

BRIZE NORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



SUPPORTING WRITING

SENTENCE GUIDANCE



A guide for parents

Introduction

Welcome to the Brize Norton Primary School Sentence Level Guidance.

The purpose of the document is to outline the stages of progress for sentence level work. Our aim is to provide parents with an understanding of the progression of sentence construction when supporting children's writing at home.

Sentence structure is only one element of the teaching of writing and the assessment we make of children's writing. It is though a major element and a whole school focus for improvement this year at Brize Norton.

The following guidance is divided into levels and gives the target statement and where it is appropriate a definition and example. Our expectations are that children are typically working at the following levels:

Year 1 - typically children will be working at level 1 with some children progressing into level 2 by the end of the year.

Year 2 - typically children would achieve level 2b by the end of the year but many will exceed this achieving level 2a or 3c.

Year 3 - typically children will be working between level 2b and 3c.

Year 4 - typically children should be achieving level 3b or 3a by the end of the year.

Year 5 - typically children should be moving well into level 4.

Year 6 - children should be working at the higher end of level 4 with many working within level 5.

The writing targets on your pupil's termly report will relate to one of the levelled statements. This document helps you see what comes before and what comes after the target and the other sentence skills your child will need to secure in a level.

If you are unclear as to the level your child is working at, please speak to the class teacher.

The supplementary booklet 'How to Improve Your Child's Writing' explains how writing is taught in school and general ideas to support writing at home.



LEVEL 1

1C

Developing the sense of a sentence and writing single words and phrases.

Target	Definition	Example
I can say and write simple words and phrases.	A phrase is a group of words that act as one unit. So dog is a word, but the dog, a big dog or that dog over there are all phrases	<i>'a big dog'</i>
I can say how full stops are used in writing or reading.		
I can use a full stop at the end of a sentence or line.		<i>'the dog was big.'</i>

1B

Being able to say and write a simple sentence independently.

Using capital letters and full stops when punctuating a simple sentence.

Language explanation: A simple sentence has one clause e.g. The big dog.
A clause is a group of words that expresses an event (she drank some water) or a situation (she was thirsty/she wanted a drink). It usually contains a subject (she in the examples) and verb (drank/was/wanted).

Target	Definition	Example
I can write simple sentences that have a subject and an action.	Verbs are action words such as walk(ed), ran	<i>'The dog ran down the road.'</i>
I can join two ideas with 'and'.		<i>'a blue ball and red bat'</i>
I am beginning to use some capital letters and full stops.		

1A

Consolidating the sense of a sentence, writing simple sentences independently.

Using capital letters and full stops to punctuate a sentence.

Language explanation: A simple sentence has one clause e.g. The big dog.
A clause is a group of words that expresses an event (she drank some water) or a situation (she was thirsty/she wanted a drink). It usually contains a subject (she in the examples) and verb (drank/was/wanted).

Target	Definition	Example
My simple sentences make sense.		
I can join simple sentences with 'and'.		<i>'The dog ran down the road and jumped over the fence into the park.'</i>
Some of my sentences start with capital letters and end with a full stop.		

LEVEL 2

2C

Using words such as 'and, but, so, or, because' to join compound sentences.

Language explanation: A compound sentence has two or more clauses (parts) joined by and, but, or so e.g. It was late but I was not tired.

Target	Definition	Example
I can write in sentences, linking my ideas with conjunctions like and, but, or, so and because.	Conjunctions are used to link two sentences together.	'We had to put our winter coats on <u>but</u> it was not cold outside.' 'It was raining <u>so</u> we could not go out to play.'
I can use full stops and capital letters in most of my work.		
I can say what a question mark or exclamation mark is used for.	An exclamation mark is used at the end of a sentence to indicate strong emotion.	'Can we get ready to go home now?' 'What a pity!' 'Get out!'
My sentences contain a subject and a verb	A verb describes an action e.g. walk, run, was talking	' <u>The girl</u> walked. <u>The dog</u> howled.'

2B

Using question marks, exclamation marks and commas in a list with some accuracy.

Target	Definition	Example
I can make my sentences longer using words like 'and, but, because, so'.		'I walked to school today <u>because</u> I missed the bus.'
I can find interesting ways to start my sentences.		' <u>Suddenly, from nowhere</u> , the dog jumped up at me.' ' <u>Nervously</u> , I walked down the street.'
I can use time connectives to start sentences.	Time connectives signal the movement of time, e.g. next, later that day, then, a few minutes later.	' <u>After a while</u> , the rain began to fall.' ' <u>Next</u> , the man jumped over the fence.'
I can use full stops at the end of a sentence and capital letters for the names or people and places.		
I can use a question mark at the end of a question.		

2A

Using interesting vocabulary (words), varying the use of verbs (action or being words) for effect and keeping the tense consistent.

Language explanation: Connectives are words which link ideas (clauses) within a sentence e.g. when, while, although, because.

Verbs are action words such as walk(ed), ran, swam, was talking.

Target	Definition	Example
I can start my sentences in a variety of ways.		'Suddenly, the man jumped to his feet' or 'The man suddenly jumped to his feet.'
I can write in the past and present tense.	A tense is a verb form that most often indicates time. English verbs have two basic tenses, present and past.	'Yesterday it was cold (past tense), but today it is warm (present tense).'
I can use connectives at the beginning and within sentences.	Connectives are linking words, such as 'but', 'because' or 'in order to' and can be in the middle or at the beginning of sentences.	' <u>When</u> he looked up he could see the plane.' 'He could see the plane <u>when</u> he looked up.'
I can use full stops, capital letters, question marks and exclamation marks accurately.		'Stop! Please, wait for me.'
I can use commas used to separate items in a list.		'I went to the shops and bought some eggs, flour and butter.'
I am beginning to use speech marks to show when a person is speaking.		"Come over here!" the mother called to her son.



LEVEL 3

3C

Using a range of adjectives, adverbs, verbs and nouns/noun phrases in writing and considering the impact on the reader.

Language Explanation: Adjectives are words which describe a thing (noun), such as *big, blue, happy etc.*
 Adverbs describe how or when something is done, *e.g. Slowly, carefully, firstly, suddenly etc.*
 Verbs are words which describe what something or someone is doing, or a state of being, *e.g. 'was, is, walk, are talking, was swimming, jumped, crawled, might have been thinking, will be going,' etc.*
 Nouns are words which name things, such as cat and mat, including proper nouns, which are names needing capital letters, *e.g. 'I, Mrs Jones, Liverpool, Mount Everest, etc.'*
 Noun phrases give more detail about a noun, *e.g. 'The big, white, fluffy rabbit'*, where 'rabbit' is the noun being described.

Target	Definition	Example
I can use simple and compound sentences.	A simple sentence has one clause, regardless of its length. A compound sentence uses a connecting word, such as 'and', 'but', 'if', 'when' and 'because' to link more than one clause.	<i>'I like sausages' and 'I like big, fat, tasty sausages' are both simple sentences.'</i> <i>'The wind was very strong <u>and</u> I really battled to stand up' is a compound sentence.'</i>
I can write in the first person. I can write in the third person.		<i>'I'</i> <i>'He/she/it/they'</i>
I can use many time connectives.	Time connectives are just one kind of linking word showing when things happen.	<i>'first, next, then, after a while, eventually.'</i>
I can use a range of connectives to signal cause/reason.	There are also connectives which show cause and effect, such as 'due to...' or 'because'.	<i>'I shivered <u>because</u> it was cold.'</i>
I can add detail through: noun phrases adverbs	Noun phrases give more detail about a noun, <i>e.g. 'The big, white, fluffy rabbit'</i> , where 'rabbit' is the noun being described. Adverbs describe how or when something is done, <i>e.g. Slowly, carefully, firstly, suddenly etc.</i>	<i>'<u>golden</u> coins'</i> <i>'<u>glistening brightly</u>.'</i>
I use speech marks accurately some of the time.		<i>"Wait for me," he said.</i>
I can use commas in a list accurately.		<i>'The room was full of dust, cobwebs, dead spiders and dead flies.'</i>

3B

Using adjectives and adverbs to create variety and add interest for the reader.
 Composing a complex sentence, using a subordinate clause.

Language Explanation:

Adverbs describe how or when something is done, e.g. *Slowly, carefully, firstly, suddenly etc.*

Verbs are words which describe what something or someone is doing, or a state of being, e.g. *'was, is, walk, are talking, was swimming, jumped, crawled, might have been thinking, will be going, etc.*

A simple sentence has one clause e.g. The wind was blowing gently through her long blonde hair.

A compound sentence has two or more clauses or simple sentences joined by and, or, but or so e.g. *'She wanted to visit the castle, but he had made other plans.'*

A complex sentence is a series of clauses, or messages, joined together by commas rather than being linked together by connectives. So, *'Clearing away the snow from the drive, I began to dream about making a snowman'* is a complex sentence, and *'I cleared the snow from the drive and thought about making a snowman'* is a compound sentence. Complex sentences are more sophisticated and mean that the order in which a writer explains what is happening can be played with in order to create the desired effect on the reader. In this instance, the complex sentence suggests the two activities are happening at the same time, whereas the compound sentence could suggest that the second activity happened after the first.

Target	Definition	Example
I use a range of simple and compound sentences accurately.	A simple sentence has one clause, regardless of its length. A compound sentence uses a connecting word, such as 'and', 'but', 'if', 'when' and 'because' to link more than one clause.	<i>'I like eating tasty, hot sausages.'</i> <i>'I cleared the snow from the drive <u>and</u> thought about making a snowman' is a compound sentence'</i>
I can use a subordinate clause using words such as 'when', 'while', 'until', 'because',	A subordinate clause describes something less important than the main clause. The main describes the more important event ('the boy read his book'). The subordinate clause often comes after the main clause.	<i>'<u>While</u> the girl was playing, the boy read his book.'</i> <i>'The boy read his book, <u>while</u> the girl was playing.'</i>
I am beginning to use complex sentences with adverb starters	An adverb is a word that describes an action.	<i>'<u>Slowly</u>, I crept forward...'</i> <i>'<u>Silently</u>, the boy crept across the hallway, while his brother peered from behind the door.'</i>
I am beginning to use commas to mark embedded clauses	An embedded clause is when extra information is added to the middle of a sentence. It is separated by commas.	<i>'The pirate, <u>with his cutlass clenched in his teeth</u>, swung on to the ship.'</i>
I can use apostrophes for possession and to mark a missing letter in a word.		<i>'the boy's dog (the dog belonging to the boy)'</i> <i>'It's a monster (it is a monster)'</i>
I can use speech marks accurately most of the time.		<i>"Wait for me," he said.</i>

3A

Beginning to use commas to separate phrases and clauses in sentences.

Using speech, layout and punctuation with increased accuracy.

Using different sentence types, including simple and complex sentences in writing.

Language Explanation:

Adverbs describe how or when something is done, e.g. *Slowly, carefully, firstly, suddenly etc.*

Verbs are words which describe what something or someone is doing, or a state of being. These can be used to start a sentence, e.g. *'Laughing at the clown, the boy fell off his chair.'*

A simple sentence has one clause e.g. The wind was blowing gently through her long blonde hair.

A compound sentence has two or more clauses or simple sentences joined by and, or, but or so e.g. *'She wanted to visit the castle, but he had made other plans.'*

A complex sentence is a series of clauses, or messages, joined together by commas rather than being linked together by connectives. So, *'Clearing away the snow from the drive, I began to dream about making a snowman'* is a complex sentence, and *'I cleared the snow from the drive and thought about making a snowman'* is a compound sentence. Complex sentences are more sophisticated and mean that the order in which a writer explains what is happening can be played with in order to create the desired effect on the reader. In this instance, the complex sentence suggests the two activities are happening at the same time, whereas the compound sentence could suggest that the second activity happened after the first.

Target	Definition	Example
I can use a variety of sentences for effect.	Long sentences slow writing down and can be used to add description. Short sentences speed thing up and build suspense.	<i>'Slowly the children moved forward following the dusty gravel path a footstep at a time.'</i> <i>'Suddenly, they fell.'</i>
I can start sentences in a variety of ways, e.g. with an adverb or verb starter.	A verb is an action word. An adverb describes an action.	<i>'<u>Unfortunately</u>, the old man did not know where he was going.'</i> <i>'<u>Silently</u>, the crept in.'</i> <i>'<u>Running at speed</u>, the boys...'</i> <i>'<u>Surprised by the sight in front of them</u>, the children...'</i>
I can use connectives between, at the beginning, and within sentences.	Connectives can be words like when, while, although, as, if and despite.	<i>'We wore our wellies <u>when</u> we played in the puddles.'</i> <i>'<u>Despite</u> wearing our willies, we were not allowed to play in the puddles.'</i> <i>'<u>Although</u> it was raining, we still went out to play.'</i>
I can write in the correct tense consistently.	Tense can be past, present or future.	<i>'They sat down and ate',</i> rather than <i>'They sat down and eat'.</i>
I can accurately use commas in a list and to mark clauses.	When marking clauses commas are used to separate parts of sentences to make them easier to understand.	<i>'Into his suitcase he packed his trousers, best shoes, jacket and small cap.'</i> <i>'When the boy fell from the climbing frame, everyone rushed to help him.'</i>
I can use speech punctuation.		<i>"Wait for me," he said.</i>
I can use apostrophes to show possession or the omission of a letter.		<i>'the boy's dog' (the dog belonging to the boy)</i> <i>'It's a monster (it is a monster)'</i>

LEVEL 4

4C

Using subordinate clauses to add detail to complex sentences.

Language Explanation:

A simple sentence has one clause e.g. The wind was blowing gently through her long blonde hair.

A compound sentence has two or more clauses or simple sentences joined by and, or, but or so e.g. 'She wanted to visit the castle, but he had made other plans.'

A complex sentence is a series of clauses, or messages, joined together by commas rather than being linked together by connectives. So, 'Clearing away the snow from the drive, I began to dream about making a snowman' is a complex sentence, and 'I cleared the snow from the drive and thought about making a snowman' is a compound sentence. Complex sentences are more sophisticated and mean that the order in which a writer explains what is happening can be played with in order to create the desired effect on the reader. In this instance, the complex sentence suggests the two activities are happening at the same time, whereas the compound sentence could suggest that the second activity happened after the first.

A subordinate clause is part of a complex sentence which adds more detail about what is happening. It is secondary, or subordinate to the main clause, which gives the main message, and would not make sense on its own, e.g. 'Looking around her, she ran over to her friend.' In this complex sentence (two clauses) the first clause is subordinate to the second and doesn't make sense on its own, whereas 'she ran over to her friend' does make sense and is a sentence and the main message.

Target	Definition	Example
I can use complex sentences appropriate to text.	In some writing, complex sentences can be effective, but they are not always suitable in some types of writing, such as giving simple instructions.	'Spread the butter thickly.'
My sentences show variety, questions and direct speech rather than reported speech .	Direct speech is what the characters say shown in speech marks. Reported speech is when someone says that someone else said something.	"Wait your turn," ordered the butcher. 'The butcher told the people in the queue to wait their turn.'
I can use short sentences effectively to speed up action.		'She stopped.'
I can use tense and person accurately.	Tense can be past, present or future. Person can be first, second or third.	'She walked down the road.' 'She walks down the road.' 'She is going to walk down the road.' 'I, we (first) you (second) and he, she, it, they (third)'
I can use dialogue layout and punctuation accurately.	Dialogue layout is the convention for writing direct speech.	"Wait your turn," ordered the butcher.



4B

Using subordinate clauses in writing to add relevant detail to complex sentences and consider impact.

Language Explanation: Refer to 4C

Target	Definition	Example
I can reorder sentences for effect.	Reordering parts of a sentence can create differing effects e.g. creating suspense or drama.	<i>'The man jumped off his bike as the car veered towards him.'</i> <i>'Veering towards him, the car forced the man to jump off his bike.'</i>
I can use subordinate clauses to add relevant detail to complex sentences.	Subordinate clauses can be used at the beginning, middle or end of sentences to add detail and emphasis.	<i>'<u>Looking around her</u>, she ran over to her friend.'</i> <i>'She ran over to her friend, <u>looking around her</u>.'</i> <i>'The doctor, <u>who had been on the phone all morning</u>, was late for his rounds.'</i>
I can use extended noun phrases.	A noun phrase describes something and is used to add detail.	<i>'Golden coins'</i> <i>'Flickering candle-light'</i>
I can use tense and person accurately, making sure the verb and tense match the person.	Tense can be past, present or future. Person can be first, second or third.	<i>'They were speaking',</i> rather than <i>'They was spoke'.</i>
I am beginning to show an awareness of the difference between spoken and written language reflected in use of dialogue.	Children understand that they can make a speaker use a style of language to reflect his or her personality or who he or she is speaking to and for what purpose.	<i>"Cor blimey!" sighed the Cockney'.</i>
I can show accurate use of commas to demarcate clauses most of the time.	Commas separate parts of sentences.	<i>'Although it was a bitterly cold day and had been snowing most of the night, the school remained open.'</i> <i>'The doctor, who had been on a house call, returned to the hospital just in time.'</i>



4A

Manipulating the subordinate clauses in a sentence to achieve different effects.

Using a variety of simple and complex sentences in writing to have an effect on the reader.

Language Explanation: Refer to 4C

Target	Definition	Example
I can understand how to vary sentence structure and length to create deliberate effects.	Short sentences to create a dramatic effect. Long sentences with several clauses to give a lot of information in order to move the action along.	<i>'Bang!'</i> <i>'The troll sprang to his feet, knocking over his cooking pot, sending the billy goats careering to safety down the path.'</i>
I can write sentences in an appropriate and effective style in relation to text-type, audience and purpose.	Using pace, build-up, suspense or drawing the reader in with a question. The children consider who will be reading what they write and what they want their readers to think or feel.	
I can use the correct punctuation to clarify meaning. The children know how to use punctuation, such as exclamation marks (!) and dashes (-).	An exclamation mark is used at the end of a sentence to indicate strong emotion. Dashes are used to indicate further information.	<i>'What a pity!'</i> <i>'Get out!'</i> <i>'It's a goal!'</i> <i>'It was a great day out – everybody enjoyed it.'</i>
I am beginning to use the full range of punctuation, e.g. ellipsis, hyphens, brackets to add information (), colons(:) and semi-colons (;).	Ellipsis (...) shows the passing of time or creates suspense. Hyphens (-) join two words that have a strong relationship. Brackets () to add extra information. Colons (:) to show that a long list will follow or a sentence which rephrases the first will follow Semi-colon (;) acts a strong comma to separate two main clauses or to separate items in a descriptive list.	<i>'and with that he ran into the crowd...'</i> <i>'a well-known painter'</i> <i>'The artist (1856-1920) was prolific.'</i> <i>'He was very cold: the temperature was below zero.'</i> <i>'I liked the book; it was about dinosaurs.'</i> This could also be written as two separate sentences: <i>'I liked the book. The book was about dinosaurs.'</i> <i>'I need large, juicy tomatoes; half a pound of unsalted butter; a kilo of fresh pasta, preferably tagliatelle; and a jar of black olives.'</i>

I can use different speech punctuation used, such as split dialogue; speaker identified before, between and after dialogue.	Split dialogue and speaker identified between dialogue.	<i>"Wait," he sobbed, "for me..."</i>
	Speaker identified before dialogue.	<i>The boy said, "Help me!"</i>
	Speaker identified after dialogue.	<i>"Help me!" the boy said.</i>

LEVEL 5

5C

Using a wider range of connectives to clarify relationship between ideas.

Language Explanation:

A complex sentence is a series of clauses, or messages, joined together by commas rather than being linked together by connectives. So, 'Clearing away the snow from the drive, I began to dream about making a snowman' is a complex sentence, and 'I cleared the snow from the drive and thought about making a snowman' is a compound sentence. Complex sentences are more sophisticated and mean that the order in which a writer explains what is happening can be played with in order to create the desired effect on the reader. In this instance, the complex sentence suggests the two activities are happening at the same time, whereas the compound sentence could suggest that the second activity happened after the first.

A subordinate clause is part of a complex sentence which adds more detail about what is happening. It is secondary, or subordinate to the main clause, which gives the main message, and would not make sense on its own, e.g. 'Looking around her, she ran over to her friend.' In this complex sentence (two clauses) the first clause is subordinate to the second and doesn't make sense on its own, whereas 'she ran over to her friend' does make sense and is a sentence and the main message.

Target	Definition	Example
I can position a clause to achieve a specific effect e.g. to create surprise.	Main clauses can be changed into a subordinate position to change the emphasis and subject of a sentence.	' <u>The door exploded inwards</u> , (main clause) <u>leaving the children stunned</u> .' (subordinate clause) as opposed to ' <u>The children were stunned</u> (main clause) <u>because the door exploded inwards</u> .' (subordinate clause)
I can use a wide range of connectives to show the relationship between ideas,	Connectives can be words like when, while, although, as, if and in spite of or despite.	' <u>In spite of</u> a well-supported petition, the planning authority granted permission for the development of the new waste disposal centre.'
I can use adverbial phrases to add detail.	Adverbial phrases can be used to show the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • place • time • manner in which something happens.	Place - ' <u>walked wearily into the deep, dark forest</u> ' Time - ' <u>in the blink of an eye</u> ' Manner - ' <u>stomping angrily out of the room</u> '.
I can use the full range of punctuation appropriately.	Refer to 4A	

5B

Using features of sentence structure to build up detail or convey meaning.

Language Explanation: Refer to 5C

Target	Definition	Example
I can consciously and consistently control my use of complex sentences by using subordinate clauses effectively.		' <i>The door exploded inwards, (main clause) <u>leaving the children stunned</u>, (subordinate clause)</i> as opposed to ' <i>The children were stunned (main clause) because <u>the door exploded inwards</u>.(subordinate clause)</i>
I can use connectives appropriate to text-type; e.g. discursive (argument or discussion) or explanatory, among others, and indicate the relationship between clauses.	Common connectives when writing an argument can be 'therefore, furthermore, on the other hand, alternatively'. Common connectives when writing an explanation can be 'because, due to, as a result of.'	' <i>Therefore, this new development is unacceptable to the villagers.</i> ' ' <i>Due to an increase in the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the government have introduced a low emission zone.</i> '
I can use modal verbs to express degree of possibility e.g. <i>might and could</i> .	Modal verbs are words such as can/could will/would shall/should may/might must/ought	' <i>This <u>might</u> mean the end of school as we know it</i> ; ' <i>It <u>could</u> be considered unreasonable.</i> '
I can use punctuation to convey and clarify meaning and to integrate speech into longer sentences.		' <i>The boy glanced over his shoulder, shivering with fear, as he whispered, "Is anyone there?"</i> '
I can use punctuation for effect as well as demarcation.		" <i>No! Stop what you are doing!</i> "



5A

Using a full range of punctuation to demarcate sentences, including speech.

Language Explanation: Refer to 5C

Target	Definition	Example
I can choose sentence structures to have a specific effect upon the reader.		<i>'Pleading and begging for his help, she began to weep bitter tears...'</i>
I can break conventions in order to achieve specific effects.	Starting a series of sentences with 'and' to convey tedium or relentlessness.	<i>'And so it went on...'</i>
I can ensure tense is manipulated for effect, e.g. diaries written in all three tenses.	Diaries can be written in the past tense, present tense and future tense.	<i>'When I woke this morning...' 'As I write I can hear...' 'Later on I shall...'</i>

