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| **Cross-curricular Grammar for Writing Glossary: Teaching Subject Vocabulary** |
| **Grammar Features** | **Explanation and Examples**  | **In the classroom** |
| **noun** | A word that names people, places, events, objects, processes, concepts and phenomenon. Nouns can have a plural form: *ally/allies; child/children; volcano/volcanoes.* Nouns are often the subject of a sentence: *A supervolcano erupts at least 1,000 cubic kilometres of material.*Nouns are often preceded by adjectives or determiners: *an important factor*; *the worst case; a serious threat.*Many subject terms consist of pairs of nouns or noun and adjective pairings which relate to a specific concept or phenomenon: *fatty acids; noble gases; periodic table; climate change; health and safety; theory and practice* | Nouns are the essential building blocks of subject communication and are key to ‘sounding like an expert’ on a topic. We can help students to choose topic-specific nouns that carry a weight of meaning and which convey information precisely and succinctly. Teach spelling and/or memorisation strategies for essential key nouns. |
| **noun phrase** | A noun phrase consists of a central or ‘head’ noun and all the other words which relate to it and which form a unit of meaning within a sentence. The head noun can be pre-modified (additional words in front of the noun) or post-modified (additional words after the noun). Thus a noun phrase can be very short or very long:*a drug**a recreational drug**a recreational drug like cannabis* *a recreational drug like cannabis which has been legalised in some EU countries such as the Netherlands.*Text complexity is often related to the number and length of noun phrases. Noun phrases are often used in questions, and represent concepts that students need to understand: *Use Darwin’s theory of natural selection to explain how the elephant’s trunk evolved.* Head nouns can be modified in several different ways eg with adjectives and adverbs: *inadequate nutrition; an equilateral triangle; the rapidly advancing army;*with prepositional phrases:*the player in the back square of the court; particles with a positive charge; accidents at nuclear power stations;*and with other nouns*:* *the advance on Berlin; the hypotenuse of a triangle; the rapid build-up of gases.* This pattern is very typical of formal academic writing. | Locating key nouns and the information attached to them is a useful scanning strategy and will quickly tell the reader what the text is about.Listing essential vocabulary for a topic in the form of noun phrases can be more helpful than listing single words. We can help students be more precise and succinct in their writing by using well-chosen noun phrases that summarise important information or add important detail.An expanded noun phrase forms a significant grammatical ‘chunk’ of a sentence and can be used to improve students’ understanding of sentence construction.We can explicitly teach the noun phrase patterns that create formality in writing: *Macbeth’s lust for power;**higher energy density in fuel;**concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.* |
| **proper noun**  | Proper nouns are those needing a capital letter to show they relate to something very specific: *French Impressionists* *Pythagoras’ Theorem**the Wall Street Crash* | In many subjects, capitalisation is vital to meaning and needs to be taught explicitly.  |
| **abstract noun** | Abstract nouns refer to ideas, emotions and concepts, such as *thought, fear, determination, justice, corruption, pride, suffrage, racism, suffering.* Especially in English and Humanities, greater use of abstract nouns is a mark of more sophisticated vocabulary and sentence construction:*Macbeth is haunted by guilt* rather than *Macbeth often feels guilty; Loneliness is an important theme in ‘Of Mice and Men’* rather than *The characters in ‘Of Mice and Men’ are lonely.* | Build vocabulary by teaching common suffixes indicating abstract nouns: -*age, -ism, -ity, –ship and –ment*Create abstract nouns from adjectives (*lonely-loneliness; safe; safety*) and experiment with positioning within a sentence. |
| **adjective** | An adjective provides additional information about a noun or pronoun – it is said to *modify* the noun. Adjectives are often found before a noun but can change their position in a sentence for additional emphasis or succinctness: A *huge, devastating* eruption occurred ten million years ago.An eruption, *huge* and *devastating*, occurred ten million years ago.The eruption was *huge* and *devastating*.Comparative and superlative adjectives are important in many subjects for making distinctions or choosing options: *safe, safer, safest; a more/the most nutritious choice.* | We can build a stock of topic-specific adjectives to support students’ precise descriptions and evaluations. Create adjectives from other word classes by using common suffixes, supporting knowledge of spelling patterns: ***al*** *– comical, brutal****able*** *– comfortable, likeable****ic*** *– anarchic, catastrophic****ive*** *– compulsive,attractive* |

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| **determiner** | A relatively recent term for a cluster of words which precede a noun or noun phrase and which *determine* some aspect of the noun. Determiners include definite (*the*) and indefinite (*a, an*) articles, and words like *some, many, few, every, their, your, this, that, those.* | Determiners are often used in exam questions or tasks: *List two advantages of...State the most likely cause of...Evaluate both choices* |
| **preposition** | Examples of prepositions are: *on, in, with, without at, of, to, under, over, beneath, across, behind, inside, outside.* They are often used to post-modify nouns in a prepositional phrase: *congestion charges* ***in*** *inner city zones; the colour* ***at*** *the hottest part* ***of*** *the flame; organisms living* ***beneath*** *the sea bed* ***off*** *the coast of Japan; the design* ***with*** *the least environmental impact.*Prepositional phrases can also modify verbs: *Some microbes are able to travel* ***down to*** *extreme depths.* | Using prepositional phrases accurately can help students be precise and succinct when referring to examples or adding informative detail. Prepositions indicate spatial or time relationships between two words or units within a sentence and thus help to link ideas securely. |
| **verb** | Verbs drive the meaning of a sentence by expressing an action or a state: *breath rate and heart rate* ***increase*** *gradually**the athlete* ***paces himself*** *throughout the race**he* ***needs to dispose of*** *CO2* As in the examples above, a verb can be a single word or a string of words. The form of the verb will dictate whether a text is in the present or past tense: *Loneliness* ***is*** *an important theme in ‘Of Mice and Men’*; *NATO* ***was*** *established in 1949.*Note that the definition of a verb as ‘a doing word’ can be a little misleading because the most common verbs (variations of ‘be’ and ‘have’) are vital for completing the meaning of a sentence but are ‘static’ e.g. *NATO* ***is*** *an alliance of countries from North America and Europe.*Modal verbs are*: can, could, will, would, shall, should, may, might, must (ought to):**This* ***could*** *make his muscles ache but* ***may*** *improve the athlete’s range of movement.**His heart and lungs* ***will*** *need to work harder.*  | Teach more formal and precise verbs to replace informal constructions: *endure, ruin, omit* rather than *put up with, mess up, leave out.*Teach the verbs associated with key processes or ways of thinking that are crucial to a subject or a topic, building verbs from nouns to expand vocabulary e.g. *migration -migrate; juxtaposition -juxtapose; alliance – ally with*; *aligned against* Modal verbs can help students speculate and evaluate possibilities, and connect and balance ideas. |
| **adverbials** | ‘Adverbials’ is an overall term for single words, phrases or clauses that give additional information about how, when, where or why something happens: they modify verbs.Single adverbs often end in –ly e.g. *rapidly; gradually, crucially; importantly, initially, finally, inadvertently,* but there are many single adverbs that take other forms *e.g. meanwhile; later, soon; nevertheless; overall.*Prepositional phrases can be used to modify verbs and add important clarifying detail: *The scene was staged* ***in the round****The athlete paces himself* ***throughout the race***Adverbial clauses (containing a verb) can provide more information about an action:*He needs to dispose of CO2* ***by breathing out*** *I changed the ending* ***so that it was more serious***Adverbials indicate the connection between actions, acting as ‘glue’ for ideas: *Most people were working in the fields* ***when the earthquake struck****.* ***As a consequence****, the number of fatalities was relatively low.*  | Adverbials can help students add detail to explanations, be more precise, or strengthen connections between ideas. Adverbials act as ‘discourse markers’ in a text, connecting sentences and paragraphs and are therefore important for ensuring text cohesion. Build subject vocabulary by teaching a range of adverbials that will allow students to express more subtle meanings and connect ideas effectively. Experiment with the effect that moving the adverbial phrase or clause within a sentence might have on the meaning and emphasis of ideas. |