No Nonsense

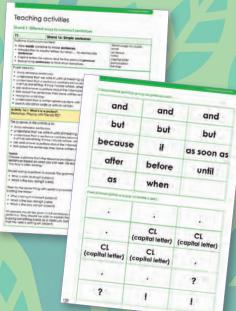
Grammar

Mar ple

A new grammar programme developed for the New Curriculum

Written by the Babcock LDP Primary Literacy team.





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written by Debra Myhill

Foreword





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Foreword

With recent changes in the National Curriculum, and the introduction of new tests for primary children, grammar is once more at the forefront of teachers' thinking. Grammar has had a chequered history in school, and was largely abandoned in the 1960s and 1970s because many felt it served no obvious purpose in the curriculum. As a consequence, many teachers who are now responsible for teaching grammar did not learn grammar themselves at school. The combination of a contested history and a cadre of teachers, many of whom are anxious about their subject knowledge, means that the reintroduction of grammar risks being viewed as a curriculum imposition rather than a creative opportunity.

Learning about grammar is learning about language, and about how meaning is created through the choices we make. It should not be a dry, dull enterprise, characterised by labelling exercises and learning rules (which is how many of us who did do grammar at school remember it). Rather, it should be a way of looking at the way the English language works and the endless possibilities it gives us for making our communication powerful. After all, through writing we can cause revolutions, break hearts, capture moments of history and express our deepest feelings! Grammar teaching in the twenty-first century should be a creative, enjoyable element of learning – generating curiosity about our language and encouraging a playful approach to language. It should also give young learners the opportunities to experience rich and diverse texts, exploring the choices that writers make in creating their texts.

This programme very much reflects this twenty-first century approach to the teaching of grammar. It is closely focused on the requirements of the National Curriculum and rooted in classroom practice. It combines the need to assess pupils' learning of grammar and to monitor their progress with a host of practical activities, which give learners an opportunity to play with and explore language actively. Written by authors who are established experts in primary literacy practice, it guides teachers to manage pupils' learning through plentiful opportunities for practising and applying. At the same time, it will support teachers' grammatical subject knowledge, giving confidence in approaching unfamiliar grammar concepts. This is grammar that lives and breathes!

Professor Debra Myhill, Exeter University

Introduction: Grammar in the National Curriculum

Over the last few years, increasing emphasis has been placed on grammar and punctuation in primary schools. In particular, the new primary curriculum for English contains specific requirements for the teaching of grammar and punctuation within each year group and the learning that pupils should be able to demonstrate at the end of each year/key stage. There are a number of issues surrounding teaching and learning within this area of the curriculum.

Challenges for teachers

The first difficulty for teachers is that progression within each grammatical element is not always clear. Certain elements are mentioned in some year groups but not in others – for example, the present perfect tense appears in Year 3 but is not referred to again. The introduction to the National Curriculum grammar Appendix states that the content in earlier years should be revisited and reinforced in subsequent years, but how should teachers do this? How, for example, should learning about the past perfect be consolidated in Years 4, 5 and 6? Furthermore, what groundwork is necessary to prepare pupils for learning some of the terminology they will come across? The term 'adverb' appears at Year 2, but can teachers do anything in Year 1 to make understanding adverbs easier for Year 2 pupils?

Another challenge for anyone teaching grammar and punctuation is the amount of subject knowledge required to feel comfortable with the content of the curriculum when the elements being taught can be used in so many different ways. Providing pupils with a pattern of language is a useful way of helping them understand a structure and how it can be used for effect. However, the English language is so flexible – with words, phrases and clauses capable of being used in extremely sophisticated structures – that it can be difficult to select examples of language that are correct for the grammatical feature being taught, appropriate to the text type being studied and not simplified to such a degree that their effect in writing is lost.

Subject knowledge

One area of subject knowledge that teachers may find particularly difficult is that caused by the merging of the previously separate 'sentence level' and 'text structure' strands. Although sentence structure and cohesion are inextricably linked, they are often considered discretely in teaching and assessment. In the National Curriculum appendix, elements such as adverbials appear in the sentence and text sections, so teachers need to clearly understand when adverbials are being used to expand information for the reader and when they are acting cohesively to tie a text together.

Teaching grammar

The primary curriculum intends that pupils should develop a deep and secure understanding of grammar, and teachers are encouraged to go beyond the content set out in the Appendix if they feel it is appropriate. To achieve this, teachers need to ensure that learning is robust and can be applied in a variety of ways; they must also have a clear understanding of which concepts their pupils have successfully grasped and whether or not it is appropriate to go beyond the stated content. It is only by talking to pupils about texts and about their own writing that it is possible to ascertain whether or not they have attained the level of understanding required. Ensuring that they know the relevant terminology is key to enabling them to discuss their writing.

How No Nonsense Grammar is organised

The No Nonsense Grammar programme is intended to address the above challenges for the primary teacher, and includes the following features:

- A subject knowledge section, which explains the basic grammatical elements and constructions as well as the punctuation and cohesion required by the National Curriculum.
- Progression charts within each of the strands required by the National Curriculum. These detail the year group/key stage where each grammatical feature and punctuation mark is introduced and expanded upon. It explains which aspects of grammar pupils may find difficult, elaborates on any subject knowledge that might be useful for teachers and considers what consolidation or preparation would be useful in the year groups where features are not mentioned. It ends by considering how teachers could go beyond the content of the National Curriculum. Cohesion and punctuation objectives are cross-referenced to strand areas where it is relevant to include them in teaching.
- Grammar and punctuation teaching for Year 1, Year 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6, linked to assessment criteria, which provides:
 - information on what needs to be taught within each strand
 - appropriate generic activities, differentiated for each year group/key stage and strand area (in many cases, these include consolidation from previous teaching)
 - links to teaching and learning sequences that use authentic texts with good models
 of writing and real purposes for writing
 - links with visual, auditory and kinaesthetic methods of teaching, such as some of the physical activities suggested and the use of the Babcock LDP Sentence Toolkit (see below).
 - resources
 - assessment activities where appropriate, including key questions to elicit understanding.
- Assessment criteria that explains what mastering each year group/key stage looks like and what pupils should understand and be able to do.
- Diagnostic assessment activities linked to the assessment criteria and the end of key stage assessment framework.

Whilst the No Nonsense Grammar programme provides activities and resources to support teachers, grammar should always be taught in context. It is the tool we use to communicate meaning, and that meaning should always be part of the discussion during teaching. Ideally, teachers will adapt the activities included in the programme and use them with the texts being studied. Across the programme we have provided three examples of a teaching and learning sequence for literacy, which show how grammar teaching should be embedded in wider English teaching. More sequences like these can be found at www.babcock-education.co.uk/ldp/

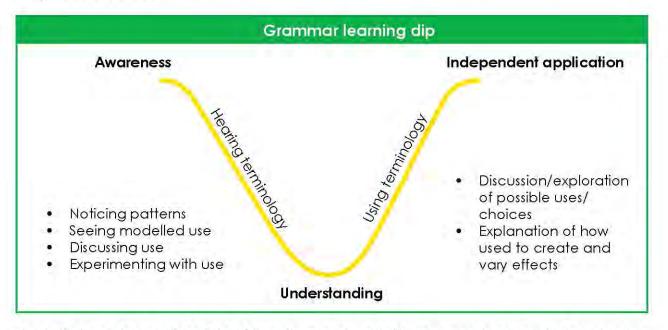
The USB stick

Included in this pack is a USB stick containing the following additional resources: instructional videos; PDFs of the books used in the teaching activities; editable versions of all three books in the programme, including the teaching resources.

The Sentence Toolkit

The abstract nature of grammar can make it difficult for young pupils to understand. The Sentence Toolkit has been developed and provided with the No Nonsense Grammar programme to help teachers make grammar come alive in the classroom and develop pupils' awareness and understanding.

The diagram below exemplifies the 'learning dip' surrounding learning in grammar. Pupils should be able to move beyond the awareness of features towards a genuine understanding of how they can be used to communicate effectively in writing. Exposing pupils to the correct terminology is essential in developing their understanding; using it will help pupils explore and explain how the features are used and the effects they have created.



The bullet points on either side of the dip are also vital for progression, and the Sentence Toolkit provides a way to help pupils focus on the aspect of grammar being used, to understand its use and remember it when writing. It does this by linking the grammatical terminology to real-life objects and, where possible, provides analogies to aid pupils' understanding of how the different grammatical features work.

Each tool makes an association between the use of the tool in real life and a writing skill that can be viewed in a similar way. Each one has a specific name and purpose – for example, we can show pupils that a spanner is used to tighten bolts and join pieces of wood or metal together. In the same way, subordinating conjunctions can be used to join clauses together. Pupils can use this analogy to help them understand the terminology as well as the writing process and how it works. The visual clues provided and actions that can accompany the tools make this a multi-sensory approach to learning about grammar.

Full guidance on using the Sentence Toolkit can be found within the introduction to that document.

As a flexible clause element, adverbials can be added in various positions in these constructions:

SVA The man slept peacefully.
ASV Peacefully, the man slept.
SAV The man peacefully slept.

ASVO On Saturday, the man painted the door.

ASVOCA Actually, the man painted the door yellow in under an hour.

In particular, using adverbials in different positions can create different effects for the reader by emphasising certain information in the sentence. When using adverbials in different positions, it is important to consider what punctuation is needed to make the meaning clear.

The sentences above are all simple – or single clause – structures. The clause element slots can be filled by single words or phrases. However, these clause element slots can also be filled by clauses. Usually sentences include a mix of words, phrases or clauses within each clause element slot, but the following sentences demonstrate how it is possible to use single words, phrases or clauses in these positions.

ASVO – with single words filling each clause element slot:

Excitedly, Fido chased Tibbles.

ASVO – with phrases filling each clause element slot:

In excitement, the playful dog Fido started to chase the tiny kitten.

ASVO – with clauses filling the A, S and O slots:

As he barked	the playful dog	started to chase	the tiny kitten, which
excitedly,	belonging to Mr Smith		mewed in fear.

In the last example, an adverbial clause fills the adverbial slot, while relative clauses post-modify the nouns in the subject and object positions.

Some of the terminology in the National Curriculum links directly to these clause elements: verb (Y2), adverbial (Y3/4), subject (Y5/6), object (Y5/6). Other terminology covers the grammatical constructions that fill these element slots: noun/noun phrase, adverb (Y2), relative clause (Y5). The challenge for teachers is to help pupils to:

- understand how to fill these clause element slots
- develop a terminology for talking about the constructions
- improve their writing through varying and manipulating the component parts of the sentence, considering the effects they are creating.

Understanding how words, phrases and clauses fit together empowers pupils to communicate their ideas in speech and writing. They can experiment with different constructions and decide how effective and appropriate they are in different situations. This is, therefore, inextricably linked with the teaching of different genres and text types.

	Y1	Y2	Y3/4	Y5/6
National Curriculum content: Co-ordination and subordination	Joining words and joining clauses using and. Introduction to capital letters, full stops to demarcate sentences. sentence capital letter punctuation full stop	Subordination (using when, if, that, because) and co- ordination (using or, and, but). compound verb Use of capital letters, full stops to demarcate sentences.	Expressing time, place and cause using conjunctions (for example, when, before, after, while, so, because). conjunction clause subordinate clause subordinate clause fronted adverbials (where these are fronted adverbial clauses).	Use of the semi- colon, colon and dash to mark the boundary between independent clauses (for example, It's raining: I'm fedup). semi-colon colon dash Use of commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity ambiguity Brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis bracket dash The difference between structures typical of informal and formal speech,
Preparation or consolidation	Talking about the meanings of because and when. Use these in oral sentences.	Extending oral sentences – giving reasons or talking about timing of actions: Before we After he Making sure pupils understand the meanings of conjunctions.	Using an increasingly wide range of conjunctions to create complex (multiclause) sentences. Understanding that commas need to be used in a list of clauses. Making sure pupils understand the meanings of conjunctions. Starting to manipulate clauses to create effects. Explaining how simple, compound and complex structures are used in texts (e.g. subordination for building up description; simple for building suspense).	and writing. Making sure pupils understand the meanings of conjunctions. Continuing to develop pupils understanding around coordination as well as subordination. Using compound sentences for effect. Understanding how manipulation of clauses can add to effectiveness and variation in writing. Developing understanding around the appropriateness and effectiveness of simple, compound and complex structures in different text types.

- Commands order somebody to do something and end in a full stop. The command structure can be used flexibly to deliver an order (*Put it there.*), but also to give advice (*Take care not to rip the paper.*), warn somebody (*Look out for the uneven pavement.*) or issue an invitation (*Come and see us soon.*) They can be used in a polite way, with *please*, to request rather than order (*Please sit down.*)
- Exclamations indicate an element of excitement or emphasis and end with an exclamation mark. A complete exclamatory sentence will begin with What or How (What a great party that was!; How nice to meet you again!) In dialogue, exclamation marks are often used with words or phrases to express strong feelings or emotions: these are called interjections (Amazing!, Wow!, Not again!)

Once pupils have understood these structures, they should be encouraged to use them in their writing where appropriate.

	Y1	Y2	Y3/4	Y5/6
National Curriculum content: Sentence types	Introduction to capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to demarcate sentences. Capital letters for names and for the personal pronoun. letter capital letter punctuation full stop question mark exclamation mark	How the grammatical patterns in a sentence indicate its function as a statement, question, exclamation or command. Use of capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to demarcate sentences. statement question exclamation command	Introduction to inverted commas to punctuate direct speech. Use of inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech (for example, a comma after the reporting clause; end punctuation within inverted commas: The conductor shouted, 'Sit down!') direct speech inverted commas (or speech marks)	The difference between structures typical of informal speech and structures appropriate for formal speech and writing (for example the use of question tags: He's your friend, isn't he?).
Preparation or consolidation	Developing talk around questions, commands and exclamations. 'Noticing' the different punctuation marks used for questions and exclamations.	Different ways of forming questions. Some ways are more appropriate for speech: • starting with What, When, Where, Who, Why, How • starting with a verb phrase that is split by a noun/pronoun: Is he playing today? Can we have a biscuit? Have you seen it? Did you know?	Developing a range of uses for different sentence types in different text types (e.g. questions in information texts). Collecting interjections to use in exclamatory speech, but talking about how these are not full sentences.	Developing a rang of uses for different sentence types in different text types, including hybrid texts. Thinking about the appropriatenes of these to the purpose/audience Linking sentence types in texts to the levels of formality required. Link with Standard English. Making links with modal verbs and apostrophes for contractions when writing dialogue.

Sample teaching activities, Years 3 and 4

Strand 1: Different ways to construct sentences

Y3/4 Strand 1b: Co-ordination and subordination

National Curriculum content:

- Expressing time, place and cause using conjunctions (for example, when, before, after, while, so, because).
- Use of commas after **fronted adverbials** (where these are fronted adverbial clauses).

Terminology for pupils: conjunction clause subordinate clause

Pupils need to:

- use and understand the terms conjunction, clause and subordinate clause when discussing sentence construction
- understand how to punctuate complex sentences, using commas to mark clauses where
 the sentence begins with the subordinate clause; recognise where the sentence ends and
 punctuate accurately
- understand the meanings of conjunctions and be able to use a wide range of them
- understand that the order of clauses can be manipulated for effect
- understand and discuss how different sentence constructions can be used for effect within texts.

Activity 1b.7: What's in a sentence?

Resources: the range of Sentence Toolkit images used to date

Terminology for pupils: revise terminology from Y1/2

The purpose of this activity is to assess previous learning: understanding of simple sentences, co-ordination and subordination and associated punctuation.

Teach

This activity could be done as a whole class activity or in small groups with supervision. The aim is for pupils to demonstrate what they know about sentence construction and for the teacher to identify misconceptions and priorities for teaching in Y3/4. Use the Sentence Toolkit images to support terminology and concepts. After each step, if pupils are not secure with the learning refer to the activities in Y1/2 to reinforce it.

1 Start with a very simple sentence (just a subject and a verb) based on current text or cross-curricular learning (George ran. / The dog barked. / The Romans fought.) Ask: Is this a sentence? How do we know? Make sure they understand that a sentence needs a subject and a verb, and must be a complete unit of meaning. A sentence also needs a full stop and a capital letter.

2 Ask: Which slots in the sentence are filled? How could we extend/improve this sentence? Take pupils' ideas and model adding them into the sentence. As you do this, get pupils to use the terminology to explain what they have done. They might suggest:

- adding adjectives (do they also know about noun phrases?)
- adding adverbial information (where, when, how) this might be as single words (quickly) or phrases (in the last century, down the road)
- changing the verb this might be into a verb phrase (was running, are fighting)
- adding a conjunction (and, but, or, because, when, if) and another clause.

Teaching resources

Strand 1b: Co-ordination and subordination

Activity 1b.8: Joining clauses

Clause definition cards

A clause is a group of words that must have a verb.

A clause also usually has a noun.

A clause can be a sentence.

A subordinate clause is a clause in a sentence, which couldn't be a sentence on its own.

A conjunction is a word that joins two clauses (or words) together.

Sentence cards

Children love chocolate because it is sweet.

When you hear the siren, leave the building.

If reptiles get too cold, they can die.

Teachers love coffee and biscuits.

He tripped over and he started to roll down the hill at speed.

Activity 1b.9: Fill in the punctuation

julies dog didnt want to stay in the garden as soon as julie had gone inside he ran up the side of the house and pushed his way through a tiny gap under the gate it was very easy julies dog had a lovely time running all over the park he ran in and out of the playground and across the flower beds he even ran into a cafe to look for something to eat that evening when julie went to feed him she couldn't find him anywhere she was very upset she looked all over the house and garden for the dog he was nowhere to be seen

Answer:

Julie's dog didn't want to stay in the garden. As soon as Julie had gone inside, he ran up the side of the house and pushed his way through a tiny gap under the gate. It was very easy. Julie's dog had a lovely time running all over the park. He ran in and out of the playground and across the flower beds. He even ran into a cafe to look for something to eat. That evening, when Julie went to feed him, she couldn't find him anywhere. She was very upset. She looked all over the house and garden for the dog. He was nowhere to be seen.

Activity 1b.10: Patterning sentences

Co-ordinating conjunctions

and	but	or
nor	then	yet

Subordinating conjunctions

if	when	because
after	although	as
before	since	so (that)
though	unless	until
where	wherever	while
that		

Example teaching sequence

The focus of this sequence is expanding and adding detail to a story. Therefore the text chosen is a relatively simple version with opportunities to add more to the story.

Writerly knowledge chart

How do I feel about the text?	How did the author do that?	Examples
Small snippets of detail but there are places where I want more.	 Adverbials to tell where, when or how things happened. Speech to move the story on. Post-modification of noun phrases. The use of when and relative clauses Use of the perfect form to refer to something that has already happened. 	Deep in the forest, at the top of the tower, in the deep dark forest day and night A thorn bush which scratched his eyes, a beautiful rat with a very long tail Had visited
A sense of this story taking place over a long time.	Use of fronted adverbials	One morning, on the third night, one day, that night

Key learning outcome:

write an expanded, animal version of a traditional tale and read it to younger pupils

Elicitation task

Ask pupils to think of their favourite traditional tale. With a partner share each other's favourite stories, relating them in as much detail as possible. Ask pupils to write their version of the story. Use the outcomes from this to adapt the medium-term plan and the national standards outcomes below. You will need to adapt the sequence by removing unnecessary aspects. The grammar section includes everything you **could** teach, but you will not be able to cover it all.

Medium-term plan

Reading

Develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding by:

- listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or text books
- increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally
- Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination.

Writing

Plan their writing by discussing and recording ideas.

Draft and write by composing and rehearsing sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures.

Evaluate and edit by assessing the effectiveness of their own writing and suggesting improvements, proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency.

Grammar

Develop understanding of the concepts set out in Appendix 2 of the National Curriculum by:

- extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including when, if, because, although
- using fronted adverbials (Y4).

Indicate grammatical and other features by:

- using commas after fronted adverbials (Y4)
- using and punctuating direct speech (Y3/4).

Drama cards

Once up on a time there were two rats who loved each other very much. One day the wife fell ill. 'Please fetch me some special seeds from the forest for me to eat,' she begged her husband. He did as she asked for two nights and she began to get better.	On the third night, the husband went back to fetch more seeds, but he was caught by a cruel cat. He begged for mercy.	'I will let you go if you promise to give me your first baby,' purred the cat. Terrified, the husband agreed and scurried away.
Time passed and the couple had a baby daughter. They called her Ratpunzel.	One morning, the cat appeared. 'You must keep your promise and give me your child,' said the cat, taking Ratpunzel away.	Ratpunzel grew up into a beautiful rat, with a very long tail. The cat hid Ratpunzel away in a tall tower, deep in the forest. Only the cat could visit her, by climbing up Ratpunzel's tail.
Ratpunzel had a beautiful voice and would spend her time singing at the top of the tower. One day, Handsome Prince Ratdolph was riding though the forest.	Prince Ratdolph heard Ratpunzel singing. He followed the sound and saw the cat climbing up Ratpunzel's tail.	Prince Ratdolph came back that night. 'Let down your tail!' he called like the cat. Ratpunzel did as he asked and Prince Ratdolph climbed up into the tower.
Prince Ratdolph and Ratpunzel fell in love. He visited her every night, taking thread for Ratpunzel to weave into a ladder to escape.	Time passed and Ratpunzel had almost finished weaving the ladder for her escape. One morning the cat came to visit her. 'You're so much heavier than the prince,' puffed Ratpunzel.	The cat was furious that Prince Ratdolph had visited. He sent Ratpunzel out into the forest.
That night, Prince Ratdolph came to see Ratpunzel as usual. The cat pulled him up using a rope. 'You will never see Ratpunzel again!' he snarled when the prince reached the top of the tower. The prince jumped from the tower to escape.	Prince Ratdolph landed in a thorn bush which scratched his eyes and blinded him. He wandered in the deep, dark forest day and night, unable to see.	But one day he heard a familiar voice singing beautifully.



Salamanders and newts have short legs and squirm from side to side as they walk. Some amphibians spend most of their time in the water. They swim or crawl along the bottom of streams.



When a tadpole is about five weeks old, its legs begin to grow. With frogs, the back legs grow first. With salamanders, the front legs are the first to grow.



The new **NO NONSENSE GRAMMAR** programme has been devised to offer teachers a comprehensive yet accessible progression in the teaching of grammar.



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