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Grammar

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Tim and Lucy



Simon the Spyman



Harold the Hiker



Grump – the Beast of Muddyfield Farm

Sentences how words make sense

Sentences do things with words.

They can say things; they can ask things; they can *tell* people to do things:



Meet Simon.

Who's Simon?

Simon is a spy.

Rubbish!

These are all sentences.

This is a sentence. — So is this.

There are four main kinds of sentence:

statements commands
questions exclamations

Statements

are for giving information or telling stories.

Chapter One

Simon was a spy. His job was to find out secrets and pass them to other spies. He wrote messages in code and hid them in strange places. Once he hid all his papers inside an old football. They would be safe there, he thought. But that's where he was wrong . . .

The sentences in this bit of story are all statements.

Commands

tell you what to do.

Have a nice day.

*Meet
Simon.*

Keep off the grass.

Stop!

Take care.

Give me that!



Questions ask things

Many questions begin with:

who what which when where why

You can call these **Wh- questions**.

Who is that man?

What's he doing?

Why is he hiding?

There is another kind of question that asks if something is so or not.

Is he still there?

Can you see him?

Do you think he's a spy?

Questions like these are called **Yes/No questions**.

Why do you think they are called that?

Full sentences – and others

Often you don't need to use full sentences, especially for speaking.

What would these speakers have said if they had used full sentences?



'Scared?'



'Who, me?'



'Yeah, you.'



'Course not.'

Exclamations have feeling!

An exclamation is a sentence said with feeling, like surprise or amusement.

What a funny looking man!

How stupid he looks!

Exclamations often begin with *How . . .* or *What . . .* and in writing they always end with an exclamation mark.

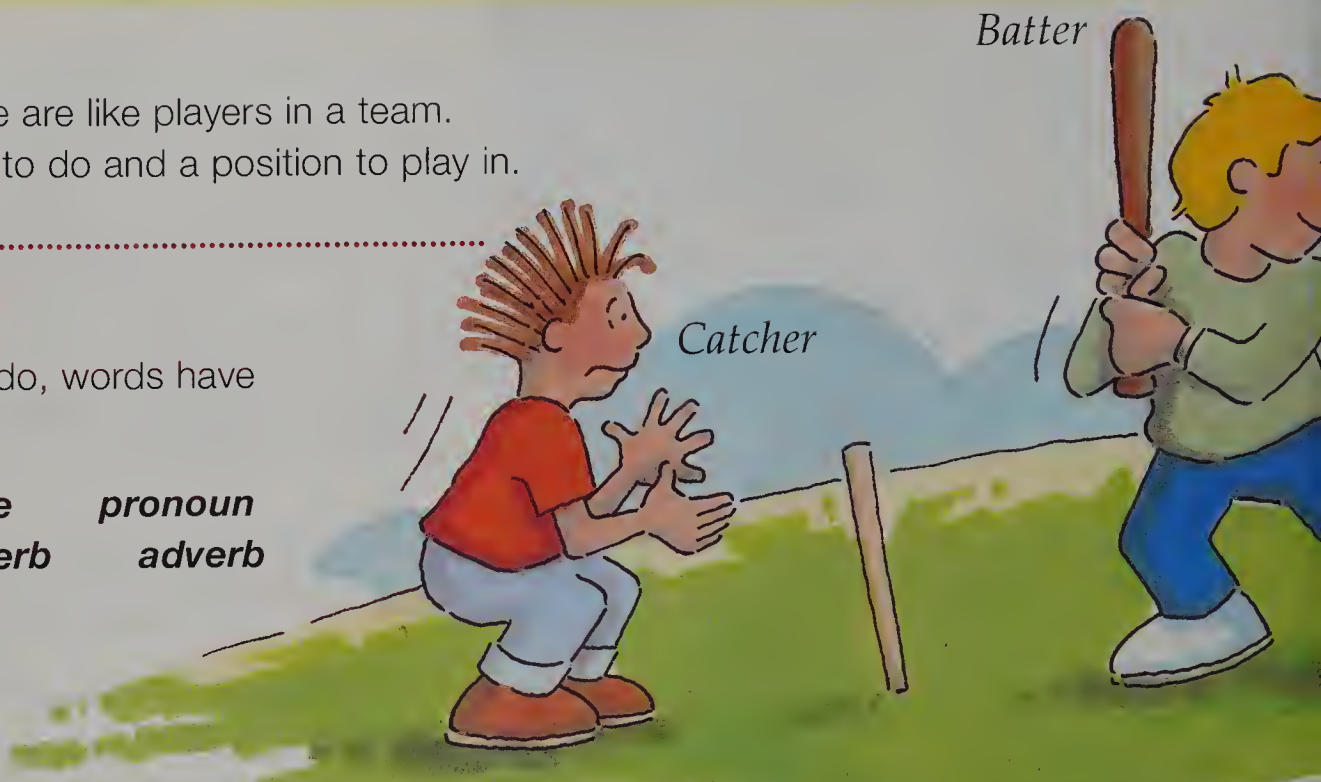
Words: players in a team

Words in a sentence are like players in a team.
Each one has a job to do and a position to play in.

Word classes

To show what they do, words have names too:

noun **adjective** **pronoun**
conjunction **verb** **adverb**
preposition



The names are called **word classes**
You can find them next to the headwords in your dictionary:

throw *verb* (throws, throwing, threw, thrown)
send something through the air
ball *noun* (balls)
a round object used in many games



Word classes are also called **Parts of Speech**

In sentences words have jobs and positions, like the players do:

noun

adverb

The next batter whacked the ball high into the air.

adjective

verb

noun

preposition

noun

There are players who can play in more than one position, and there are words that can be in more than one class. For example, 'whack':

Lucy can really whack the ball or She gave the ball a real whack

verb

noun

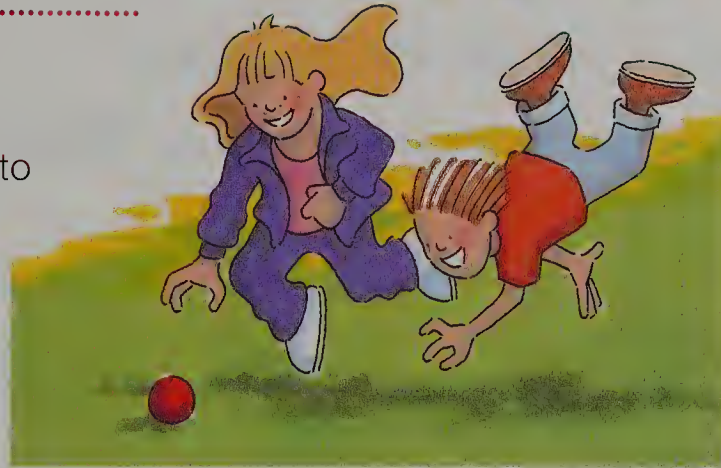
Word class depends on the job a word does and where it goes in the sentence.



Word forms

Many words have to change to suit different sentences:

One *player* *chases* the ball.
 Both *players* *chase* the ball.
 Lucy *chased* the ball.
 Tim was *chasing* it too.



player and *players* are different forms of the same word.
 So are *chase*, *chases*, *chased* and *chasing*.

Look on page 6 and find all the forms of the verb *throw*

Look in a dictionary and find all the forms of the verbs: *catch* *drop* *run*

Phrases

A phrase is a string of words that makes sense but isn't a full sentence.

right out of the park *whacked the ball* *Tim's sister*

Put these three **phrases** together to make a full sentence.

Nouns people, animals, things, and stuff



Meet Grump. Grump is a bull.

bull is a noun.

Nouns are words for things, including living things:

bull gate farm hiker mud

These words are called **common nouns**.

Grump is a noun too. It's the name of a particular bull.

Grump Harold Muddyfield Farm

Names are called **proper nouns**.

One – or more?

bull is a **singular noun** – it means there's just one. But most nouns have a **plural form**, for two things or more.

Singular Form	Plural Form
----------------------	--------------------

<i>bull</i>	<i>bulls</i>
-------------	--------------

<i>gate</i>	<i>gates</i>
-------------	--------------

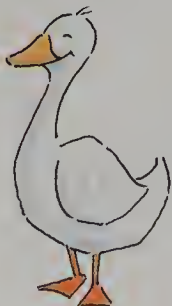
<i>hiker</i>	<i>hikers</i>
--------------	---------------

Adding *-s* is the **regular** way to make a noun plural.

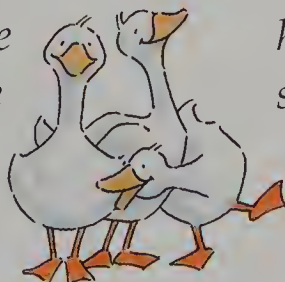
'Regular' means the most usual.

But there are also many nouns with **irregular** plurals:

goose
mouse



geese
mice

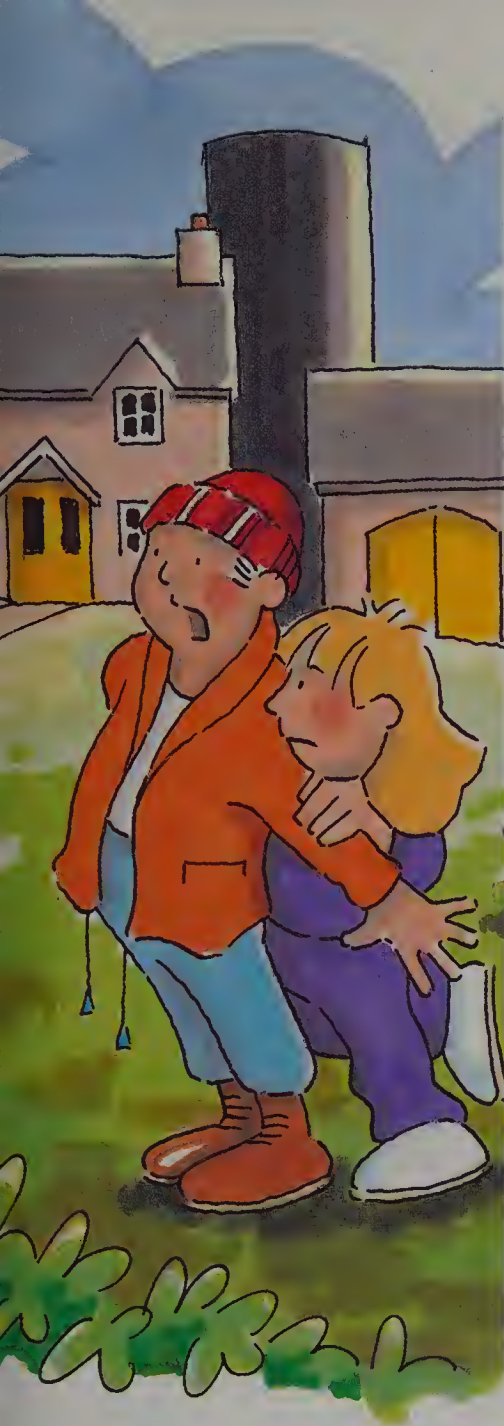


hoof
sheep



hooves
sheep





Uncountable

Counting is fine for things and people, but not for stuff, like

grass mud butter bread

Can you see why nouns like this are called 'uncountable'?

Try saying

one mud, two muds, three muds ...!



Invisible

Bulls and gates and hikers and mud are solid things you can see or touch.

But there are some things you can't see or touch:

danger fear stupidity speed luck fun

We call these words **abstract nouns**.

Can you think of any more abstract nouns?

Collective nouns

are words for groups or sets of things:

a party of hikers

a herd of cattle

a crowd of spectators

a flock of sheep

Collective nouns have plural forms too:

herds of cattle

flocks of sheep

English has some peculiar collective nouns.

Did you know that a collection of geese is often called a *gaggle*?

See what other unusual collective nouns you can find.

Always plural

There are English nouns with no singular form. Here are some of them:

scissors

trousers

cattle

gymnastics



Noun phrases describing things

bull is a word – a **noun**

the old bull is a phrase – a **noun phrase**

Noun phrases have the same sort of meanings as nouns – people, animals, things, and stuff. Here are some more noun phrases:

Which is the noun in each of these phrases?

the old brown bull

a muddy field

tired hikers

great danger

a wooden gate

A noun phrase nearly always has a noun in it, and the noun is the main word in the phrase.

Building noun phrases

As you can see, you need more than just nouns to build noun phrases:

old *muddy* *tired* *great* *wooden*

are describing words for using with nouns. They belong to a big class of words called **adjectives**, (see pages 12–13).



Starters

At the beginning of noun phrases the most common words are *the a an*

But here are some more very useful noun phrase starters.

this *that* *these* *those* *all* *some* *any* *no* *every* *each*
either *neither* *several* *enough* *such* *many* *much* *more*
most *few* *little* *my* *your* *her* *his* *our* *their*

All these words are special kinds of adjectives.

Try making up some noun phrases that start with them.

Possessive nouns

Harold's backpack

This phrase shows that the backpack belongs to Harold.

Harold's is called the **possessive form** of the noun *Harold*.
(A *possession* is a belonging.)

Notice that the possessive noun is spelt with the sign ' which is called an **apostrophe**.

Common nouns also have a possessive form.

the bull's horns *the farmer's field*
the tree's leaves *Grump's nasty temper*

An apostrophe means that something has been left out of a word.
A long time ago, possessive nouns in English ended in -es:

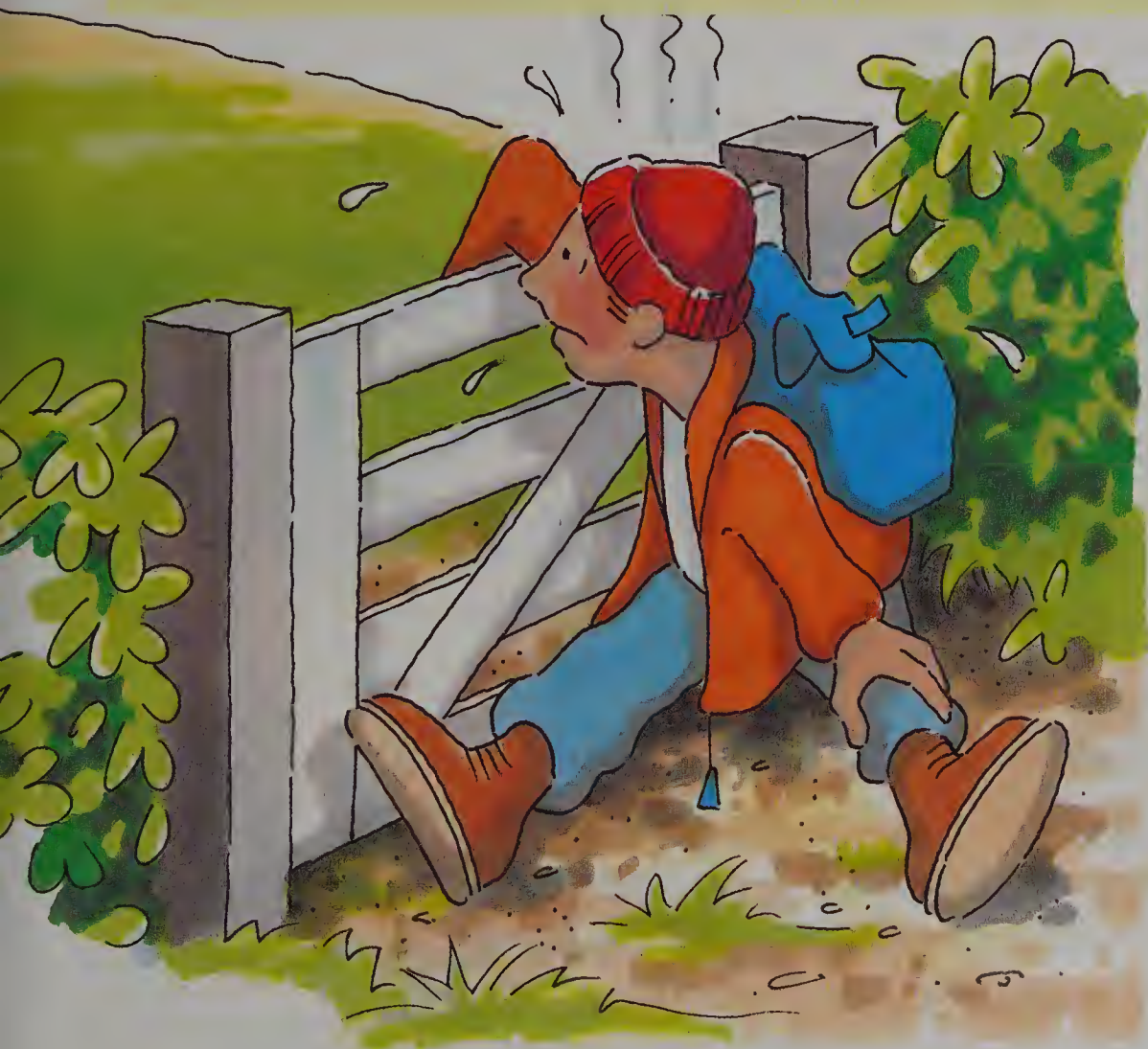
the mannes hat **the dogges bone**

Gradually the *e* disappeared, but the apostrophe stayed, to show where the *e* once was. One day the apostrophe may disappear, too. Language is always changing.



If the owner is plural, and ends in an -s the apostrophe goes after the s.

the bulls' horns
the hikers' packs



Adjectives working with nouns

The man in the hat could be **either** of these:

The short man in the floppy hat could only be **one** of them.

It's the adjectives *short* and *floppy* that make the difference:

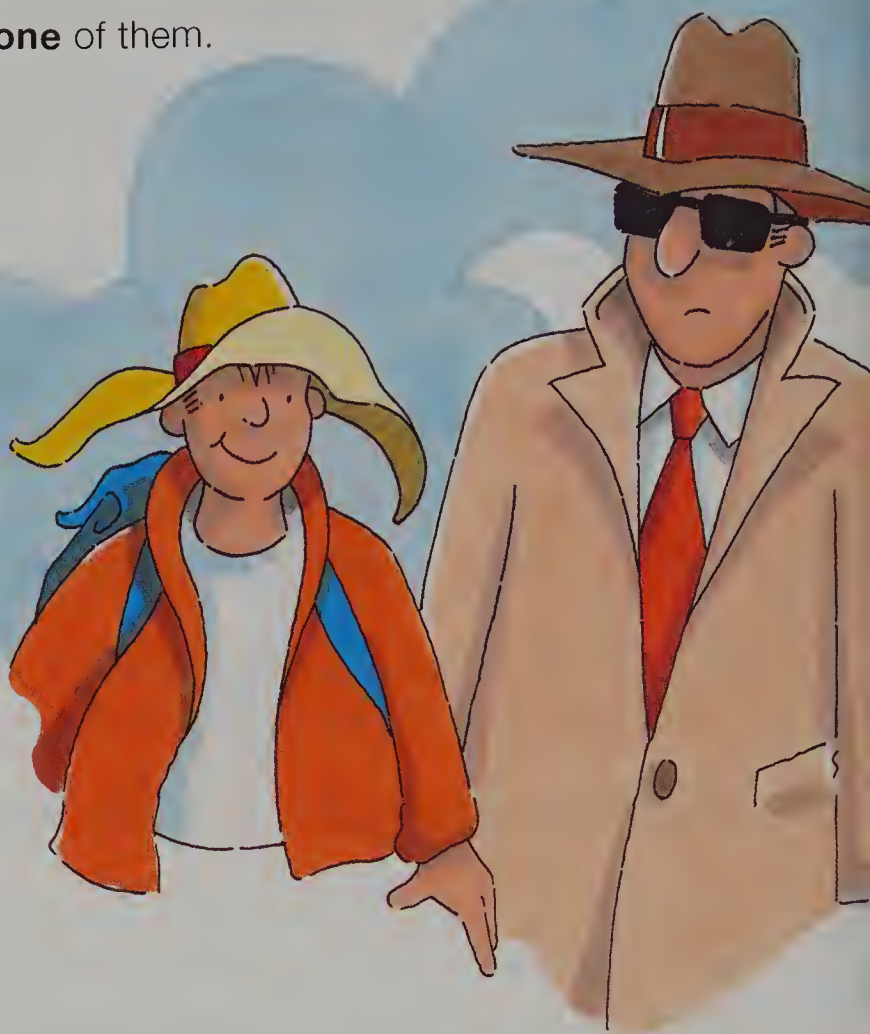
Adjectives work with nouns, describing people and things.

Which noun does *short* work with?
Which noun does *floppy* work with?

Adjectives give many different sorts of information about nouns.
Here are some sorts, with examples of the adjectives:

Adjectives

SIZE	large	long . . .			
SHAPE	round	floppy . . .			
COLOUR	brown	red . . .			
FEEL	hard	smooth	cold	wet . . .	
NATURE	bad	strange	suspicious	dangerous	secret . . .
AGE	new	young	old	ancient . . .	
NUMBER	twelve	twenty	first	last	next . . .



Adjectives can be used in front of nouns to make **noun phrases**:

a suspicious parcel secret documents
a wet, chilly afternoon a bright, warm, spring morning

Most adjectives – but not all – can also be used to finish off sentences:

The parcel looked suspicious.

The documents were highly secret.

The afternoon was wet and chilly.

Making the difference

cold chilly cool mild warm hot

Here is a list of adjectives for describing different temperatures. If these aren't enough, you can always use a phrase like:

very hot terribly cold quite warm really windy



Think of an adjective or phrase that describes the weather where you are today.

Words like *very*, *terribly*, *quite*, *really* etc., are called *adverbs*. You can find out about adverbs on page 20.

More and Most

Many adjectives have forms that can be used to *compare* things. They are called the **comparative** and **superlative**:

	Comparative	Superlative
<i>a warm day</i>	<i>a warmer day</i>	<i>the warmest day this year</i>

The regular forms are made by just adding *-er* and *-est* to the adjective. But some adjectives are *irregular*:

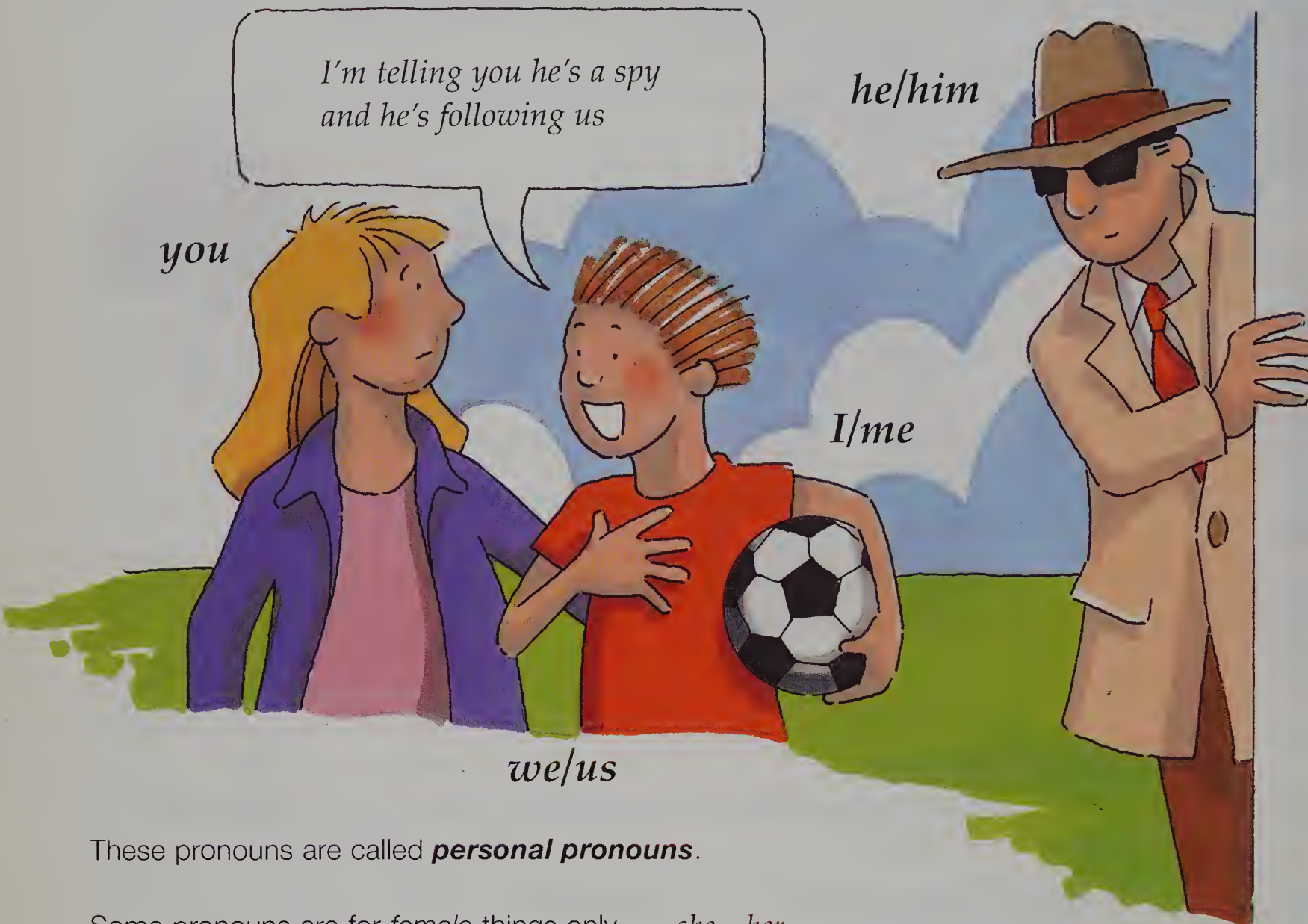
Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
<i>heavy</i>	<i>heavier</i>	<i>heaviest</i>
<i>far</i>	<i>further</i>	<i>furthest</i>
<i>good</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>best</i>
<i>bad</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>worst</i>

Not all adjectives have their own forms for comparing. You have to make them into phrases using *more* or *most*:

Comparative	Superlative
<i>more difficult</i>	<i>the most difficult</i>
<i>more dangerous</i>	<i>the most dangerous</i>

Pronouns words for nouns

Pronouns are words for people, animals, and things – just like nouns.



These pronouns are called **personal pronouns**.

Some pronouns are for *female* things only *she her*
Some are for *male* things only *he him*

Pronouns by themselves are *blank*. They can mean almost anything. So when you use a pronoun you must make it clear what, or who, it does mean.

SECRETS OF THE PARK BENCH

When Tim and Lucy Boswell found an old football under a bench in the park, **they** had no idea **it** belonged to Simon the Spyman, or that hidden inside were secret papers. Simon was so desperate to get **them** back, that **he** followed the two children.

What do the four pronouns in this story mean?

Person

person has a special meaning in grammar. There are three 'persons' – the first is for *me* (or *us*), the second is for *you* and the third is for *everyone*, and *everything*, else.

Personal Pronouns	Singular	Plural
1ST PERSON	<i>I me</i>	<i>we us</i>
2ND PERSON	<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>
3RD PERSON	<i>he him</i> <i>she her it</i>	<i>they</i> <i>them</i>

There are **singular** 'persons' and **plural** 'persons'.

But what do you notice about the pronoun *you*?

Each of these sentences is written in a different 'person'. Which is which?

Did *you* know *you* were carrying secret documents?

I noticed *we* were being followed by a strange-looking man.

They threw away the ball, and ran for it.



Possessive pronouns

are for talking about things which belong to someone.

my *your* *his* *her*
its *our* *their*
mine *yours* *hers*
ours *theirs*

Spell check: There are no apostrophes in possessive pronouns.

Some possessive pronouns are like adjectives:

my brother his football
their secrets

Some are like nouns:

That's not yours, it's mine!

More pronouns

who *whom* *what* *which* *whose*

someone and *something* are pronouns too. So are:

anyone *everyone* *no one*
anything *everything* *nothing*

These pronouns are for asking questions.

Verbs doing, being, and having

Most verbs are about *doing* certain things, but there are verbs about *being* and *having* certain things, as well.

Grump *lives* alone in a field. He *has* a very bad temper. When he *is* angry he *bellows*, and *stamps* his feet. He *charges* about, *breaking* fences and *throwing* hikers into hedges. Grump really *hates* hikers.



Doing words

live, bellow, stamp, charge, break, throw and *hate* are all verbs. They are words that tell us what things or people do.

Verb forms

Verbs can change their form to fit different sentences. Most verbs have four or five different forms. You can find out what these are from your dictionary. For example:

bellow *verb* bellows, bellowing, bellowed

The usual way to change the form of a verb is to add *-s*, *-ed* or *-ing*.

Some verbs have an extra form that usually ends in *-en*:

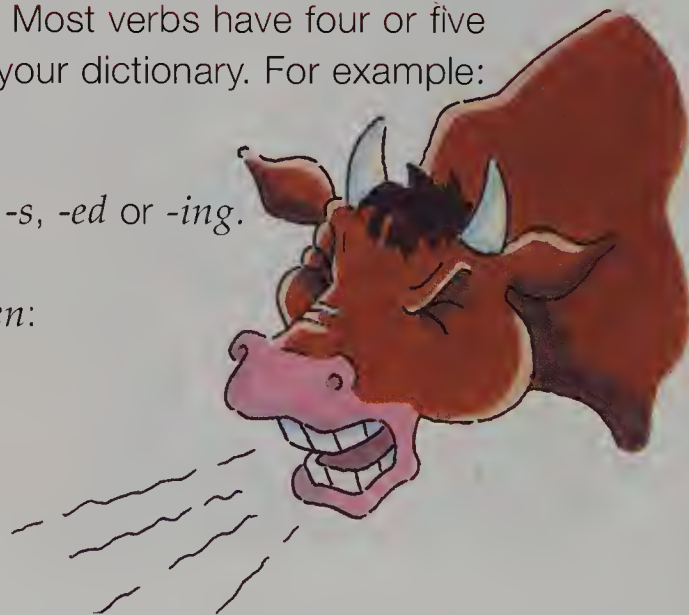
break *verb* breaks, breaking, broke, broken

fall *verb* falls, falling, fell, fallen

-s, *-ing*, *-ed*, *-en* are the **regular** verb endings.

But some verb forms are **irregular**. For example:

threw (not throw**ed**) *broke* (not break**ed**) *thrown* (not throw**en**)



Verbs have more forms than any other English words, but not nearly as many as some languages. The French verb *jeter*, which means *throw*, has about 30 forms including:

jeter jeté jetes jetons jetez jettent jetai jetais jetterai...

And some languages have hundreds! (Think yourself lucky.)



be and have

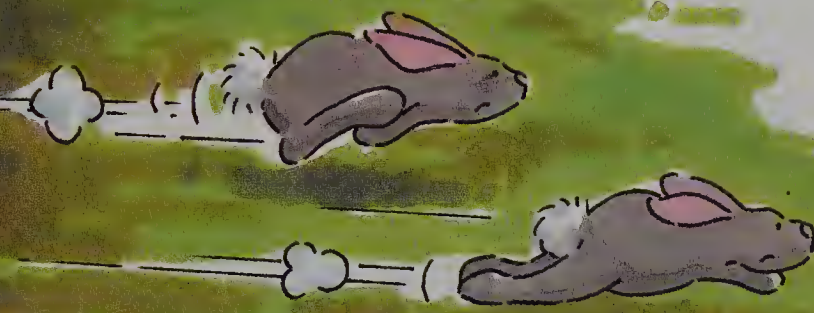
Two of the most important verbs in English are *have* and *be*, and all their different forms.



He has a bad temper He is very angry.

They are very irregular, especially *be*:

be *verb* am are is being was were been
have *verb* has having had



Auxiliary Verbs – the helpers

Often verbs work together in teams, with a **main verb** and one or more *helper verbs* – called *auxiliaries* – in front of it. This makes a **verb phrase**:

The three hikers had been walking all day.
Grump was bellowing at the top of his voice.

had, been, and was are the helper verbs.
walking and bellowing are the main verbs.

Some more **auxiliary verbs** are:

can could will shall would should may might

Bulls can move very quickly for such large animals.
Harold should have stayed on his side of the gate.
He might have been hurt very badly.

Another busy auxiliary verb is *do*, with its forms *does, doing, did, done*:

Grump really does hate hikers.
Poor Harold didn't have a chance.

Tense past, present, future

Tense is about *time*: past, present, and future.

The past tense

is for saying what *happened*, or how things *were*. It is the usual tense for stories.

Simon called his boss and told him he had hidden the secret documents inside an old football under the park bench. But when he put down the phone, the football had gone.

The present tense

is for describing things, for writing stage or film directions and giving commentaries.

Simon is a spy, but not a very good one. Everyone knows he's a spy. He wears sunglasses and a long overcoat, which are a complete giveaway. And he loses things all the time.



The future tense

is for saying what will happen, or may happen.

“Simon’s boss will be furious when he finds out. He might even give him the sack. Simon won’t be using that hiding place again. Silly man!”

The future is the tense for giving *forecasts* and *predictions*:

Tomorrow will be wet and windy.

Simple tenses

English verbs, on their own, can only show two tenses – present and past. These are called **simple tenses**:

Verb	Call	Tell	Hide
PRESENT	<i>call</i> or <i>calls</i>	<i>tell</i> or <i>tells</i>	<i>hide</i> or <i>hides</i>
PAST	<i>called</i>	<i>told</i>	<i>hid</i>

Which of these has a *regular* past tense? Which are *irregular*?

Why do you think there are two forms to choose from for the present tense?
(You can find out on page 24–25.)

Other tenses

There are other ways of making tenses with the help of auxiliary verbs like:

is was will have were ...

For example:

PRESENT	<i>is calling</i>	<i>am telling</i>	<i>are hiding</i>
PAST	<i>was calling</i>	<i>was telling</i>	<i>were hiding</i>
	<i>has called</i>	<i>have told</i>	<i>have hidden</i>
	<i>had called</i>	<i>had told</i>	<i>had hidden</i>
FUTURE	<i>will call</i>	<i>will tell</i>	<i>will hide</i>

Don't mix tenses!

Be careful – especially when you are writing – not to change from one tense to another in mid sentence. It is easy to do, but it's confusing for the reader.



He puts down the phone and saw that the ball has gone.

This sentence is a mess! Which two tenses have been *mixed*? How would you put the sentence right?

Adverbs working with verbs

Adverbs can be used to say *how*, *when*, or *where* something happens:

loudly *angrily* *yesterday* *now* *here* *there*

Grump snorted angrily.

The hikers should be arriving soon.

A large brown bull lives here.

How? *Angrily.*

When? *Soon.*

Where? *Here.*



A lot of English adverbs are formed by adding *-ly* to the end of an adjective.

ADJECTIVE	loud	angry	bad
ADVERB	loudly	angrily	badly

But not all adverbs end in *-ly*. These are adverbs too:

soon *fast* *together* *afterwards* *home . . .*

In most sentences adverbs work with verbs and add to their meaning:

Adverbs are real wanderers. You can find them almost anywhere in a sentence.

Suddenly there was a loud roar.

Grump snorted crossly and lowered his horns menacingly.

Harold was soon running frantically towards the gate.

Some adverbs can be used with adjectives – or with other adverbs – to alter their meaning.

more *most* *very* *extremely* *dreadfully* *horribly*
absolutely *less* *quite* *fairly* *rather* *slightly* *so* *not . . .*

Here are some phrases with these adverbs in:

absolutely furious

a very loud roar

horribly sharp horns

rather crossly

less friendly

quite soon

What difference do these adverbs make?

Prepositions and conjunctions

Prepositions are small words but they are very busy ones. Most of them are to do with the *position* things are in or the *direction* they're going.

*in on under over by from to with beside through between up
across into at with of...*

They are used in front of nouns, or noun phrases, or even pronouns, to make short phrases like:



across some fields

through mud

over the gate

Conjunctions link up words and phrases and sentences. The conjunctions that are used most are *and*, *or* and *but*:

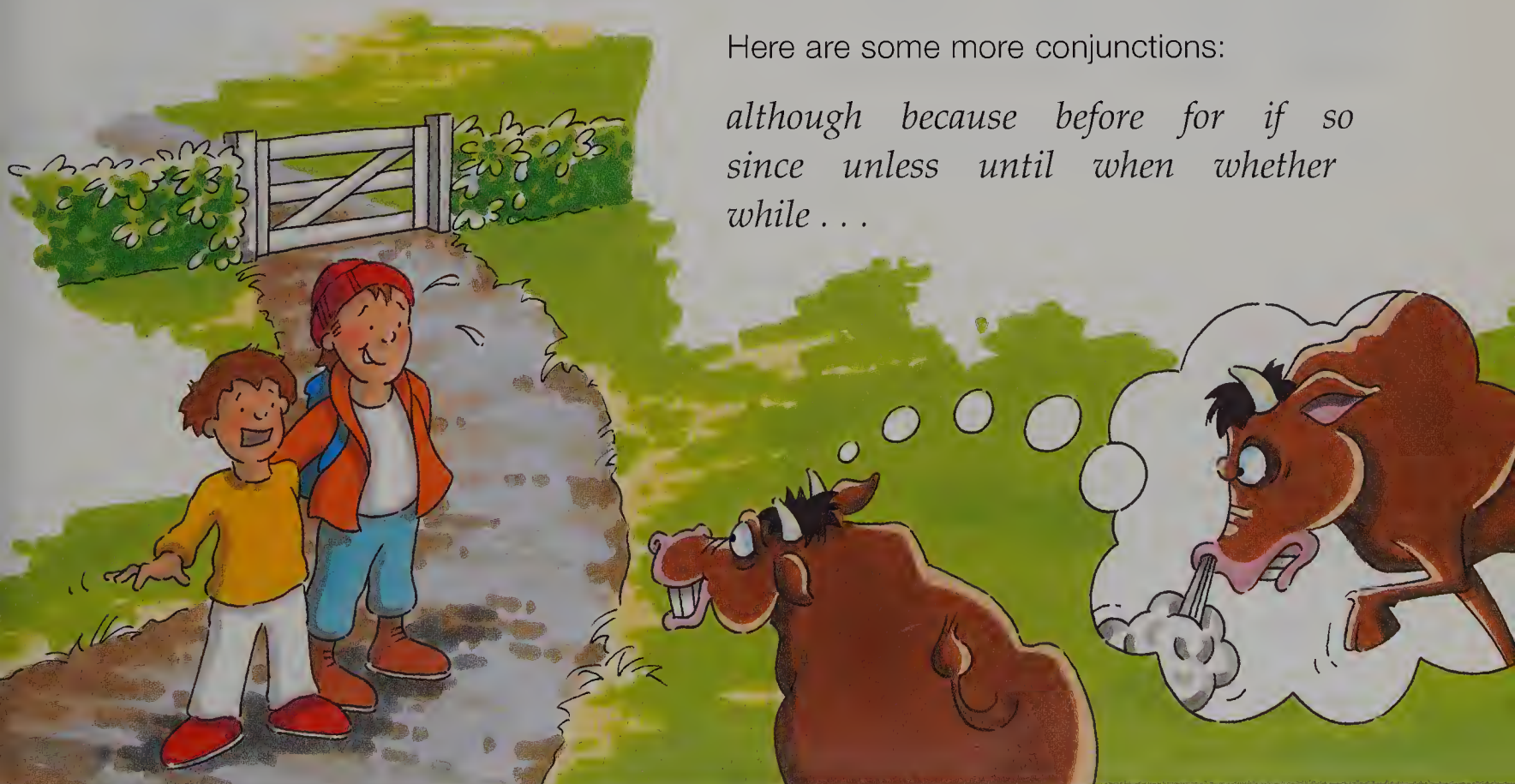
Harold and Jamila

a short cut across the field or a long walk round

The animal looked friendly but it was mean and bad-tempered.

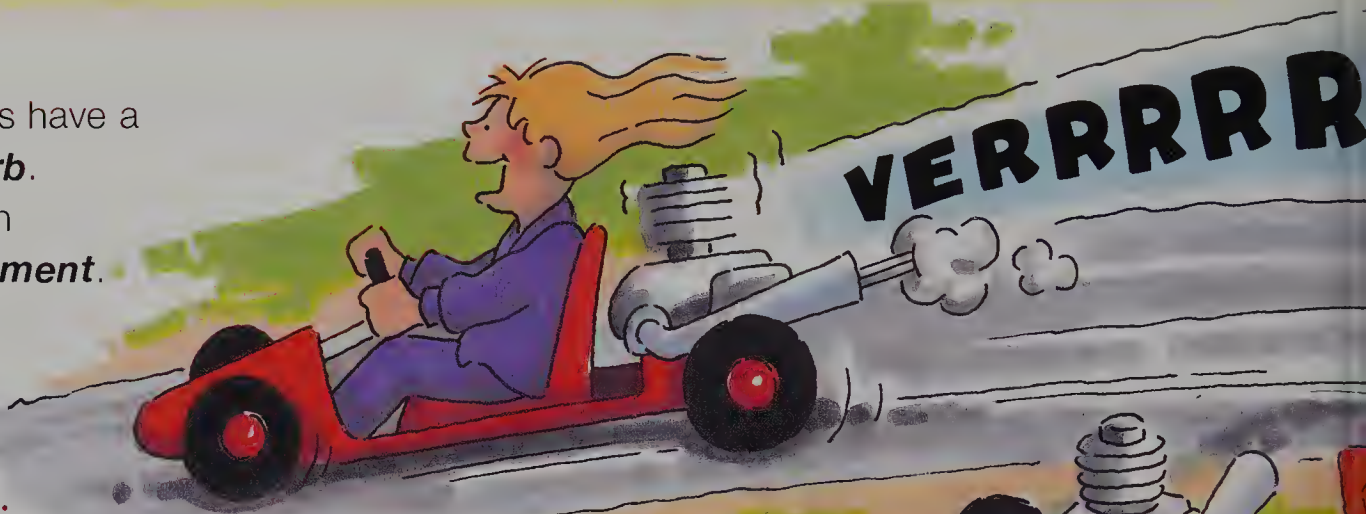
Here are some more conjunctions:

*although because before for if so
since unless until when whether
while...*



What's in a sentence? the main parts

Most *full* sentences have a **subject** and a **verb**.
Some also have an **object** or **complement**.



Subject

The **subject** of a sentence is *who* or *what* the sentence is about.

Lucy won the race.

In this sentence *Lucy* is the subject. She won the race.

The green car came last.

In this sentence *the green car* is the subject. It came last.

It got a puncture in the front tyre.

In this sentence *it* is the subject. *It* got the puncture.

The subject of a sentence can be:

a **noun** (like *Lucy*)

a **noun phrase** (like *the green car*)

or a **pronoun** (like *it*)

The subject can be singular or plural:

The other cars were a long way behind.

What is the subject of this sentence? Is it singular or plural?



Predicate

The rest of a sentence, without the subject, is called the **predicate**.

The predicate is the part of the sentence that has the verb in.

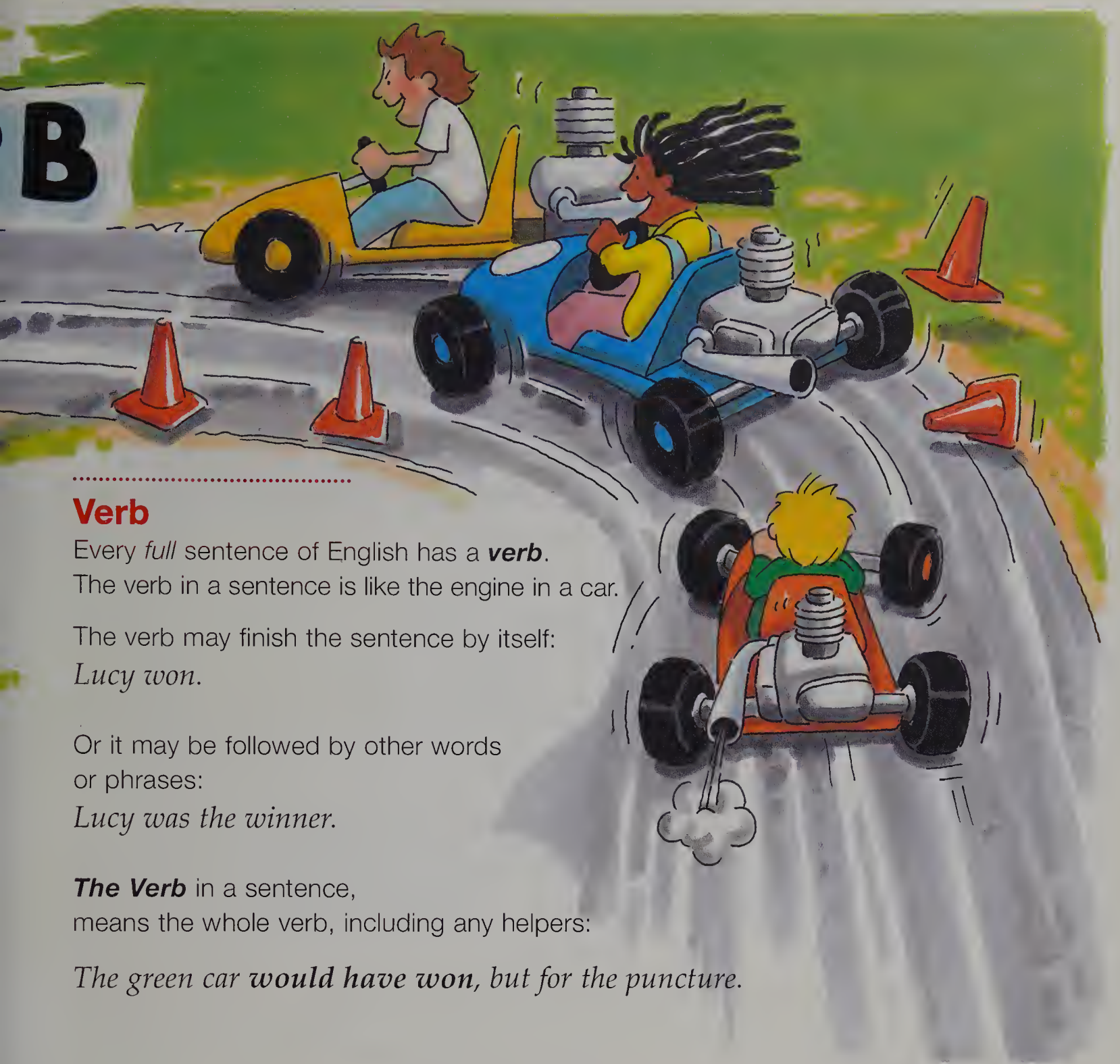
... won the race. *... came last.*

... were a long way behind.

The predicate can be a verb on its own:

... swerved. *... stopped.* *... lost.*

Think of some different subjects you could give to these predicates.



Verb

Every *full* sentence of English has a **verb**.
The verb in a sentence is like the engine in a car.

The verb may finish the sentence by itself:
Lucy won.

Or it may be followed by other words
or phrases:

Lucy was the winner.

The Verb in a sentence,
means the whole verb, including any helpers:

The green car would have won, but for the puncture.

Object

Sometimes the verb has an **object** as well as a subject:

Lucy beat Tim. *Tim's car hit the cones.*

The object is who or what something happens to, like being *beaten* or getting *hit*.

Complement

In some sentences the verb is followed by a description of the subject:

Tim looks angry.  *Lucy is the champion.* 

This part is called the **complement**. The complement says what the subject *is*, or what the subject is like.

Agreement verbs and subjects

In English – and in many other languages – the verb may change its form to suit different subjects. This is called **agreeing**.

The verb that changes most is the verb *to be*. These are the changes it makes:

Subject	Present Tense	Past Tense
<i>I</i>	<i>am</i>	<i>was</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>were</i>
<i>he, she, it</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>was</i>
<i>we</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>were</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>were</i>
<i>they</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>were</i>

Other verbs hardly change at all.

Present Tense	Past Tense
<i>like</i>	<i>liked</i>
<i>like</i>	<i>liked</i>
<i>likes</i>	<i>liked</i>
<i>like</i>	<i>liked</i>
<i>like</i>	<i>liked</i>
<i>like</i>	<i>liked</i>

See how agreement works in sentences:

I am your friend.

You were my friend.

She is our friend.

I like pizza.

He likes kebabs.

We like ice-cream.

If the subject is a noun or a noun phrase, the verb still has to agree:

Tim likes kebabs.
(same as with he)

Lucy and I like ice-cream.
(same as with we)

This spinach is delicious.
(same as with it)

Hot-dogs are disgusting.
(same as with they)



Singular or plural?

These pronouns are singular.

<i>someone</i>	<i>anyone</i>	<i>everyone</i>	<i>no one</i>
<i>something</i>	<i>anything</i>	<i>everything</i>	<i>nothing</i>

That's why you say:



Everyone likes pizza and *Nothing beats ice cream*

What verbs would you use if these pronouns were plural?

What about collective nouns? A collective noun, like *team*, is singular, even though there are lots of players in it.

So should you say:

Our team is winning OR *Our team are winning?*



The fact is, people say both, and both are all right. Which do you say?

Using pronouns

There are five words in English which can *only* be used as subjects.

They are the personal pronouns: *I* *he* *she* *we* *they*
In other parts of the sentence you use: *me* *him* *her* *us* *them*

She passed it to me. *I passed it to them.*

They passed it to us. *We passed it to him.* *He dropped it.*

Be careful when you join two pronouns with *and*.

You should say **He and I** are friends, NOT *Him and me* are friends.

subjects



Building sentences and making changes

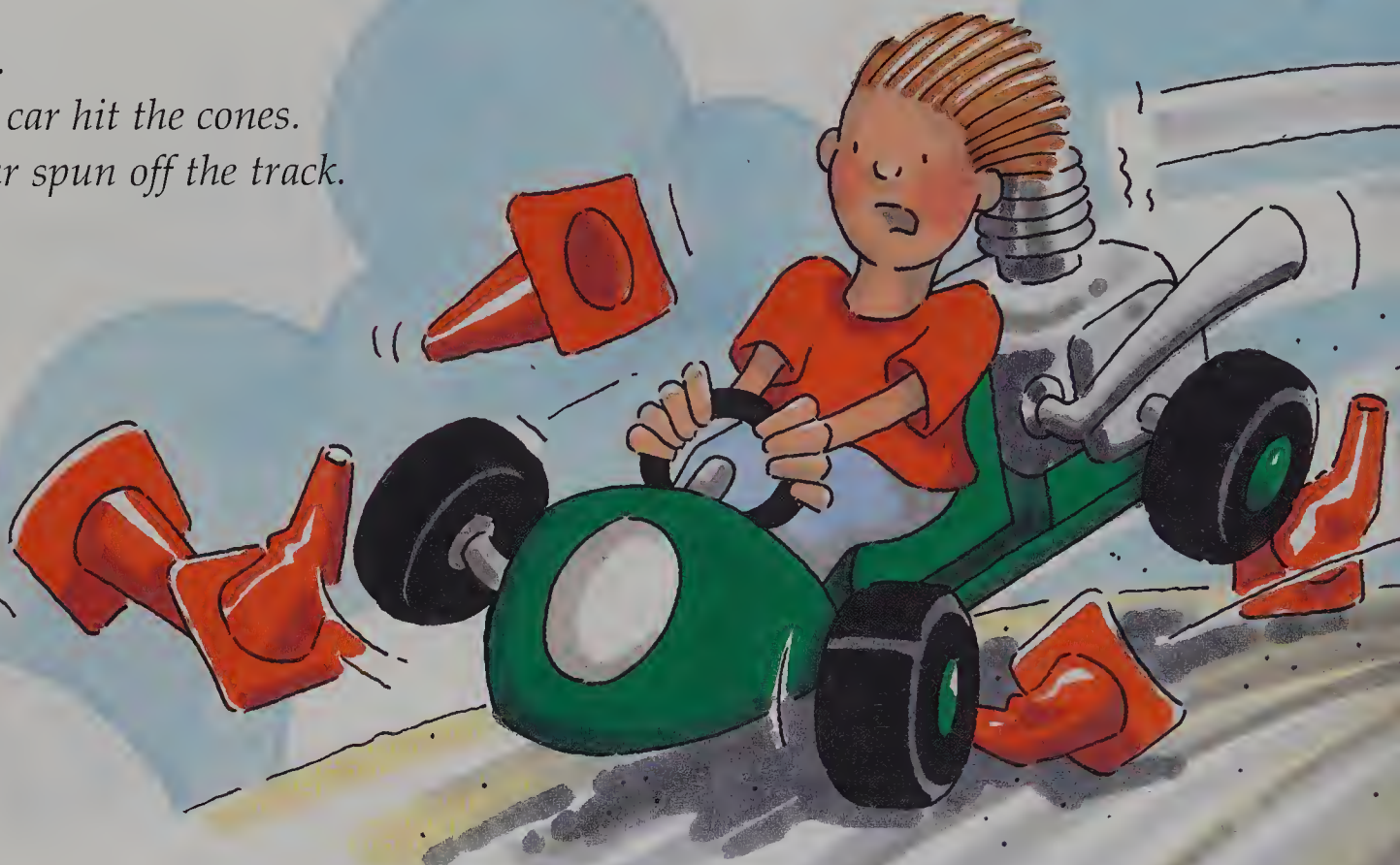
The simplest kinds of sentence are short **statements**, like these, with the subject at the beginning and the verb next:

For example:

Lucy won.

The green car hit the cones.

The red car spun off the track.



No it's not!

Adding the word *not* to a statement makes it *negative*.

Lucy has won the race.

Lucy has not won the race.

has not can be shortened to *hasn't*

The word *not* is placed in the middle of the verb.

So, if the verb is just one word, it may need a helper to make it negative:

Tim won the race.

Tim did not win the race.

did not can be shortened to *didn't*

Which is the helper verb?

There are other ways, too, to make a sentence negative:

Nothing has happened yet.

No one came near.

I never eat ice cream.

This room is untidy.

In English you only need one of these words to make a sentence negative.

For example: *I didn't tell him **nothing*** should be

*I told him **nothing*** or *I didn't tell him anything.*

Questions

Remember there are two kinds of question – See page 5.

A Yes/No question is like a statement, but usually with words in a different order. It is the different order of words that turns it into a question:

Statement

You have walked a long way

That bull is friendly.

They did have a good time.

(They had a good time.)

Question

Have you walked a long way?

Is that bull friendly?

Did they have a good time?

Where has the subject moved to in these questions?

Wh- questions nearly always begin with a Wh- word – whether it's the subject or not.

What is the matter? Why are you looking worried?

How did Harold get away? Who won the race?

What do you think is the subject in each of these questions?



Commands

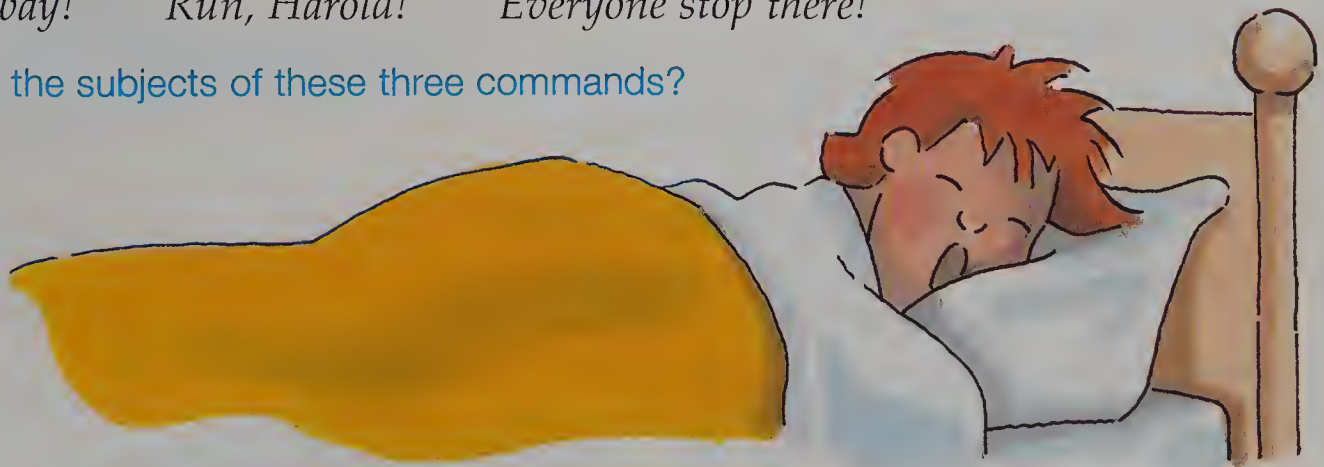
Commands often have no subject. The subject is whoever you're speaking to.

Stop! *Enjoy your walk.* *Sleep well.*

But you can give commands a subject if you want to:

You go away! *Run, Harold!* *Everyone stop there!*

Which are the subjects of these three commands?



In writing you have punctuation marks to show different kinds of sentence – ?!

In speech you don't. But there are differences you can hear.

Read the sentences on this page and listen for changes in your voice – especially at the end.

Extra parts phrases and clauses

You can make short sentences longer by adding *phrases* or *clauses*.

Phrases

Let's start with a plain, simple sentence that has no extra parts.

Simon hid the secret documents.

Here it is with an extra phrase added:

Simon hid the secret documents inside an old football.

Extra phrases don't have to be added to the end of a sentence. For example:

For some strange reason Simon hid the secret documents inside an old football.

Clauses

Here is a new sentence.

First you see it on its own, then with a **clause** added:

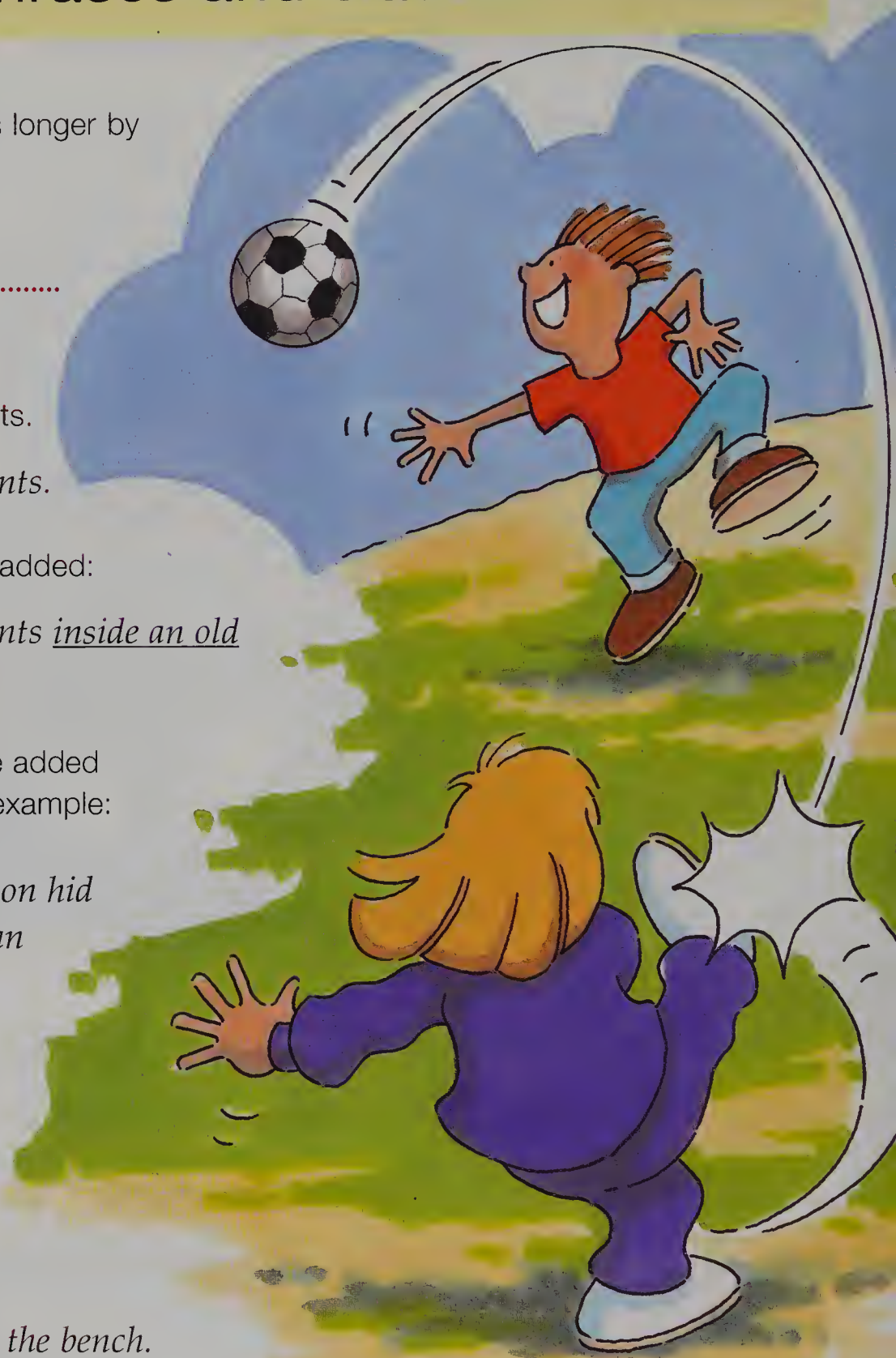
Simon left the football under the bench.

Simon left the football under the bench while he made a phone-call.

A clause is another short sentence, with its own subject and verb. So, in the longer sentence, there are **two** clauses:

*Simon left the football under the bench
+ he made a phone call*

But instead of being written as two sentences, with a full stop between them, they are joined by the word *while* to make one big sentence.



Clauses and Conjunctions

One way to connect clauses is to use a **conjunction**. There is a list of conjunctions on page 21.

Here are some conjunctions at work joining clauses:

Simon followed the children home because they had found his football full of secret papers.

Give me that ball or you'll be sorry.

We're not letting you have it unless you say please.

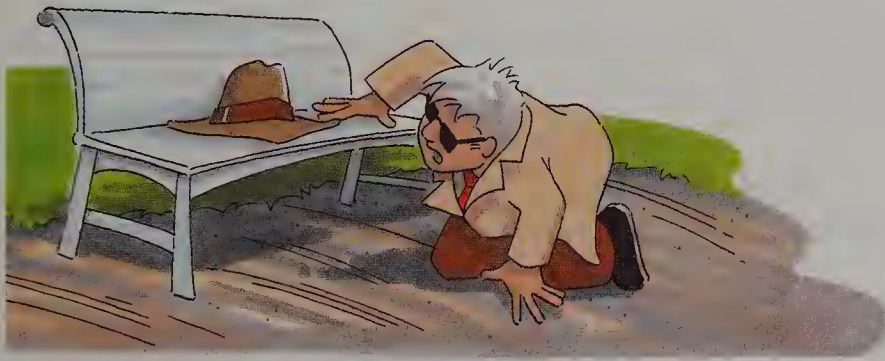


Conjunctions don't have to be in *between* the clauses. A conjunction can be at the *beginning* of a sentence. Like this:

When he came out of the phone box, the ball had gone.

Who, which, that

The pronouns *who*, *which* and *that* can be used to connect clauses, too, but in a slightly different way:



That's the man who followed us home.

He wants the football that we found under the bench.

Simple or complex?

A **simple** sentence has only one clause.

Give me that ball.

Simple Sentence

You'll be sorry.

Simple Sentence

A **complex** sentence has two or more clauses joined together.

Give me that ball or you'll be sorry.

Complex Sentence



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abstract noun	Something that is abstract is something you can't see or touch. 'Danger', 'fear', 'luck', 'fun', etc are all abstract nouns. 9
adjective	Adjectives are describing words that are used with nouns. 6, 10, 12
adverb	Adverbs tell you how, when, or where something happens. Adverbs like 'very', 'quite', etc. can be used with adjectives or other adverbs to change their meaning. 6, 13, 20
agreement	Having the right verb with a subject is called 'agreement'. E.g. in: 'They are ...' the subject and verb agree, but they don't agree in: 'They is ...' 24
apostrophe	Apostrophes are little marks like commas, but above the line. They can be used to show that something has been left out, and to show possession. 11
auxiliary verb	You can use auxiliary verbs in front of a main verb to make verb phrases. Auxiliary means 'helper'. 17
clause	Clauses are small sentences which can be joined together to make larger sentences. 28
collective noun	This is a word for a set or group of things. 'Party', 'crowd', 'gang' ... are all collective nouns. 9
command	A command is a sentence which tells you or asks you to do something. 4, 27
common noun	Common nouns are general words for people and things, like 'bull', 'gate', 'farmer', 'sister' ... 8
comparative	The comparative form of an adjective or an adverb means 'more'. The comparative of 'hot' is 'hotter'. 13
complex sentence	A complex sentence has two or more connected clauses. 29
conjunction	This is a word you can use to connect words, phrases and sentences: e.g. and, or, because. 6, 21
exclamation	An exclamation is sentence said with feeling, such as surprise or anger. 5
full sentence	A full sentence has none of its meaning left out. 'Are you scared?' is a full sentence. 'Scared?' is not a full sentence, though it may do the job just as well. 5
future tense	The future tense is for saying what will – or might – happen. 18

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The main verb is the last verb in a verb phrase, and it gives the whole verb phrase its meaning.	
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Words like like 'not', 'never', 'no', make sentences negative.	
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Nouns are words for people and things.	
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Noun phrases describe or name people and things.	
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If an action is done to someone or something, that person or thing is the object of the sentence.	
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This means the same as a word class.	
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There are three persons in grammar: The first is for whoever is speaking; the second is for whoever is being spoken to; the third is for whoever (or whatever) is being spoken about.	
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A phrase is a string of words which makes sense but is not a whole sentence.	
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When a word is used about two or more people or things it is plural.	
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This is a noun that is always plural, like 'scissors'.	
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A possessive noun is one that shows belonging. It ends with 's or s'.	
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This is a pronoun which is used to show belonging, like 'his', 'my', 'yours', etc.	
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The predicate is the whole of a sentence except the subject. It is what is said about the subject.	
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Prepositions are words which tell you the positions of things or the direction they are going: e.g. in, on, under, at.	
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Pronouns are words like 'he' 'she' and 'it' which can be used in place of nouns and noun phrases.	
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The name of a particular person or thing is called a proper noun.	

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question	A question is a sentence which asks something.	5, 27
regular	Words which follow rules are regular. Words that are exceptions to the rules are irregular.	8, 13, 16
sentence	A sentence is a whole thought or idea put into words.	4, 22
simple sentence	A simple sentence has only one clause in it.	29
simple tense	Simple tenses can be given by a single verb, without any need for auxiliaries.	19
singular	A word is singular when it is used about one person or thing, not two or more.	8, 24, 25
statement	A statement is a sentence that gives information or tells part of a story.	4, 26
subject	The subject of a sentence is who or what it is about.	22, 24
superlative	The superlative is the form of an adjective or adverb that means 'most'. The superlative of 'hot' is 'hottest'.	13
tense	Tense is about time: past, present, or future.	18
uncountable	An uncountable noun is one which has no plural. 'Grass', 'mud', 'butter', etc. are uncountable.	9
verb	A doing, being, or having word, which you find in every full sentence.	6, 16, 23, 24
verb phrase	A verb phrase is a group of words which do the job of a verb.	17
word class	A set of words that can all do the same kind of job in a sentence. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. are word classes.	6
word form	Words may change into different forms to fit into different sentences, or show different tenses.	7, 8, 13, 16, 24

Grammar

For children of eight and upwards

Grammar explains the basics of grammar in a way that is easy to understand.

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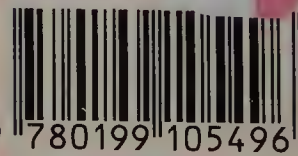
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