, wrap up warmly,” said the weatherman.

### Commas and speech marks

- When the speaker comes before the speech, we used the comma before the speech marks:

Rebecca said, “You can’t enter that room.”

- When the speaker comes after the speech, the speech is followed by a comma:

‘If you finish your tea, you can have some dessert,’ explained the mother.

- If the spoken word is a question or exclamation mark. We use them instead of a comma, regardless of whether the subject is before or after the speech.

### Paragraphs

It is important that you structure your writing effectively. The best way to do this is to paragraph. A paragraph is a unit of text. This chunk of text usually consists of several sentences and these sentences will cover a specific topic.

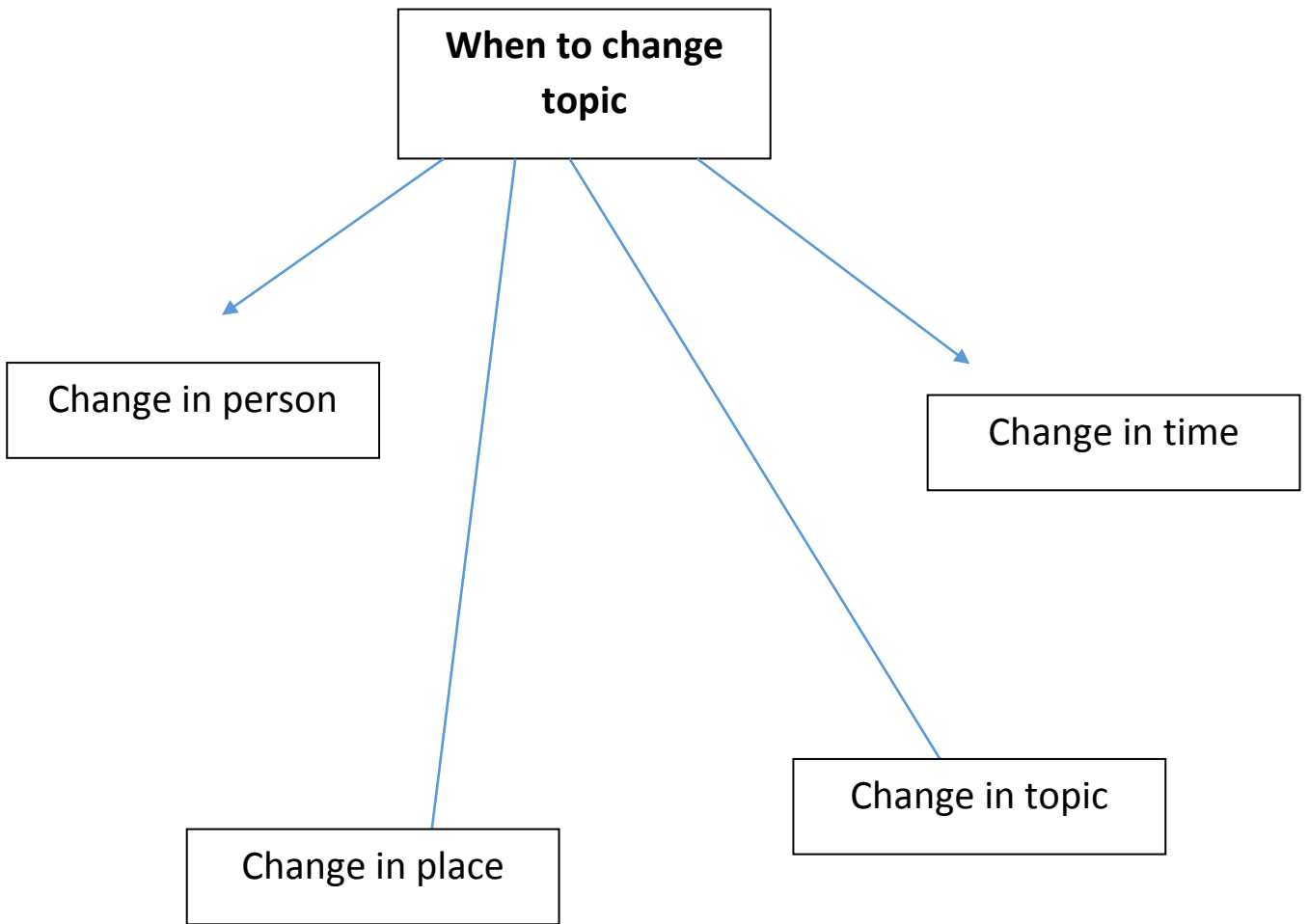
### One-sentence paragraphs

On occasions, paragraphs could be one sentence long. This is often used to create a particular effect.

The door was no longer open and the classroom was shrouded in darkness. The boy could not make out if there was something moving within. He inched closer to the handle.

This was the end for the trepid explorer.





Purpose or Introduction

to  
so as to  
in order to  
in order that  
so that

Cause and Effect

because  
so  
therefore  
thus

Sequencing

next  
then  
first, second and third  
meanwhile  
finally  
after

Adding

and  
also  
as well as  
in addition

Illustrating

for example  
such as  
for instance

**Using  
Connectives to  
Compare and  
Contrast**

Emphasising

above all  
in particular  
especially  
significantly

Adding

and  
also  
as well as  
in addition

Comparing

equally  
in the same way  
similarly  
likewise

Reserving Judgement

though  
although  
unless  
if  
even if  
in case  
apart from

Contrasting

whereas  
instead of  
alternatively  
otherwise  
unlike  
on the other hand  
while  
whilst  
but

Qualifying

however  
although  
unless  
if  
as long as

How to Structure an Analysis Paragraph

Point	Link	Evidence	Link	Explain
<p>In this section, you need to use the question to help form your response.</p> <p>Ensure that your make one point.</p>	<p>I know this because...</p>		<p>This shows that...</p>	<p>This is the most important section.</p> <p>You need to explain why the data or evidence proves your point.</p> <p>What is it in particular about this bit of evidence that demonstrates it clearly?</p>
	<p>An example to prove my point is...</p>		<p>This highlights the fact that...</p>	
	<p>Evidence to support this claim is...</p>		<p>As a result,...</p>	

Your Dictionary

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>

Your Thesaurus

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>