

Grammar for the Year 6 GPS exam

All the grammar terminology and structures needed for your child to answer the grammar questions in the year 6 SATS test

Your child will be familiar with most of the grammar terms having studied them this year and will have practiced identifying the various sentence structures which are tested in the exam. Reinforcing that knowledge by discussing the exam content and working through the exercises in this booklet, will hopefully boost your child's confidence so that they will do their very best come exam day.

The grammar questions break down into three main areas: questions about parts of speech or word class of individual words; questions about how sentences link together; questions about sentence structures, which are to do with tense or convey tone as well as meaning.

The most difficult questions are to do with this last category and include questions about passive and active structures and the subjunctive. These are difficult concepts to grasp. Your child needs to be comfortable with the content of the easier questions to have the knowledge and confidence to tackle these more challenging questions.

The grammar explanations in this booklet have been simplified. Fuller explanations of the grammar for the year 6 GPS exam can be found on the TES website. Carol Vorderman's 'Help your kids with grammar and spelling' covers more content than is necessary for the GPS exam but nonetheless is an excellent book with good examples and explanations. Raymond Murphy's 'Essential Grammar in Use' (Elementary) is a self study workbook that covers almost all the grammar terms needed to answer the GPS questions. The explanations and examples in this book are excellent and most children will be able to work through the exercises independently.

All the grammar terms at a glance

Use this as a checklist. Learn the terms by remembering examples for each word.

Noun

Proper noun
Abstract noun

Article

Determiner

Verb

Tense

Present

Past

Future

Present simple

Past simple

Present progressive

Past progressive

Present perfect

Past perfect

Passive

Active

Command

Modal verb

Subjunctive

Antonym

Synonym

Prefix

Suffix

Direct speech

Indirect speech

Adjective

conjunction

subordinating conjunction

co-ordinating conjunction

preposition

sub-ordinate clause

relative clause

adverbs

subject and object

Pronoun

Possessive pronoun

Question tags

capital letter

contractions

Nouns

noun; a person place or thing.

The **pen** is on the **desk** next to the **lamp**.

Typical question: underline the nouns in a sentence.

common mistake: misidentifying the noun.

proper noun: a noun that needs a capital letter.

London is the capital city of **England**.

Dates are considered to be proper nouns e.g.

June 5th 2007

Typical question: underline the words that need capitals.

common mistake: capitalising *all* nouns.

abstract noun: an idea or concept

The cat had no **hope** of reaching the tree.

typical question: underline the abstract noun a sentence.

common mistake: misidentifying the noun or underlining all nouns.

noun phrase: a group of words that names someone or something.

There's the man that rescued the girl.

We've found the place where the pirate treasure was hidden.

Often the noun phrase can be replaced by a pronoun.

We've found it.

We've found the place where the pirate treasure was hidden.

typical question: underline the noun phrase in the sentence.

common mistake: underlining the whole sentence or just the noun.

Verbs & Tenses

verb: an action.

Billy **hit** the ball.

Martha **plays** guitar.

Penelope **runs** for her local club.

typical question: identify the verb in this sentence.

common mistake: confusing verbs with adverbs.

verb* 'to be': used to show a state of being.

It's important to know this verb in present and past forms as they are used as auxiliary verbs.

Present: am is are. Past: was & were

I **am** ten.

She **is** my grandmother

They **are** friends of mine.

He **was** on time.

We **were** first to finish.

typical question: identify the verbs in this sentence.

common mistake: not recognising *am is are was were* as a verb.

tense: verb form to indicate time.

The verb in a sentence changes to show when something happened. Auxiliary or 'helping' verbs are needed for some tenses.

Jimmy **eats** his dinner at school. **[present]**

Jimmy **ate** his favourite desert. **[past]**

Jimmy **has eaten** his lunch. **[present perfect; a form of past tense]**

Jimmy **had eaten** his lunch and was ready to go out. **[past perfect]**

Jimmy **will be** at home at 5 'o' clock tonight. **[future]**

typical question: change this sentence from present to past, present to future etc

common mistake: not recognising present perfect as a past tense.

present simple: expressions using verbs in simple present form.

This tense is used to talk about things that regularly or usually happen.

I go to school each day.

My mum works at a bank.

A cheetah runs fast.

A mouse eats cheese.

typical question: write in a verb in the present tense to complete this sentence.

common mistake:

past simple: expressions using verb in simple past form.

Most passed tense verbs end 'ed'

John passed the exam.

They finished the race.

We asked for some help.

typical question:

common mistake: not recognising verbs that don't end 'ed'

present progressive: used to talk about actions that are in progress now.

This tense needs the auxiliary verb 'to be' + the main verb + ing.

I am eating my breakfast.

She is reading a book.

They are rowing a boat.

typical question: underline the part of this paragraph that is written in present progressive.

common mistake:

Careful! This tense often written with contractions.

She's reading a book.

We're playing football.

I'm drinking my tea.

typical question: underline the part of this paragraph that is written in present progressive.
common mistake: not recognising present progressive in contracted form.

past progressive: used to talk about continuous actions which took place sometime in the past.

Similar to present progressive, this tense needs the auxiliary verb to be in the past tense + the main verb + ing.

She was driving her car .

I was texting my friend.

They were following the others

typical question: identify the part of the sentence which is past progressive.

common mistake: missing the verb 'to be' in the past progressive structure.

present perfect; used to talk about events in the recent past which maybe be on-going.

This is a form of past tense not present!

**This tense uses the auxiliary verb 'have' with the past participle of the verb.
auxiliary verb have (has)+ verb in past participle form.**

Dad has driven for two hours, but we've still got 100 miles to go.

I have hidden my chocolate bar so my brother won't eat it.

We have finished our homework and handed it in on time!

careful! this tense is often written with contractions.

Dad's driven for two hours, but we've still got 100 miles to go.

She's gone to Scotland and won't be back for a fortnight.

He's been to Brazil several times.

typical question: identify which sentence (from a selection of 4) is written in the present perfect.

common mistake: pupils mistake the contraction of the first verb believing it to be 'is' rather than 'has'.

past perfect; used to talk about two past events to show which happened first.

**This tense uses the auxiliary verb 'had' with the past participle of the verb.
auxiliary had+ verb in past participle form.**

Susan had eaten a big breakfast, but he was still hungry.

Simon picked up the gun he had fired.

To date this has never come up in an exam.

present: sentences about current time.

Pupils need to be able to identify or write sentences in a present tense, i.e.; present simple or present progressive.

past: sentences about past time.

Pupils need to be able to identify or write sentences in a past tense; i.e. past simple or past progressive.

future: sentences about events in the future.

Pupils need to be able to identify or write sentences in a future tense; e.g. future using 'will'.

We **will** be attending the concert next Thursday.

passive and active

passive (also called passive voice); subject and object are reversed. This structure needs an extra verb 'to be' and the past participle.

verb 'to be' in present or past tense + verb in past participle form.

Coca-cola **is produced** in Texas.

Sushi **is eaten** in Japan.

The bridge **was built** by the council.

active: normal structure of a sentence where the subject and object are in normal positions and the verb is not preceded by the verb 'to be'.

Texas **produces** Coca-cola.

The council **built** the bridge.

John **sat** on the chair.

command: a sentence that uses a verb at the start of the main clause and where the object of the sentence is you.

Pass the salt.

Please **sit** down.

Don't **cross** the street.

If you are involved in the concert, **arrive** before 7pm.

typical question: Underline the preposition in this sentence.

common mistake: not identifying the sentence as a command if the verb doesn't start the sentence.

Modal Verbs

modal verb: verbs which indicate choice, possibility, ability or obligation.

would should could may can shall ought to must might

I **should** go to the doctors, I don't feel very well.

We **would** go to the party if we **could** get a lift.

They **might** go to Portugal for their holiday.

typical question: Indicate which sentences show possibility or certainty.

common mistake: misunderstanding that a possibility that is probable is still a possibility

subjunctive or subjunctive mood: a particular verb pattern used to show a urgency or importance.

This is advanced grammar and by far the most difficult concept to understand.

Used after certain verbs e.g. demand command ask advise insist suggest.

The structure has a subject ,the verb to show importance or urgency, the object (the person the advice is for) and the verb in the simple form,e.g the verb 'to go'

I **suggested** that he **leave** early. **NOT** I suggested that he leaves early. **X**

It's **important** that he **come** on time **NOT** It's important that he comes on time. **X**

I **insist** we **not go** there. **NOT** I insist we don't go there

If I **were** you I would buy a new computer. **NOT** If I was you I would buy a new computer **X**

typical questions: Insert the correct verb in the sentence to form the subjunctive mood.

common mistakes: using 2nd person form of the verb as shown in the examples.

pronouns

pronoun: a word that stands in for a noun.

E.g: I he she it they we them these

possessive pronoun: a pronoun that shows ownership.

E.g: his hers ours theirs mine its

Which, who, when are special pronouns that ask a question.

The dog wagged **its** tale to show **his** owner **he** was happy.

He was certain that **he**'d seen **him** with **his** friends earlier that day.

typical questions: underline all prepositions in this sentence.

common mistakes: not identifying 'its' 'his' 'her' 'their'

articles and determiners

article: the a an

The chair was next to **a** heater.

The fruit bowl contained **an** apple and **an** orange.

typical questions: identify the articles in this sentence.

common mistakes: forgetting that 'a' is an article.

determiner: words placed in front of a noun to make it clear what the noun refers to

the a, an this, that, these, those, my, your, his, her, its, our, their
a few, a little, much, many, a lot of, most, some, any, enough
one, ten, thirty all, both, half, either, neither, each, every
other, another.

There were **a few** tickets left for the show.

Some people are on **the** pitch, they think it's all over!

Neither team qualified for **an** award.

typical questions: Underline the determiners in this sentence.

common mistakes: because many determiners are also other parts of speech, pupils find it hard to recognise their function as a determiner in a sentence, for example 'the' and 'a' are articles **and** determiners.

antonym and synonyms prefixes and suffixes

antonym: a word with the opposite meaning to another word.

backward - forward bad - good beautiful - ugly before - after
begin - end below - above bent - straight best - worst

typical questions: Give antonyms for the following words ...

common mistakes: Words don't match! Antonyms should be the same word class, for example an antonym for the adjective *brave* should also be an adjective such as *cowardly*, not *coward* as this is a noun.

synonym

begin - start elegant - stylish calm - quiet cool — chilly crooked — bent
cry — sob cut — gash dangerous — hazardous

typical questions: Give antonyms for the following words ...

common mistakes: Words don't match! As with antonyms, synonyms should be the same word class, for example a synonym for the verb *end* could be *stop* not *stopped*, as this is in the wrong tense, or *conclusion* which is a noun.

prefix: letter or group of letters added to the beginning of a word to make a new word, e.g;

re de un anti dis in sub bi

replay deconstruct untidy anti-clockwise disagree incapable subway bicycle

suffix: a letter or group of letters added to the end of a word to make a new word:

like ship able ness ful est ment ish

lifelike relationship comfortable kindness closest development boyish

direct speech: the actual words said by a person placed in speech marks.

indirect speech: also called reported speech. Telling someone what someone else said.

"I like walking my dog" said Mary. (direct speech)

Peter said **"Can you repeat that please John?"** (direct speech)

"If it rains, I won't go out" said Harry. (direct speech)

indirect speech does not use speech marks.

When reporting speech the verb goes back one tense. Compare the verbs in the sentences below in indirect speech with the sentences above in direct speech.

Mary said that she **liked** walking her dog.

Peter asked if John **could** repeat what he said.

Harry said that he **wouldn't** go out if it rained.

typical question: change direct speech into indirect speech.

common mistake: not changing the verb tense when converting direct to indirect speech.

adjectives and adverbs

adjective: a describing word.

beautiful disgusting interesting clever nice imaginative

An adjective can be placed before a noun or at the end of a noun phrase

The **beautiful** sculpture was created by the **imaginative** artist.

The team were **happy**.

typical questions: identify the adjectives in this sentence.

change the noun shown to an adjective e.g. wood - wooden, mystery - mysterious

change the adjective shown to a noun e.g. happy - happiness, imaginative - imagination

common mistakes: when asked to change adjective to noun, pupils often change it to an adverb e.g. happy—happily-x

proper adjective: an adjective requiring a capital letter.

These are most often adjectives to do with nationality,e.g:

French German English Polish

adverb: a word that shows how an action (verb) is performed.

Many adverbs end 'ly' but not all.

endlessly firmly delightfully quickly lightly delicately beautifully truthfully
very too almost also only enough so quite almost rather

The referee spoke **firmly** to the team captain.

The ballerina danced **delicately** to the gentle music.

Mr Best spoke **confidently** to the large crowd.

In these examples the **adverb** follows the **verb**.

Not all adverbs end 'ly'.

The door was left **open**.

adverbs also modify adjectives and other adverbs,e.g.

The actor's performance was **hugely** impressive. (**impressive** is an adjective)

My cat can moves **very quickly** when a dog is chasing her.

(**very** & **quickly** are adverbs)

Usain Bolt runs **really fast**!

(**really** is an adverb, **fast** is also an adverb as it is the way in which Usain Bolt runs)

prepositions

preposition: a word to show position in space, direction or time, e.g:

in at on beside opposite next to under after soon

Ginny's office was **opposite the cinema.**

James worked **at his father's shop **during** the holiday.**

typical questions: Identify the prepositions in this sentence.
common mistakes: identifying all short words as prepositions.

conjunctions

conjunctions: connect words, phrases and clauses.

Two types to learn co-ordinating conjunctions & sub-ordinating conjunctions need to be learnt.

co-ordinating conjunctions

The mnemonic **FANBOYS** is a good way to remember all the co-ordinating conjunctions.

for and nor but or yet so

Matilda likes chocolate **but she prefers ice-cream.**

Best was a world class striker **yet he play in the World Cup.**

sub-ordinating conjunctions: e.g:

even if once now that since though unless until when where while

I haven't been back to Moscow **since the chess competition.**

I knew we'd won the game **once the third goal went in.**

The conjunction can also start the sentence;

****Once** the third goal went in, I knew we'd won the game.**

typical questions: Which sentence has a sub-ordinating conjunction, which has a co-ordinating conjunction

common mistakes: confusing sub-ordinating and co-ordinating conjunctions.

Clauses

Clauses: a sentence which has a subject and object and a verb.

Pupils need to know three types; **main clause**, **sub-ordinate clause** and a type of sub-ordinate clause called a **relative clause**.

The main clause is a sentence with a subject, object and verb.

Peter arrived early for his job interview.

The subject is Peter. The object is the interview. The verb is arrived.

Peter arrived early for his job interview **because he took an earlier train.**

because he took an earlier train is a sub-ordinate clause, it needs a main clause; the main clause of the sentence is; Peter arrived early for his job interview

A subordinate clause can be at the beginning or end of a sentence.

Examples:

She felt tired **after she completed the race.**

main clause sub-ordinate clause

Whenever he played he always scored a goal.

sub-ordinate clause main clause

relative clause

This is a type of sub-ordinate clause that uses these words:

who, that, which, whose, where, when.

That's the man who stole my purse!

who stole my purse! is the relative clause.

Examples:

The building, **which was constructed in 1919**, is for sale at £250,000.

The rider **who won the race** did it in a record time

which was constructed in 1919 & who won the race are relative clauses

typical questions: underline the sub-ordinate/ relative clause in this sentence.

what is the main clause in this sentence?

common mistakes: not recognising sub-ordinate clauses when they are at the start of a sentence.

subject and object

The expression **subject and object** refers to a person or thing that is doing the action; the object is the target of that action.

Mary spoke to Julie.

Mary is the **subject**. The verb is **spoke**. The **object** is **Julie**.

Todd hit the nail with the hammer.

Todd is the **subject**. The verb is **hit**. The **object** is **nail**.

questions

question: statement requiring a question mark.
typical question start words;

can have do will are could

Can you see that cat on the wall?

Have you considered walking to school?

Do you think that's a good idea?

using **could** is more polite

"Could you pass the salt please?"

question tags: statements with a question 'tagged' to the end'

If the statement is **positive** the tag is **negative**.

If the statement is **negative** the tag is **positive**.

This **is** the book you asked for, **isn't it**?

You **haven't** had your lunch yet, **have you**?

typical questions: change the statement to a question, e.g.
James likes playing chess - Does James like playing chess?
common mistakes: forgetting to use a question mark!

capital letters

capital letters: correct use of capital letters.

capital letters are needed for:

The start of a sentence , proper nouns (names) , proper adjectives

(nationalities/regions) personal pronoun (I not i)

sentence starts in speech marks & titles (Mr Sir Lord Reverend Doctor etc)

The car , a 1920 silver **Rolls Royce**, was purchased by **Scottish** billionaire Lord **McC**ampbell in 1958.

Peter replied “ **I** see the problem”, he continued “ **I’ll** be with you shortly”

typical questions: why are these words capitalised?

common mistakes: not capitalising nick names, names of pets or unusual names.

Practice Questions

Nouns

Remember that unusual names, nicknames, names of pets and titles still need a capital letter.

1 Underline all nouns in these sentences.

Petra took her dog Barney for a walk around the local park.

Lord Grimshaw and Lady Fordham were married by the Reverend John Barnes at St. Mary's church on May 11th 1931.

2 Underline the proper nouns in these sentences.

London and Paris are two of Europe's largest cities.
Bratislava and Brno, in the Slovakia, produce Skoda cars.

3 Underline the abstract nouns in these sentences.

The unfortunate animal was given no hope of survival.
The sight of the shark caused panic amongst the sailors.

4 What are the noun phrases in these sentences.

Remember that noun phrases can often be replaced with a pronoun - it he she they etc

The small bedroom is next to the bathroom on the third floor of the house.
Billy identified the man he'd seen earlier.

verbs and tenses

For these and other practice questions, start by picking out the technical grammar terms. Look back through this booklet to find examples.

5 Underline the **verbs** in these sentences.

Jacob works at the bank and drives an expensive car.
Susan was reading her favourite book in the the library.

6 Change these sentences to the **past**.

Frank rides his bike to work every day.
Patricia is trying her best to complete the cross-country course.

7 Which sentence is in written in a **future tense**?

Paul's taking a shower.
Howard's just bought a new flute.
Kiera will be there soon.

8 Identify the sentence which is **present progressive**.

Toby was feeling enthusiastic about being chosen for the school team.
Harriet's feeling good about her test results.
Belinda's completed her homework on time.

9 Identify the sentences which are **past progressive**.

Everyone agreed that George was the best player in the team.
At lunchtime Sian was playing table tennis with her friends.
Desmond was injured when he fell at the skate park.

10 Identify the sentence which is in the **present perfect**.

Hannah was drawing a sketch of her grandmother earlier today.
Dan has eaten his lunch and is ready to start work.
Ian wasn't able to find his car keys which made him late for the service.

11 Change this sentence to the **passive voice**.

Joseph gave his permission.

12 Which sentence is **active**?

Insects are eaten in many countries in the far East

Travellers use the QE 2 bridge to cross the Thames.

Fish and Chips are enjoyed by thousands of British people.

13 Insert the correct verb for the **subjunctive form** for each sentence.

The headteacher insisted that he _____ the meeting.

Anne suggested that they _____ on time.

pronouns

14 Underline the **pronouns** in this sentence.

He always practiced his French when he went to Belgium.

15 Change the nouns in this sentence to appropriate **pronouns**.

The man drove a large van and parked the van in a nearby street.

articles and determiners

16 Underline the **articles** in this sentence.

The wedding took place on a Saturday.

17 Underline the **determiners** in this sentence.

Many people envied the few individuals who were chosen for the next round of the contest.

antonym and synonyms prefixes and suffixes

18 Give **antonyms** for these words:

hot slim soft rigid shy delicately

19 Which two words in this sentence are **synonyms**.

After three days of storms the sailors enjoyed some peaceful moments as the sea was now calm.

20 Create an adjective from these nouns by adding a **suffix**.

silk life courage

Create a new word by adding a **prefix and suffix**

turn count trust

adjectives and adverbs

21 Underline the **adjectives** in these sentences.

London's is the world's favourite tourist destination.

Nina didn't like spicy food.

22 Underline the **proper adjectives** in these sentences.

German cars are exported all over the world.

Greek and Turkish orchestras are famous for playing Russian music in their repertoire.

23 What are the **adverbs** in these sentences?

The dancers delighted the audience their beautifully performed duet.

Vienna is renown for it scenic views of the Danube which flows gently through the city.

The referee controversially awarded a penalty which produced a very angry reaction from the team

prepositions

24 Identify the **prepositions** in this sentence.

Lloyd's bank is on the High Street next to the Chemist.

conjunctions

24 Which sentences have a sub-ordinating conjunctions?

Harriet recently bought a new computer even though she is not good with technology.

James likes jazz but he prefers to listen to pop music.

Unless Robin trains everyday he will never be able to complete the marathon.

Desmond twisted his yet he still managed to finish the race.

clauses

25 Underline the subordinate clause in this sentence.

However hard he tried, Kevin could not the high notes of the song.

26 Identify the relative clause in this sentence.

The team's better performance was down to the inspiration of their captain who was the outstanding player of the tournament.

subject and object

27 What is the subject and object of this sentence?

The building was destroyed by fire.

questions

28 Change these statements into questions.

Alice wants to go to the cinema on Thursday.

Hassan is owner of the of the shop.

capital letters

29 Which words need capital letters in these sentences?

sandra and i played our favourite board games on the beach at brighton.

lions often attack hyenas on the african savannah.

answers

1 Petra took her dog Barney for a walk around the local park.

Lord Grimshaw and Lady Fordham were married by the Reverend John Barnes at St.Mary's church on May 11th 1931.

2 London and Paris are two of Europe's largest cities.
Bratislava and Brno, in Slovakia, produce Skoda cars.

3 The unfortunate animal was given no hope of survival.
The sight of the shark caused panic amongst the sailors.

4 The small bedroom is next to the bathroom on the third floor of the house.
Billy identified the man he'd seen earlier.

5 Jacob works at the bank and drives an expensive car.
Susan was reading her favourite book in the the library.

6 Frank rode his bike to work every day.
Patricia was trying her best to complete the cross-country course.

7 Kiera will be there soon.

8 Harriet's feeling good about her test results.

9 At lunchtime Sian was playing table tennis with her friends.

10 Dan has eaten his lunch and is ready to start work.

11 Permission was given by Joseph

12 Travellers use the QE2 bridge to cross the Thames.

13 The headteacher insisted that he attend the meeting.
Anne suggested that they arrive on time.

14 He always practiced his French when he went to Belgium.

15 He drove a large van and parked it in a nearby street.

16 The wedding took place on a Saturday.

17 Many people envied the few individuals who were chosen for the next round of the contest.

18 hot/cold slim/obese soft/rough rigid/flexible shy/confident delicately/carelessly

19 After three days of storms the sailors enjoyed some **peaceful** moments as the sea was now **calm**.

20 **silky** **lifelike** **courageous**
 returnable **uncountable** **untrustworthy**

21 London's is the world's **favourite tourist** destination.
 Nina didn't like **spicy** food.

22 **German** cars are exported all over the world.
 Greek and **Turkish** orchestras are famous for playing music in their repertoire.

23 The dancers delighted the audience their **beautifully** performed duet.
 Vienna is renown for it scenic views of the Danube which flows **gently** through the city.
 The referee **controversially** awarded a penalty and produced a **very** angry
 reaction from the team

24 Lloyd's bank is **on** the High Street **next to** the Chemist.

25 James likes jazz **but** he prefers to listen to pop music.
 Desmond twisted his **yet** he still managed to finish the race.

26 Does Alice want to go to the cinema on Thursday?
 or
 Alice wants to go to the cinema on Thursday, doesn't she?
 Is Hassan the owner of the shop?
 or
 Hassan is owner of the of the shop, isn't he?

27 **However hard he tried,** Kevin could not hit the high notes of the song.

28 The team's better performance was down to the inspiration of their captain **who was the outstanding player of the tournament**.

28 building - subject fire - object

29 **Sandra** and **I** played our favourite board games on the beach at **Brighton**.
 Lions often attack hyenas on the **African** savannah.