

Name: _____ ID#: _____ Date: _____

Lesson #

16

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Layer 1: Collect Prior Knowledge

Scorecard Preview

Directions: Rate yourself on the following scale.

Note: The ratings below do NOT have to *exactly* match to the Scorecard completed at the beginning of the course.

#	Do you...	Pre-Score Always Sometimes Never				
45	Feel overwhelmed by the number of grammar and punctuation rules to learn?	1	2	3	4	5
46	Struggle to remember and correctly apply grammar rules when writing?	1	2	3	4	5
47	Hesitate to write due to confusion over grammar and punctuation rules?	1	2	3	4	5

Investigation

Directions: Follow the prompts in the course to fill in the boxes, below.

A

B

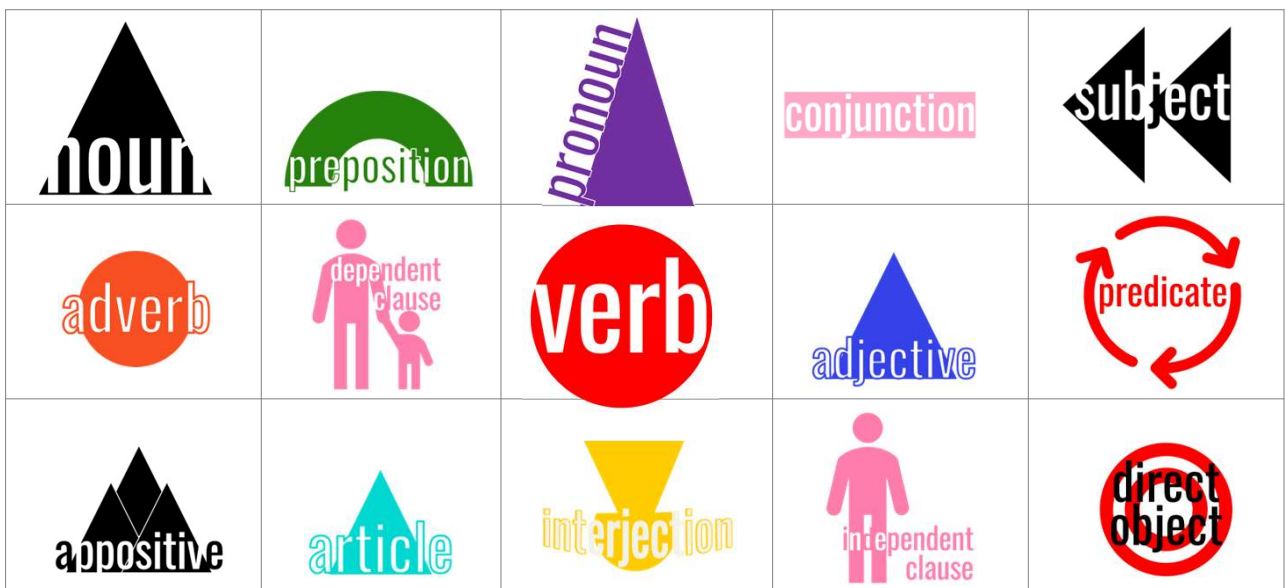
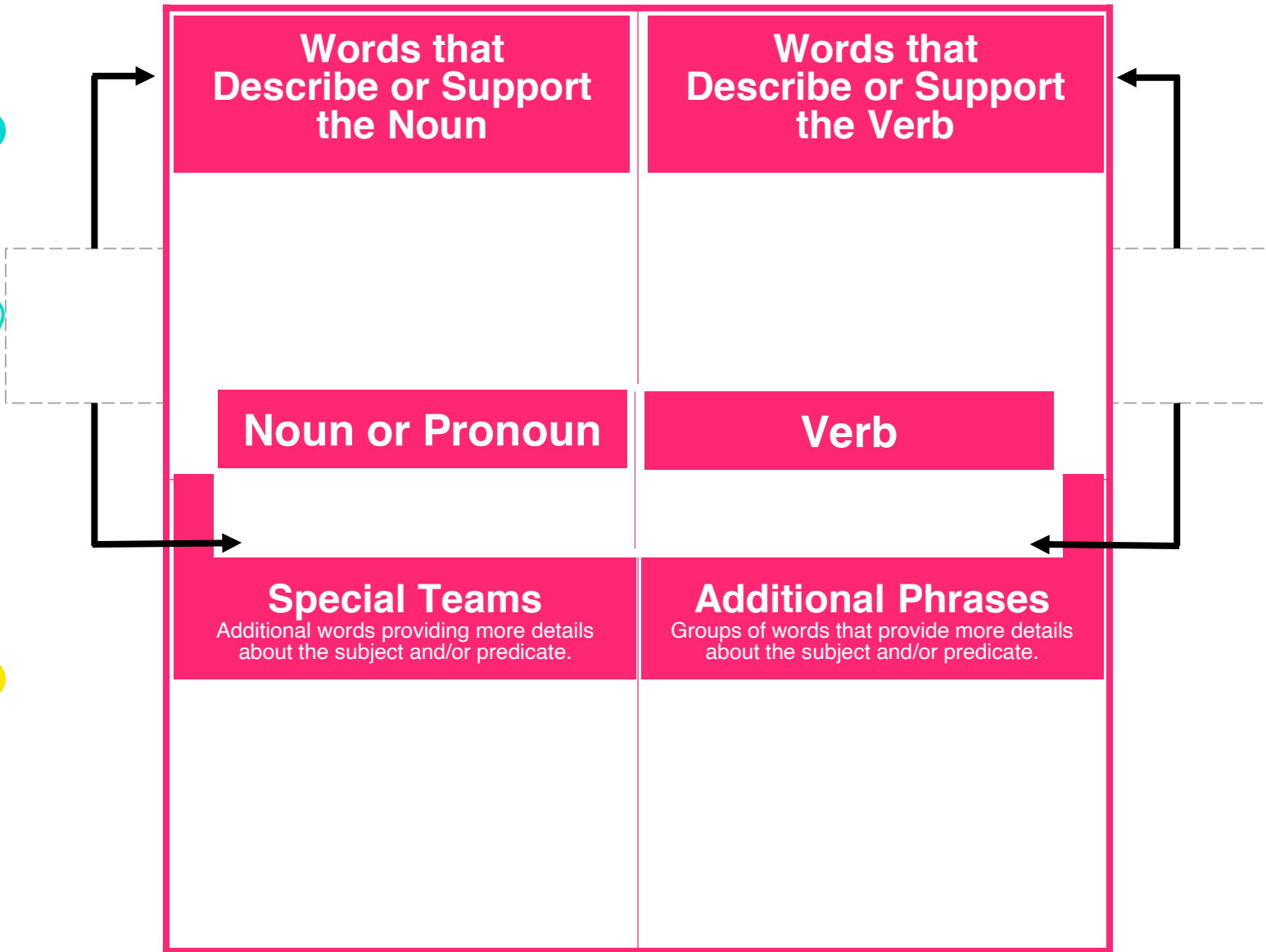
C

D

Four-Square Sentence

What positions do words play in a sentence?

DIRECTIONS: Cut out the “pieces” below and arrange each in the correct place on the four-square sentence diagram. If you prefer larger pieces, see the next page. NOTE: Some pieces may overlap.



Four-Square Sentence

 noun	 preposition	 pronoun	 conjunction
 adverb	 dependent clause	 verb	 adjective
 appositive	 article	 interjection	 direct object
 subject	 predicate	 independent clause	

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Layer 2: Connect New Information

Key terms

The following terms and concepts are introduced in this lesson:

- **grammar:** Rules governing the word-choice and structure of sentences in a language.
- **feedback codes:** Symbols (from the RED) indicating areas for improvement in a text.
- **revising & editing decoder (RED):** A tool that consolidates all grammar and punctuation rules on one page for easy reference and decoding of feedback.
- **Four-Square Sentence:** A model that shows the positions words play in a sentence (a.k.a. "grammar").
- **revising:** Process of correcting and refining text for better clarity and style.
- **editing:** Proofreading content to review for grammatical errors.
- **feedback:** Advice on how to improve your writing.
- **punctuation:** Symbols and spaces used to clarify written text.
- **parts of speech:** The various positions words play in a sentence.
- **emotional safety:** A supportive learning environment where students can make mistakes without fear of ridicule.
- **Montessori grammar symbols:** Visual tools representing parts of speech that aid in learning grammar.
- **informal writing:** Casual, expressive writing not strictly following grammatical rules.
- **consistency:** Maintaining the same grammatical and stylistic standards throughout a text.
- **decoding feedback:** Interpreting symbols to determine errors and apply corrections.

Sections

This lesson includes the sections below. Use this information to guide your note-taking and track your progress through the lesson.

A. "How will 'asking questions' help me learn grammar and punctuation?"

B. "Why is grammar and punctuation important?"

C. "What positions do words play in a sentence?"

D. What is the Revising & Editing Decoder (R.E.D.)?

E. "How do I use the R.E.D.?"

F. "How do I NOT use the R.E.D.?"

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Layer 3: Confirm Understanding

Apply + Practice

Decode grammar & punctuation errors – passage A

Directions

1. Read the following passage and identify a minimum of five grammar and/or punctuation errors.
2. Circle the word/words where the error is visible or missing.
3. Use the R.E.D. to determine which error code applies. Write the corresponding letter/number directly about the circled error.
4. In the lines below the passage, follow the prompts to rewrite each sentence or phrase correctly.

Passage A

In Lesson 16, we learn that traditional ways of teaching grammar like just doing worksheets isn't much help. The author says he has found better ways to teach that don't make students feel bad. He introduced tools like the Revising & Editing Decoder; R.E.D., and Four-Square Sentence, which help make grammar easier and fun to learn. These tools help students see the rules of grammar and punctuation more clearly and understand how to use them in their own writing, the author used to struggle with grammar at school which is why he developed these methods. He believes that understanding grammar and punctuation is very important because it helps us communicate better by making our writing clear and enjoyable to read and he thinks that learning should not be frustrating.

Error Code	Sentence or phrase, written correctly

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Layer 3: Confirm Understanding

Apply + Practice

Decode grammar & punctuation errors – passage B

Directions

1. Read the following passage and identify a minimum of five grammar and/or punctuation errors.
2. Circle the word/words where the error is visible or missing.
3. Use the R.E.D. to determine which error code applies. Write the corresponding letter/number directly about the circled error.
4. In the lines below the passage, follow the prompts to rewrite each sentence or phrase correctly.

Passage B

Lesson 16 explores new methods for teaching grammar and punctuation which are quite effective compared to traditional approaches. The author, having faced challenges with learning grammar herself, developed the Revising & Editing Decoder or R.E.D. and the Four-Square Sentence model; these innovative tools aim to make grammar learning interactive and engaging, the author discusses the limitations of old methods like rote memorization and repetitive worksheets that often lead to confusion rather than clarity. By integrating these modern tools into education, students can visualize grammar rules and apply them directly to their writing, enhancing their understanding and retention. The author passionately believes that mastering grammar and punctuation is essential for effective communication; this helps in making writing clear and impactful.

Error Code	Sentence or phrase, written correctly

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Layer 3: Confirm Understanding

Apply + Practice

Decode grammar & punctuation errors – passage C

Directions

1. Read the following passage and identify a minimum of five grammar and/or punctuation errors.
2. Circle the word/words where the error is visible or missing.
3. Use the R.E.D. to determine which error code applies. Write the corresponding letter/number directly about the circled error.
4. In the lines below the passage, follow the prompts to rewrite each sentence or phrase correctly.

Passage C

In this lesson, the author shares her journey from struggling with grammar to developing tools that help simplify it for students. She introduces the Revising & Editing Decoder, known as R.E.D., and the Four-Square Sentence strategy. These tools are designed to help students understand grammar rules in a practical way and see how they fit into real writing. The chapter emphasizes that traditional grammar lessons, which often focus only on memorizing rules, don't really help students learn effectively. Instead, the author's methods encourage active participation and understanding, making grammar more accessible and less daunting. The author's story inspires students to see grammar as a tool for clear communication rather than just a set of rules to follow.

Error Code	Sentence or phrase, written correctly

Apply + Practice

Decode grammar & punctuation errors – passage A

Directions

RED: REVISING + EDITING DECODER

PUNCTUATION

WORDS

1. Use **apostrophes** with possessive nouns/pronouns:
 - a. singular possessive ('s)
 - b. plural possessive (s')
 - c. possessive pronouns *avoid* apostrophes.
 - it's = it is
 - its = possessive form of it
2. Use **pronouns** that match their antecedents in gender, person, and number.

SENTENCES

3. **End with** a: period, question mark, or exclamation mark.
4. **Capitalize:**
 - a. first letter in sentence
 - b. proper nouns (names of people, places, things)
 - c. titles: all words but articles, conjunctions, prepositions less than five letters
 - d. quote: first word of quote
 - e. days, months, holidays (not seasons)
 - f. time-periods; specific names
5. Use **commas:**
 - a. between separate items in a list. (Ex: I like grapes, pears, and strawberries.)
 - b. between two adjectives of similar meaning or tone used to describe the same noun. (Ex: We went for a walk in the crisp, cold air.)
 - c. to prevent misreading. (Ex: Ever since they've been happy. -vs- Ever since they've been happy... [fragment])
 - d. to set off introductory clauses. (Ex: Screaming with excitement, she ran to her grandma.)
 - e. to separate a dependent clause in the middle of a sentence; separate with a comma on both sides. If the dependent clause provides clarifying information, it may also be separated by parentheses.
 - f. to set off the explainers of a direct quotation. (Ex: The girl sighed, "I don't want to leave.")
 - g. between two independent clauses joined by: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. (FANBOYS)

- h. to set off an interjection. If the interjection is at the beginning of a sentence, place comma after it. If interjection is at the end of a sentence, place comma before it. (This code indicates an *unnecessary* comma.)
- i. Use **semi-colons:**
 - a. to separate two independent clauses that are closely related in meaning.
 - b. as a "fancy period," not as a comma.
7. Use **colons** to: introduce a list or quotation, before explanation, clarification, or elaboration, between independent clauses, to separate times and ratios
8. Use **quotation marks** to identify words spoken/written by another source:
 - a. When introduced within a sentence, place a comma before the first quotation mark.
 - b. When commas and periods come at the end of a quotation, place them inside the quotation marks.
9. **Insert extra information into a sentence with commas, dashes, or parentheses:**
 - a. Commas are most formal, least intrusive.
 - b. Dashes are very informal; used in emails and dialogue, not a formal report.
 - c. Parentheses are best for inserting short asides such as numbers and dates.

OTHER

10. 1st/2nd or 3rd person is consistent across piece.
11. Use consistent verb tense: past, present, or future.
12. Titles formatted correctly:
 - a. Major works (books, plays, long poems) are underlined in handwriting, italicized in type.
 - b. Minor works (short stories, articles, poems, songs) are placed in quotation marks.
 - c. Titles of works not published (such as your essays) only capitalized.
13. "Other" punctuation error, not otherwise listed.

COMPOSITION

SENTENCES

- A. are complete with subjects and predicates. [Fragment present.]
- B. include descriptive adjectives/adverbs, used clearly. [Clarification needed.]
- C. are varied in length, including use of prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections to add detail and interest. [Sentences are short and feel choppy.]
- D. "sound" varied, with clauses placed before and after the core sentence. [Sentence-flow sounds choppy.]

PARAGRAPHS

- E. begin with a sentence that clearly introduces the topic. [Topic is not clear.]
- F. include following sentences: related to topic; make sense; & in logical order.
 - a. [Sentence(s) do not relate to topic.]
 - b. [Confusing or contradictory language; I don't understand this part.]
 - c. [Sentences seem out of order.]
- G. include specific examples to support generalizations or opinions. [This statement needs more evidence.]
- H. include transition words that flow from one sentence to the next. [This flow is an abrupt or surprise shift.]
- I. conclude with a summarizing sentence and signals the ending. [The closing sentence needs attention.]

MULTI-PARAGRAPH COMPOSITIONS

- J. The first paragraph introduces the main topic; it tells the reader what they are about to read and why they should keep reading. [The topic of this essay is not clearly defined or communicated.]
- K. The "first 100 words" have a good "hook" to capture readers' interest. NOTE: Often, the best hooks are hiding later in the piece. [Opening could be stronger.]
- L. Each paragraph in body has only one sub-topic that supports the main topic.
 - a. [The sub-topic of this paragraph is not clear.]
 - b. [There is more than one sub-topic in this paragraph.]
 - c. [Some details in this do not support the sub-topic.]
- M. Paragraphs transition smoothly, from one to the next. [This paragraph is an abrupt shift and/or does not make clear sense here.]
- N. The final paragraph:
 - a. closes all open loops. [Reader is left with unanswered questions.]
 - b. signals that the piece is ending. [Ending is abrupt.]

STYLE ELEMENTS

- O. Remove unnecessary words:
 - a. Avoid "clearing the throat."
 - b. Use positive voice.
 - c. Use active voice.
- P. Remove all words adding no value. Optimize word-choice:
 - a. Use words that activate the five senses; "show" vs "tell"
 - b. Use descriptive verbs.
 - c. Avoid clichés, tired phrases, slang.
- Q. Use compound sentences intentionally; stack together for cadence (flow).
- R. Use parallel structure: sentence elements alike in function share the same grammatical form, including:
 - a. Lists
 - b. Comparisons
 - c. Headings & subheadings
 - d. Phrases/clauses within a sentence.
- S. Keep related words together.
- T. Place emphatic words at the end of sentences.

EXPOSITORY/ARGUMENT WRITING

- U. Determine style/voice:
 - a. "Classical" = 1st/2nd person conversation.
 - b. "Formal" = 3rd person reporting.
- V. Avoid rhetorical questions.
- W. Avoid unsure language (may, might, etc).
- X. Provide background info; do not assume reader has prior knowledge of your topic.
- Y. For arguments, defend opinions with facts/evidence.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

- Z. Literary analysis is present tense.
- AA. Provide background; assume reader of your piece has NOT read the literature.
- BB. Support quotes with proper lead-in and transition.
- CC. Plot summary must be balanced with your unique and thoughtful analysis.

NARRATIVE

- DD. Dialogue: new speakers are signaled with new paragraph and framed with proper transitions.
- EE. New characters are introduced with plenty of background.
- FF. Plot is developed with strong conflicts.
- GG. The resolution solves all conflicts and closes all loops.

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Layer 3: Confirm Understanding

Scorecard Review**Directions:** What solutions have you learned to resolve each problem, below?

For each statement: rate yourself post-lesson, briefly describe a solution you learned, and calculate the difference from your pre-score.

#	Do you...	Solution	Post-Score			+/- change from pre-score		
			Always	Sometimes	Never			
45	Feel overwhelmed by the number of grammar and punctuation rules to learn?		1	2	3	4	5	
46	Struggle to remember and correctly apply grammar rules when writing?		1	2	3	4	5	
47	Hesitate to write due to confusion over grammar and punctuation rules?		1	2	3	4	5	

Rubric: Apply + Practice**Directions:** This rubric is to help you and your teacher evaluate your progress on the Apply + Practice activity.

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT (4)	SATISFACTORY (3)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (2)	POOR (1)
Error Identification	Correctly identifies all five errors.	Identifies 4 errors correctly.	Identifies 3 errors correctly.	Identifies fewer than 3 errors correctly.
Code Application	Applies correct RED codes to all errors.	Applies correct codes to 3+ errors.	Applies correct codes to 2 errors.	Incorrectly applies codes to most errors.
Sentence Rewriting	Rewrites all sentences correctly, maintaining original meaning.	Mostly correct rewrites with minor clarity issues.	Partially correct rewrites; some clarity or meaning issues.	Rewrites do not correct errors or change meaning significantly.
Grammar and Punctuation Use	Excellent use of grammar and punctuation in rewrites.	Good understanding with minor errors.	Adequate understanding with several errors.	Poor understanding; numerous errors.

Total points: _____ / _____

Name: _____ ID#: _____ Date: _____

Lesson #

16

How to Learn Grammar & Punctuation

Skill Demonstration Form

The purpose of this activity is to apply the information from this lesson to “real life” situations. It can be a stand-alone assessment and/or used as preparation for the end-of-course Exit Presentation.

Directions

Complete the prompts below, in writing or with multimedia tools.

NOTE: As an alternative to this form, a digital portfolio is provided throughout the curriculum

Section #: _____ Section Title: _____

Chapter #: _____ Chapter Title: _____

1. What is the skill or topic you learned?

(For example: taking notes, using a planner, communicating with teachers, etc.)

2. What is the name of the evidence and a short description?

(Examples of evidence: a page of notes, a page from a planer, an email to a teacher, a photo of your organized binder or bedroom, etc.)

3. How does this evidence illustrate what you learned about this skill or topic?













4. How/why/when do you expect to use this skill or information in the future?

Rubric

Evaluation guidelines are below.
(Your teacher will determine the total number of points possible.)










SCORE	POINTS POSSIBLE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
		The evidence provided demonstrates an <u>understanding of the concept/strategy</u> .
		The evidence provided demonstrates <u>appropriate application to a current setting</u> .
		The description of a future application demonstrates an understanding of the <u>potential use</u> for this concept/strategy.
		COMMENTS:

Grammar Symbols - The Nine Parts of Speech

	Definition 	Symbol 	Symbol Significance 
noun	Names a person, place, or thing		This symbol has three sides, like the three types of words it describes. Its color is like “carbon,” the most common element in matter.
adjective	Describes a noun		This word gives more information about the noun, so its symbol is a similar shape, but smaller. The smaller size illustrates its dependency on the noun.
article	Identifies a noun as being specific or unspecific: a, an, the		This word gives extra information about a noun, so it is a similar shape. Its symbol is the smallest pyramid because only three words in English are articles.
pronoun	Substitutes a noun: I, he, she, you, it, we, they, them, etc.		This word replaces the noun and article in a sentence, so its symbol is a taller version of the noun. It is the narrowest pyramid because most of these words are short.
verb	Names an action (like run, write, or think) or a state of being (like is, are, was, to be).		If you set this symbol down, it will roll. It has action, like the word it describes. It is the color of our blood, to suggest energy.
adverb	Describes a verb		This word depends on the verb, so it is the same shape, but smaller to illustrate its dependency on the verb.
preposition	Shows relationships between other words in a sentence.		This symbol is shaped like a bridge because a preposition acts like a bridge—it connects a noun or pronoun to another word, often showing place, time, or direction.
conjunction	Links other words, phrases, or clauses together.		This symbol is shaped like the outline of a chain link because a conjunction connects words, phrases, or clauses—like the FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.
interjection	Expression of strong emotion or feeling, often followed by an exclamation point.		This symbol is a combination of the symbols for nouns and verbs and resembles the punctuation that most often follows it, the exclamation point.

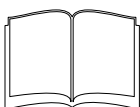
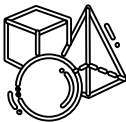










Grammar Symbols - Additional Grammar Terms

Dr. Montessori created symbols for the nine parts of speech. However, some parts of speech can serve more than one role in a sentence. On this page, we are highlighting some of them and have created our own symbols to support them.. These symbols were designed to support the Four-Square Sentence Diagram.

	Definition 	Symbol 	Symbol Significance 
appositive	A noun or noun phrase that provides more information about another noun.		This symbol includes a series of “noun symbols” because it is more than one noun.
direct object	A noun or pronoun that receives the action of a verb in a sentence		This symbol is a target because it supports the verb and is the same shape as the verb. Also, both a target and direct object “receive” an action.
independent clause	A group of words within a sentence that could stand alone as its own sentence.		This symbol is a lone person, “independent” person, symbolizing the phrase that can “stand alone.”
dependent clause	A group of words w/in a sentence containing a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a sentence.		This symbol of a parent and child symbolizes that the dependent clause is dependent on the “adult sentence.”
subject	The primary person, place, thing, or idea that is doing or being something in the sentence.		This symbol features two black triangles, representing the noun and its supporting words; it points left to indicate they include the upper and middle LEFT of the 4-square.
predicate	the part of a sentence or clause that tells what the subject is doing or being. It includes the verb and any objects or modifiers		This symbol features three arrows forming a circle; the shape represents the action of the verb, the multiple arrows to represent the verb and its supporting words.

Grammar Symbols - The Nine Parts of Speech

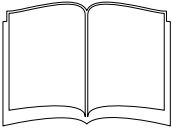








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	Definition 	Symbol 	Symbol Significance 
noun	Names a person, place, or thing	black pyramid 	This symbol has three sides, like the three types of words it describes. Its color is like "carbon," the most common element in matter.
adjective	Describes a noun	blue pyramid 	This word gives more information about the noun, so its symbol is a similar shape, but smaller. The smaller size illustrates its dependency on the noun.
article	Identifies a noun as being specific or unspecific: a, an, the	light blue pyramid 	This word gives extra information about a noun, so it is a similar shape. Its symbol is the smallest pyramid because only three words in English are articles.
pronoun	Substitutes a noun: I, he, she, you, it, we, they, them, etc.	purple pyramid 	This word replaces the noun and article in a sentence, so its symbol is a taller version of the noun. It is the narrowest pyramid because most of these words are short.
verb	Names an action (like run, write, or think) or a state of being (like is, are, was, to be).	red ball 	If you set this symbol down, it will roll. It has action, like the word it describes. It is the color of our blood, to suggest energy.
adverb	Describes a verb	orange ball 	This word depends on the verb, so it is the same shape, but smaller to illustrate its dependency on the verb.
preposition	Shows relationships between other words in a sentence.	green arc/bridge 	This symbol is shaped like a bridge because a preposition acts like a bridge—it connects a noun or pronoun to another word, often showing place, time, or direction.
conjunction	Links other words, phrases, or clauses together.	pink rectangle 	This symbol is shaped like the outline of a chain link because a conjunction connects words, phrases, or clauses—like the FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.
interjection	Expression of strong emotion or feeling, often followed by an exclamation point.	gold exclamation point 	This symbol is a combination of the symbols for nouns and verbs and resembles the punctuation that most often follows it, the exclamation point.

Grammar Symbols - Additional Grammar Terms

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Dr. Montessori created symbols for the nine parts of speech. However, some parts of speech can serve more than one role in a sentence. On this page, we are highlighting some of them and have created our own symbols to support them.. These symbols were designed to support the Four-Square Sentence Diagram.

	Definition	Symbol	Symbol Significance
			
appositive	A noun or noun phrase that provides more information about another noun.	three black pyramids 	This symbol includes a series of “noun symbols” because it is more than one noun.
direct object	A noun or pronoun that receives the action of a verb in a sentence	Circular red & white target 	This symbol is a target because it supports the verb and is the same shape as the verb. Also, both a target and direct object “receive” an action.
independent clause	A group of words within a sentence that could stand alone as its own sentence.	icon of single person 	This symbol is a lone person, “independent” person, symbolizing the phrase that can “stand alone.”
dependent clause	A group of words w/in a sentence containing a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a sentence.	icon of parent & child 	This symbol of a parent and child symbolizes that the dependent clause is dependent on the “adult sentence.”
subject	The primary person, place, thing, or idea that is doing or being something in the sentence.	two black triangles, pointing left (like “rewind” symbol) 	This symbol features two black triangles, representing the noun and its supporting words; it points left to indicate they include the upper and middle LEFT of the 4-square.
predicate	the part of a sentence or clause that tells what the subject is doing or being. It includes the verb and any objects or modifiers.	Circular outline of three arrows 	This symbol features three arrows forming a circle; the shape represents the action of the verb, the multiple arrows to represent the verb and its supporting words.

Four-Square Sentence

The positions words play in sentences

If a sentence was a sport, the four-square would be its field! The four-square makes several things visible:

- The positions that words can play in a sentence.
- The relationship between the parts-of-speech and their function in a sentence.
- The relationships between all parts-of-speech... and a few additional positions (appositive, direct object, dependent/independent clauses, subject, and predicate).

