



St John's Grammar Glossary



Term	Definition (aligned with the National Curriculum)	Example
Active voice	A verb in the active voice has its usual subject and object, where the subject performs the action.	Somebody saw you. John threw the ball at James.
Adverbial	Part of a clause that behaves like an adverb. (Adverbial phrases include time openers, adverbs and prepositions).	They left a few days ago . Suddenly , ... Under the clear blue sky , ... Yesterday , ...
Adjective	A word that describes a noun.	big house cold morning
Antonym	A word that means the opposite of another word.	Big → small Happy → sad
Article	The words the , a or an which go before a noun. (A type of determiner).	The girl ate an apple on a very hot day.
Clause	A clause contains a verb and a subject.	It was raining. The boy ran home.
Conjunction	A word used to link two clauses.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinating conjunctions 	Words that connect two main clauses that both make sense on their own (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)	I was tired but I stayed up late. I was hungry so I ate a sandwich.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subordinating conjunctions 	Words that connect a main clause (a clause that makes sense on its own) to a subordinate clause (a clause that doesn't make sense on its own). (if, since, as, when, although, while, after, before, until, because)	Although she was ill, she went to work. I always count to 120 seconds while brushing my teeth. After finishing his dinner, James went to ride his bike.
Contraction (or contracted form)	The new word made by joining two words together with an apostrophe.	Will not – won't Shall not – shan't
Determiner	A word that comes before a noun to clarify which noun is being referred to, or to provide information about the noun's quantity or possession.	The book: "The" is a determiner specifying a particular book. My car: "My" is a determiner indicating ownership. This flower: "This" is a determiner pointing to a specific flower. Some apples: "Some" is a determiner indicating an unspecified quantity.
Direct speech	The actual words that are said by someone.	"You can't park there," said the police officer. "Besides," said Sally thoughtfully, "what was she doing there anyway?"

Homophone	A <i>homophone</i> is a word that sounds the same as another word but has a different meaning and is often spelled differently.	I can see the sea. The knight rode through the night. (Here, see/sea and knight/night sound the same but have different meanings and spellings.)
Main clause	A <i>main clause</i> is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb and makes sense on its own. It can stand alone as a complete sentence.	I went to the park because it was sunny. (Here, I went to the park is the main clause; it can stand alone.)
Modal verb	A <i>modal verb</i> is a type of verb that shows how likely something is to happen, or expresses ability, permission, or obligation. (can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would)	You must finish your homework before dinner.
Noun	A <i>noun</i> is a person, place, thing, or idea.	The dog chased the ball across the field .
Object	The <i>object</i> is the noun or pronoun that receives the action of the verb.	Tom kicked the ball . (Here, ball is the object.)
Passive Voice	Passive voice is a way of writing or speaking in which the subject of the sentence is the person or thing that is acted upon, rather than the one performing the action.	The meal was cooked by the chef. The fence was painted by the children. Top tip - You can test if a sentence is in the passive voice by adding the phrase "by zombies" after the verb — if the sentence still makes sense, it's passive!
Phrase	A <i>phrase</i> is a group of words that work together but do not contain both a subject and a verb.	in the morning under the table the tall boy
Plural	A <i>plural</i> word shows that there is more than one person, place, or thing.	One apple, two apples .
Prefix	A prefix is a group of letters added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning.	un- added to happy → unhappy
Preposition	A <i>preposition</i> shows the relationship between a noun (or pronoun) and another word in the sentence, often showing place, time, or direction.	The cat sat on the mat. My feet are under the table.
Pronoun	A <i>pronoun</i> is a word used in place of a noun to avoid repetition.	He, she, it, they, you, we
Relative pronoun	A <i>relative pronoun</i> is a word that introduces a relative clause and connects it to a noun or pronoun in the main clause. Common relative pronouns include who, whom, whose, which, and that .	The girl who won the race is my sister.

Relative clause	A <i>relative clause</i> adds extra information about a noun, usually beginning with a relative pronoun such as who, which, or that .	The book that I borrowed from the library was exciting.
Simple sentence	A <i>simple sentence</i> has one main clause that includes a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.	The sun shone brightly.
Singular	A <i>singular</i> noun refers to one person, place, or thing.	One cat sat on the wall.
Subject	The <i>subject</i> is the person or thing that performs the action of the verb.	Lucy baked a cake. (Here, Lucy is the subject.)
Subordinate clause	A <i>subordinate clause</i> gives extra information but cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. It often begins with a subordinating conjunction such as <i>because, although, or when</i> .	I went inside because it was raining . Although it was raining , we still had our picnic.
Suffix	A <i>suffix</i> is a group of letters added to the end of a word to change its meaning or word class.	help → helpful
Synonym	A <i>synonym</i> is a word that has a similar meaning to another word.	happy → joyful
Verb	A <i>verb</i> is a doing, being or having word.	run, smile, shout, is, was, has, have, had