

# Glossary

## A

### Abbreviation

A shortened form of a word or phrase

### Acronym

An abbreviation that is formed by combining the first letter of each word in a phrase to create a new word

### Action verb

A verb that indicates a physical or mental action

### Active voice

When a sentence is written so that the subject is performing an action

### Adjective

A word that describes a noun or pronoun

### Adverb

A word that describes a verb, adjective, or another adverb

### Antecedent

The word that a pronoun renames in a sentence

### Antonym

A word that has the opposite meaning of another word

### Apostrophe

A punctuation mark used for possessive nouns, contractions, and shortened numbers and words

### Article

A type of adjective (*a, an, or the*) that describes a noun or pronoun

## B

### Brackets

A pair of punctuation marks commonly used inside parentheses or quotation marks to add minor details to a sentence or insert missing text inside a quotation

## C

### Clause

A word group that contains a subject and a verb

### Collective noun

A noun that denotes a group but is treated as a singular noun

### Colon

A punctuation mark used to introduce a list or quotation, end a salutation, and join related numbers

### Comma

A punctuation mark used to separate items in a list; join compound sentences; mark introductory words, phrases, and clauses; add extra or unnecessary details to a sentence; and separate similar adjectives

### Comma splice

A sentence error made when two independent clauses are combined with a comma but no conjunction

### Common noun

A noun that represents a non-specific person, place, thing, event, or idea

### Complete predicate

All verbs, verbals, descriptions, modifiers, and/or objects that work together to express a complete thought about the subject

### Complete sentence

A sentence that contains a subject and simple predicate and expresses a complete thought

### Complete thought

When a group of words is logically finished

### Complex sentence

A sentence pattern in which an independent clause is connected to a dependent clause

### Compound adjective

An adjective that is made up of two or more words that describe a noun or pronoun

### Compound antecedent

Nouns or pronouns that are joined by a conjunction and renamed by a pronoun

### Compound-complex sentence

A sentence pattern containing at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause

### Compound noun

A noun made up of two or more words

### Compound sentence

Two independent clauses joined by a semicolon or a comma and conjunction

### Compound subject

A subject made up of two nouns or pronouns, usually joined by a conjunction

### Conjunction

A word that makes a connection between other words or a group of words

### Conjunctive adverb

A transition word that shows contrast, comparison, sequence, and other relationships between clauses

### Contraction

A phrase that has been shortened into one word

### Coordinating conjunction

A conjunction that connects words or word groups of equal importance in a sentence

### Coordination

A writing method that creates flow by combining related independent clauses and implying that they are equally important

### Correlative conjunctions

Conjunctions that connect two or more similar ideas and always appear in pairs

### Count noun

A noun that can be counted

## D

### Dangling modifier

A modifier that has no word to modify

### Dash

A punctuation mark used to add extra information, often with emphasis, to a sentence

### Declarative sentence

A sentence that makes a general statement that informs the reader

**Demonstrative pronoun**

A pronoun that takes the place of a noun phrase and acts as an adjective

**Dependent clause**

A word group that contains a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought

**Direct object**

A word that receives the action of a verb

**Direct question**

A sentence that asks the audience a question and usually ends with a question mark

**E****Ellipsis**

A punctuation mark used to indicate information has been removed from a quotation

**Exclamation point**

A punctuation mark that conveys emphasis or strong feeling

**Exclamatory sentence**

A sentence that communicates emotion or surprise

**Exclusive language**

Exclusionary, disrespectful, inaccurate, and/or irrelevant references (intentional or unintentional) to people's personal characteristics

**F****FANBOYS**

An acronym for the seven coordinating conjunctions

**First-person pronoun**

A pronoun used to refer to the speaker of the sentence

**Fragment**

A word group that is punctuated as a sentence but does not express a complete thought

**Fused sentence**

A sentence error made when two independent clauses are joined with no punctuation or conjunction

**Future-perfect tense**

A verb tense used to describe an action that started in the past and will be completed in the future

**Future-progressive tense**

A verb tense used to describe a continuous action that will take place in the future

**Future tense**

A verb tense used to describe an action that has not yet taken place or to describe plans or instructions

**G****Gender**

A basis for classifying feminine, masculine, and neutral words

**Gender-neutral language**

Terms that apply to all genders

**Gender-specific language**

Terms that apply to only one gender or one set of genders

**Gerund**

A verbal that functions as a noun in a sentence and is formed by adding *-ing* to the end of the verb

**H****Helping verb**

A verb that is added to a verbal to create a simple predicate that grammatically fits the sentence

**Homonym**

A word whose pronunciation sounds similar to that of another word

**Hyphen**

A punctuation mark that links together words or word parts

**I****Imperative sentence**

A sentence that makes commands and often addresses the implied subject

**Implied antecedent**

An antecedent that is not directly stated

**Implied subject**

The subject of a sentence when the speaker is talking directly to the audience

**Inclusive language**

Intentionally respectful, accurate, and sensitive references (when relevant) to people's personal characteristics

**Indefinite pronoun**

A pronoun that does not rename a specific noun

**Independent clause**

A word group that includes a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought

**Indirect object**

A word that receives the direct object

**Indirect question**

A sentence that tells the audience about a question and usually ends with a period

**Infinitive**

A verbal that can function as a noun, adjective, or adverb in a sentence

**Inline quotation**

A quote that fits into a sentence without a formal introduction

**Interjection**

A word or group of words that adds emphasis or emotion

**Interrogative sentence**

A sentence that asks a question

**Inverted word order**

When the verb comes before the subject in a sentence

**Italics**

Slanted letters most often used to set apart titles of longer works, important words, and foreign terms

**L****Linking verb**

A verb that links the subject to a description

**M****Main verb**

The verb that expresses the primary action or state of being of a subject in a complete sentence

**Misplaced modifier**

A modifier that is too far away from the word it modifies

**Modifier**

A word or group of words that adds extra information to a sentence

**N****Non-count noun**

A noun that cannot be counted

**Noun**

A word that represents a person, place, thing, event, or idea

**Number**

A basis for agreement between singular or plural words

**O****Object of a preposition**

A word that completes the meaning of a prepositional phrase

**Objective case**

The form a word takes when used as the object of a preposition, direct object, or indirect object of a sentence

**Objective pronoun**

A pronoun that functions as an object in a sentence

**P****Parallelism**

A method for showing a relationship between ideas by using similarly structured words, phrases, or clauses

**Parentheses**

A pair of punctuation marks used to add extra information to a sentence or introduce an abbreviation

**Parenthetical information**

In-text details that are set off by parentheses and provide extra information

**Participle**

A verb form that can function as an adjective

**Parts of speech**

The categories that classify each type of word found in a sentence

**Passive voice**

When a sentence is written so that the subject is receiving an action

**Past participle**

A verb form that can function as an adjective or as part of a perfect-tense verb to show completed mental or physical action

**Past-perfect tense**

A verb tense used to describe an action that was completed before another past-completed action

**Past-progressive tense**

A verb tense used to describe a continuous action that occurred at a certain time in the past

**Past tense**

A verb tense used to report on an event or reflect on a past experience

**Period**

A punctuation mark used to end sentences that make a statement or relay information

**Person**

The point of view—first-, second-, or third-person—indicated by the form a word takes on in a sentence

**Personal pronoun**

A pronoun that renames a specific person, animal, object, or place

**Phrase**

A word group that does not form a complete thought

**Plural noun**

A noun that represents multiple people, places, things, events, or ideas

**Possessive case**

A pronoun form that shows possession or functions as an adjective

**Possessive noun**

A noun that shows ownership

**Possessive pronoun**

A pronoun that shows possession of another noun

**Prefix**

A word part added to the beginning of a root in order to create a new word

**Preposition**

A word that shows a relationship among people, places, things, events, and ideas

**Prepositional phrase**

A group of related words that starts with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun

**Present participle**

A verb form that can function as an adjective as part of a progressive-tense verb to express a continuous action

**Present-perfect tense**

A verb tense used to describe an action that was started in the past and has not yet been completed

**Present-progressive tense**

A verb tense used to describe a continuous action that is happening in the present or will happen in the near future

**Present tense**

A verb tense used to describe an event or action that is happening now

**Pronoun**

A word that takes the place of a noun in a sentence

**Pronoun-antecedent agreement**

The consistency in gender and number between a pronoun and the person, place, thing, idea, or event it renames in a sentence

**Pronoun case**

The form a pronoun takes based on its function—subjective, objective, or possessive—in a sentence

**Pronoun reference**

The connection between a pronoun and the noun it renames

**Proper noun**

A capitalized noun that represents a specific person, place, thing, event, or idea

**Q****Question mark**

A punctuation mark used at the end of a sentence that asks a question

**Quotation marks**

A pair of punctuation marks used to repeat someone else's words

**R****Regular word order**

When the subject comes before the verb in a sentence

**Relative pronoun**

A pronoun used to introduce a dependent clause

**S****Salutation**

A phrase that greets the person or group receiving a letter

**Second-person pronoun**

A pronoun that directly addresses the audience: you

**Semicolon**

A punctuation mark used to combine two independent clauses and separate long list items

**Sentence pattern**

A set of distinct clause combinations that can make up a sentence

**Simple predicate**

Multiple verbs and/or verbals that work together to indicate the subject's action or state of being

**Simple sentence**

A sentence made up of one independent clause

**Single quotation marks**

Punctuation marks used to mark a quote or title within a quote

**Singular noun**

A noun that represents one person, place, thing, event, or idea

**Stress**

Emphasis, either written or spoken

**Subject**

The person, place, thing, event, or idea a sentence is about

**Subjective case**

The form a word takes when it functions as the subject of a sentence

**Subjective pronoun**

A pronoun that functions as the subject in a sentence

**Subject-verb agreement**

When a subject and verb used in a sentence match in number and point of view

**Subordinating conjunction**

A conjunction that introduces a dependent clause

**Subordination**

A writing method that deemphasizes the idea in a dependent clause in order to emphasize a related idea in an independent clause

**Suffix**

A word part added to the end of a root in order to change the meaning of a word

**Syllable**

The basic unit of a word's pronunciation

**Synonym**

A word that has the same meaning as another word

**T****Tense**

How a verb indicates when it took place: past, present, or future

**Third-person pronoun**

A pronoun that refers to the person, people, or thing(s) being talked about in a sentence

**Transition**

A word, phrase, or sentence that shows order and makes connections between ideas

**V****Verb**

A word that represents an action, relationship, or state of being

**Verbal**

A verb form that functions as another part of speech, such as an adjective, adverb, or noun