

# FACT SHEETS

for the

GED<sup>®</sup>

REASONING THROUGH  
LANGUAGE ARTS TEST

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TEST PREPARATION

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# ADJECTIVES

An **adjective** is a word that describes a noun. Specifically, an adjective can describe the quantity, opinion, size, age, color, shape, origin, material, specificity, and purpose of something. These descriptive words help us to clearly visualize what someone is talking about, whether in a day-to-day conversation or in a book.

Here are a couple of example sentences that contain simple adjectives.

The brown squirrel scampered up the tall tree.

Three people just sat at the wooden table.

In the first sentence, the adjectives *brown* and *tall* are describing color and size, and in the second sentence, the adjectives *three* and *wooden* are describing number and material. Articles (*a*, *an*, and *the*) are also adjectives, because they describe whether a noun is specific or non-specific.

When two or more adjectives are being used to describe a noun, they are known as **coordinate adjectives**. Coordinate adjectives should be separated by a comma or the word *and*, as seen in the following sentences:

What a thoughtful and generous gift!

Rufus is a happy, energetic dog.

When a single adjective is made of multiple words, it is known as a **compound adjective**. Compound adjectives require a hyphen, as seen in the example sentences below:

The six-page essay is due tomorrow.

Kim is a well-known biologist from Nevada.



# LIST OF ADJECTIVES

able	disturbed	frustrating	loose
abrupt	dizzy	funny	lovely
acidic	early	fuzzy	low
adorable	easy	gaudy	lucky
adventurous	effortless	good	massive
aggressive	exasperated	graceful	mysterious
agitated	excited	greasy	narrow
alert	exhilarated	great	nasty
aloof	extensive	grieving	outrageous
bad	exuberant	gritty	panicky
best	foolish	grotesque	perfect
bored	frantic	grubby	perplexed
brave	fresh	grumpy	quizzical
bright	friendly	handsome	teeny
certain	frightened	happy	tender
clear	frothy	hard	tense
colossal	frustrating	hollow	terrible
condescending	glorious	hungry	tricky
confused	gorgeous	hurt	troubled
cooperative	grubby	icy	unsightly
corny	happy	ideal	upset
costly	harebrained	immense	white
courageous	healthy	impressionable	whole
cruel	helpful	intrigued	wicked
despicable	helpless	irate	yellow
determined	high	large	young
different	hollow	lazy	yummy
dilapidated	homely	livid	zany
diminutive	free	lonely	zealous
distressed	frothy	long	zippy



# ADVERBS

An **adverb** is a word that modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb.

The easiest way to find an adverb in a sentence is to ask these questions:

Where?

How?

When?

To what extent?

Most often, adverbs will end with the suffix *-ly*. Here are some examples:

abruptly	cautiously	gently	ironically	oddly	safely
admirably	coolly	gladly	jokingly	offensively	securely
agreeably	creatively	gloomily	joyfully	pathetically	sharply
angrily	deliberately	gracefully	leniently	peculiarly	softly
astonishingly	disastrously	graciously	lightly	playfully	speedily
begrudgingly	disturbingly	hastily	loudly	pleasantly	sternly
bitterly	dramatically	heroically	lovingly	quickly	tightly
blatantly	easily	hopelessly	magnificently	quietly	tragically
blissfully	eventually	hurriedly	mildly	rapidly	unfortunately
broadly	fearlessly	importantly	moderately	readily	unjustly
carefully	ferociously	incessantly	nobly	responsively	wrongly
casually	fortunately	innocently	noisily	rudely	yearly

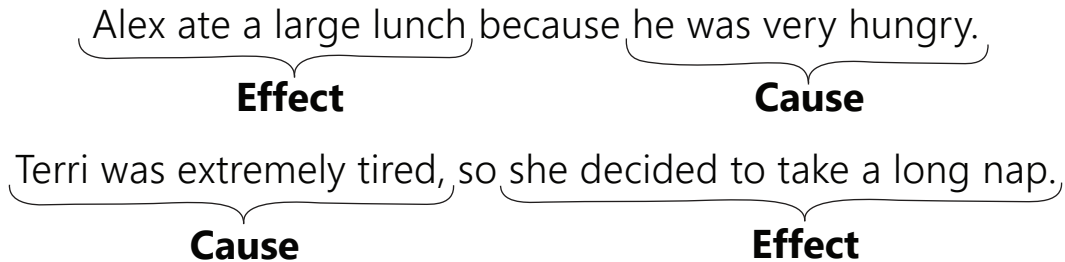
Some adverbs are used as **degrees of comparison**:

ADVERB DEGREES OF COMPARISON		
Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Soft	Softer	Softest
Loud	Louder	Loudest
Badly	Worse	Worst



# CAUSE AND EFFECT

A cause-and-effect relationship is one where Event B happens because Event A happened. Event A is the **cause** and Event B is the **effect**.



As you can see, the cause will sometimes appear before the effect in the sentence and other times appear after it. In either case, there are several words and phrases that often indicate a cause-and-effect relationship:

## Cause

- If
- Because
- Since
- Due to
- Caused

## Effect

- Then
- Consequently
- As a result
- For this reason
- So

These “keywords” almost always appear at the beginning of the cause or effect phrase they indicate. In the first example sentence above, the keyword *because* comes before the cause in the sentence. In the second sentence, the keyword *so* comes before the effect in the sentence.

## EXAMPLES:

**Due to** the weather, we will not be meeting outside this afternoon.

Sam is not feeling well. **As a result**, he will not be attending school today.

**Because** he has longer legs, Jack walks faster than Marcus.

**Since** Rachel brushes her teeth every day, she does not have cavities.

Sarah does not have a car. **Consequently**, she rides her bike to school.

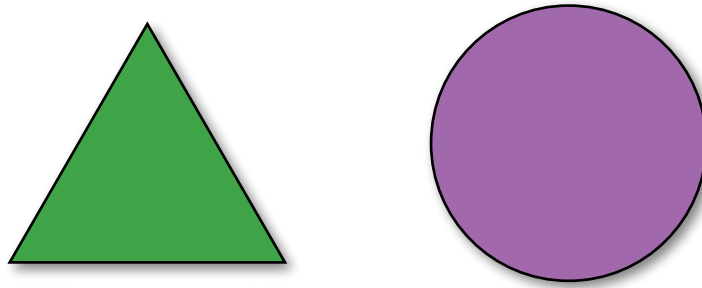


# COMPARE AND CONTRAST

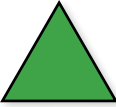
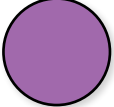
To **compare** means to look for all of the similar qualities between two or more things. For instance, you could compare a dog and a cat by noting that they are both animals, or you could compare different books by noting the similar themes they share.

To **contrast** means to look for all of the differing qualities between two or more things. For instance, you could contrast an elephant and a mouse by noting their different sizes, or you could contrast the personalities of different people.

Take a look at the two shapes below. They are similar in some ways and different in others, so you can both compare *and* contrast them.



Compare
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Shapes</li><li>· Filled with color</li><li>· Similar size</li></ul>

Contrast	
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Triangle</li><li>· Green</li><li>· Three points</li><li>· Three sides</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Circle</li><li>· Purple</li><li>· No points</li><li>· No sides</li></ul>

This is a simple example. However, there are more challenging ways in which you might be asked to compare

and contrast something. For example, in your English class, you may be asked to compare and contrast key themes or ideas, or in math and science classes, you may be asked to compare and contrast different graphs and values.



# CONNOTATION AND DENOTATION

Whether you're reading a book or just chatting with friends, your brain is constantly working to interpret the meaning of the words you're taking in. Generally, there are two different types of meaning to choose from: connotation and denotation.

**con·no·ta·tion** | /,kə-nə-'tā-shən/  
(noun)

• something implied or suggested by a word or phrase

**Connotation** is the emotions and/or ideas associated with a particular word or phrase.

If a word invokes a good feeling or idea, that word has a positive connotation. If a word invokes a bad feeling or idea, that word has a negative connotation. If a word doesn't invoke any particular emotion or idea, then that word has a neutral connotation.

**Positive connotation:** Jamie uses coupons because she is *economical*.

**Negative connotation:** Jamie uses coupons because she is *cheap*.

The context of the surrounding text can help clarify a word's connotation.

**Denotation** is simply the literal meaning or definition of a word or phrase.

**de·no·ta·tion** | /,dē-nō-'tā-shən/  
(noun)

• the direct dictionary definition of a word or phrase

Here's an example of the connotation and denotation of the word *timid*:

**Connotation:** The connotation of *timid* is generally a negative one, especially if you compare it to the word *reserved* or the word *apprehensive*, both of which have a more positive connotation.

**Denotation:** The denotation, or definition, of *timid* is "lacking in courage or self-confidence."





# EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT INFORMATION

Information that is clearly stated and leaves no room for interpretation is called **explicit information**. Here's an example:

**ex·pli·cit** | /ɪkˈsplɪsət/  
(adjective)

• stated clearly and with detail; not vague

*"It was a stormy night in Greenwood. The strong winds were causing the trees to sway, and it rained for hours."*

There are multiple pieces of information that are explicitly stated in the example above:

- A storm was underway.
- The storm is happening in Greenwood.
- It was nighttime.
- The winds were strong.
- The winds were causing the trees to sway.
- It rained for hours.

Information that doesn't directly provide information and instead requires the reader to infer what's going on is called **implicit information**. Here's an example:

*"Kayla peered out the window before heading to bed. The trees were wildly swaying, and the puddles in her yard were growing larger by the minute."*

**im·pli·cit** | /ɪˈɪm-ɪpli-sət/  
(adjective)

• implied without being directly expressed

The reader can infer a handful of things that are **implied** in this example:

- It was nighttime.
- The wind was blowing forcefully.
- It was raining heavily.
- A storm was occurring.



# FACT AND OPINION

A **fact** is a statement that can be proven to be true by the use of evidence. This means that facts are fully true in all cases and for all people.

- Humans are mammals
- Asia is the largest continent in the world
- World War II began in 1939
- Earth, Saturn, and Neptune are planets

Each of these statements is verifiably true. In other words, evidence exists that could prove each claim.

When something is factual, it is known as being **objective**.

On the other hand, an **opinion** is a statement that is not necessarily true or false; it can express a belief, attitude, value, judgment, or feeling.

Each of these statements is debatable; one can agree or disagree with each statement.

When something is debatable, it is known as being **subjective**.

- Humans are the best mammals in existence
- Asia is the most interesting continent in the world
- World War II was a terrible war
- Earth is the most beautiful planet in the solar system

When trying to distinguish opinion from fact, be on the lookout for certain signal words that will often accompany an opinion:

- Always
- Bad
- Beautiful
- Best
- Disgusting
- Favorite
- Good
- Great
- Horrible
- Lovely
- Most
- Must
- Never
- Pretty
- Should
- Strangest
- Terrible
- Ugly
- Unfair
- Wonderful
- Worst
- Worthwhile



# INDUCTIVE vs. DEDUCTIVE REASONING

When you are constructing an argument or reaching a conclusion, there are two basic styles of reasoning that are used: inductive and deductive reasoning. **Inductive reasoning** relies on specific premises to reach a general conclusion, while **deductive reasoning** uses general premises that are certain by definition to reach a specific conclusion. Note that inductive conclusions are not always true.

## Inductive Reasoning

### 1. Specific Observations

Inductive reasoning begins with observations.

- John is from Atlanta.
- John has brown hair.
- Mary is from Atlanta.
- Mary has brown hair.

### 2. Generalization

Patterns are drawn from the observations and then generalized.

- John and Mary are both people from Atlanta.
- John and Mary both have brown hair.

### 3. General Conclusion

The generalizations are combined to form a general conclusion.

All people from Atlanta have brown hair.

## Deductive Reasoning

### 1. General Premises

Inductive reasoning begins with observations that lead to a generalization.

- All peaches are fruits.
- All fruits have seeds.



TRANSFORMATIVE LAW

If  $A = B$  and  $B = C$ , then  $A = C$

A: peaches B: fruits C: have seeds



### 2. Specific Conclusion

The general premises are combined to form a specific conclusion.

Peaches have seeds.

## OTHER EXAMPLES:

### INDUCTIVE

Lisa is a grandmother. Lisa has gray hair. Therefore, all grandmothers have gray hair.  
I always see Sam eat lunch at noon. Therefore, Sam will probably eat lunch at noon today.

### DEDUCTIVE

All birds have feathers. All pigeons are birds. Therefore, pigeons have feathers.  
All apples are fruits. Granny Smith is an apple. Therefore, Granny Smith is a fruit.



# INFERENCE

An **inference** is a conclusion reached by using evidence and reasoning. Making inferences is a way of using information available in a text to make informed guesses about what is not yet known (i.e., “reading between the lines”).

We make inferences every day. For example, if you lost your cell phone and remember that the last time you saw it was in your bedroom, you might infer that it is in your bedroom. It may not be there, but the available evidence leads you to this feasible conclusion. It may be an incorrect conclusion, simply because inferences are rarely certain.

There are two main uses of inference when reading a text: making predictions and guessing word meanings.

## Making Predictions

**EXAMPLE:** John said, “Whatever you do, don’t go into the basement.”

A few conclusions can be inferred from this:

- 1) It foreshadows a trip to the basement later in the text. One can guess that since John said this, characters are probably going to go into the basement.
- 2) There is likely something bad or forbidden in the basement.

### NOTE:

Is John a trustworthy character or a suspicious one? Inferences about what is in the basement might differ depending on the answer.

## Guessing Word Meanings

**EXAMPLE:** She was gregarious, found always at one event or another around town and surrounded by laughing people. Her door was always open.

### NOTE:

Be careful to not confuse inference with observation. An observation is something you notice or see, while an inference is something you conclude based on these observations.

The word *gregarious* may be unfamiliar, but one can infer from the content of the sentence what the definition of the unknown word is:

**gre·gar·i·ous** | /grə'gerēəs/  
(adjective)

• fond of the company of others; sociable.



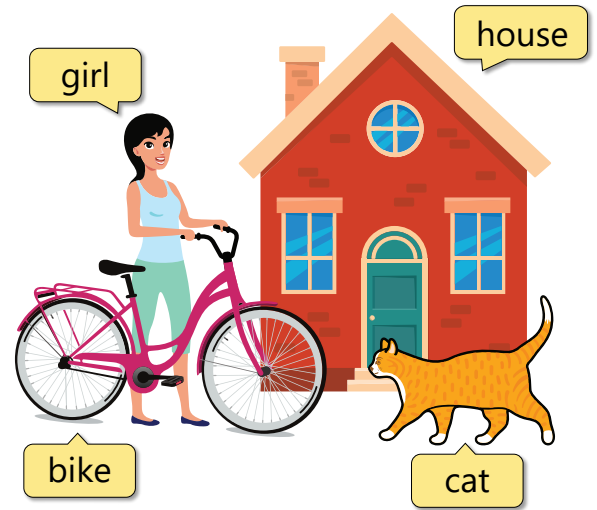
# NOUNS

A **noun** is a word that names a person, place, thing, or idea. For example, the words *car*, *team*, and *John* are all nouns. There are a few different types of nouns that can be used:

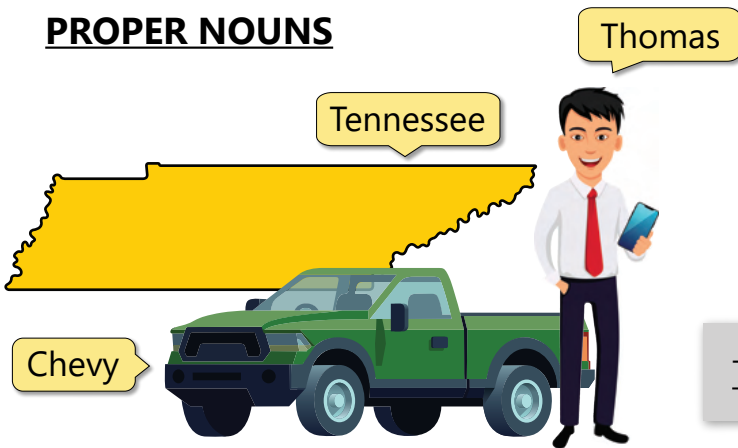
## COMMON NOUNS

A common noun is a word that refers to general people, places, things, or ideas. For example, the words *girl*, *bike*, *house*, and *school* are all common nouns.

The girl rode her bike from her house to the school.



## PROPER NOUNS



A proper noun is a word that refers to specific people, places, or things. For example, the words *Thomas*, *Tennessee*, *Lindale High School*, and *Friday* are all proper nouns. Proper nouns are always capitalized.

Thomas will drive to Tennessee on Friday in his Chevy.

## COLLECTIVE NOUNS

A collective noun refers to a collective group of people or things that can act as a unit. For example, to refer to a group of multiple people playing a sport, we use the collective noun *team*.

The flock of birds soared through the morning sky.



There are eight people on that soccer team.



# PLURAL NOUNS

Nouns that refer to more than one person, place, or thing are plural nouns, while nouns that refer to just one person, place, or thing are singular nouns. There are a few different rules to remember when writing regular plural nouns (and there are usually some exceptions):

## **GENERAL RULE**

Add -s to the end of the singular form.

- bat → bats
- car → cars
- table → tables
- doll → dolls

## **NOUNS ENDING IN S, X, Z, CH, SH, OR SS**

Add -es to the end of the singular form.

- box → boxes
- bench → benches
- bus → buses
- glass → glasses

## **NOUNS ENDING IN A CONSONANT + O**

Add -es to the end of the singular form.

- hero → heroes
- volcano → volcanoes
- tomato → tomatoes
- potato → potatoes

## **NOUNS ENDING IN A VOWEL + O**

Add -s to the end of the singular form.

- radio → radios
- stereo → stereos
- video → videos
- audio → audios

## **NOUNS ENDING IN A CONSONANT + Y**

Remove the y and add -ies to the end.

- city → cities
- lady → ladies
- enemy → enemies
- fly → flies

## **NOUNS ENDING IN A VOWEL + Y**

Add -s to the end of the singular form.

- day → days
- toy → toys
- alley → alleys
- donkey → donkeys

## **NOUNS ENDING IN F OR FE**

Change the ending to -ves.

- wolf → wolves
- knife → knives
- half → halves
- shelf → shelves

## **IRREGULAR PLURAL NOUNS**

Some nouns have a special plural form.

- man → men
- woman → women
- child → children
- tooth → teeth
- sheep → sheep
- deer → deer
- fish → fish
- moose → moose



# POSSESSIVE NOUNS

Nouns that describe ownership of something are possessive nouns. Generally, singular nouns can be made possessive by adding an apostrophe and an s to the end of the noun. Plural nouns can usually be made possessive by adding only an apostrophe.

## SINGULAR NOUNS

If a noun is singular, add an apostrophe and an s to the end to make the noun possessive:

- David's shoe
- the bird's wing
- a tree's branches
- a cliff's edge
- the box's size
- my friend's house
- James's bike
- a bass's stripes
- a church's steeple

## PLURAL NOUNS THAT END IN S

If a noun is plural and ends in s, add an apostrophe after the s to make the noun possessive:

- the puppies' paws
- the babies' cries
- the planets' orbits
- the teachers' classrooms
- the shelves' strength
- my friends' laughter
- the tomatoes' color
- the boxes' contents
- the houses' doors

## PLURAL NOUNS THAT DO NOT END IN S

If a noun is plural and does not end in s, add an apostrophe and an s to the end to make the noun possessive:

- the children's toys
- the sheep's bleating
- the geese's pond
- the mice's tails
- the oxen's strength
- the men's hats
- the people's choices
- the women's shoes
- the deer's antlers

## JOINT POSSESSION vs. SEPARATE POSSESSION

If something is owned by two people, only the second person mentioned should be made possessive. If two things are owned by two people, both people mentioned should be made possessive:



my aunt and uncle's house

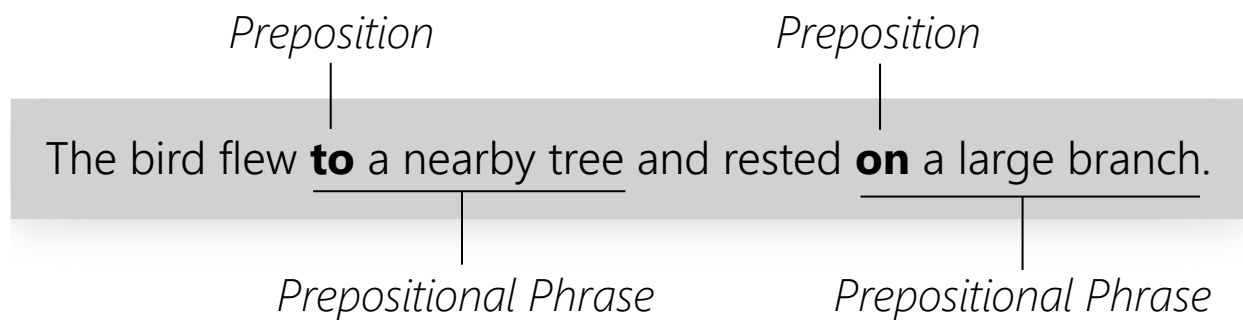


my aunt's and uncle's cars



# PREPOSITIONS

A **preposition** is a word that comes before a noun or pronoun to describe location, direction, and spatial relationships. The second noun connected with the preposition is called the object of the preposition. Together with the preposition, they form a **prepositional phrase**.



In the example above, the preposition *to* describes the direction in which the bird is flying, and *on* describes the bird's location. In both cases, the preposition is connecting the bird and another object.

Since prepositions specify how something is related to something else in time and space, it's important to be familiar with them:

aboard	around	beyond	inside	out	under
about	as	by	instead of	outside	underneath
above	at	concerning	into	over	unlike
according to	because of	despite	like	past	until
across	before	down	minus	regarding	unto
after	behind	during	near	since	up
against	below	except	of	through	upon
along	beneath	for	off	throughout	with
amid	beside/besides	from	on/onto	to	within
among	between	in	opposite	toward	without





# PERSONAL PRONOUNS

A **pronoun** is a word that takes the place of a noun in a sentence. For example, instead of saying, "When Tina walked in the house, Tina took off Tina's shoes," you could use the pronouns *her* and *she* to replace the noun Tina: "When Tina walked in the house, she took off her shoes." The noun that a pronoun replaces is called an **antecedent**.

## SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE

Pronouns that refer to people are called personal pronouns.

When acting as the subject of a sentence or phrase, a **subjective** personal pronoun is used. When acting as the object of a sentence or phrase, an **objective** personal pronoun is used.

In the example below, the pronoun *they* is used as the subject, and the pronoun *us* is used as the object:

They won't spot us hiding behind this tree.

		Subjective	Objective
Singular	1st Person	I	Me
	2nd Person	You	You
	3rd Person	He, She, It	Him, Her, It
Plural	1st Person	We	Us
	2nd Person	You	You
	3rd Person	They	Them

## POSSESSIVE

A **possessive** personal pronoun can help show a noun's ownership, or possession.

In the example below, the pronoun *yours* replaces the noun *notebook*:

It looks like this notebook is yours.

	Singular	Plural
1st Person	Mine	Ours
2nd Person	Yours	Yours
3rd Person	His, Hers, Its	Theirs

It is important to know the difference between possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives. A possessive pronoun takes the place of a noun, while a possessive adjective describes a noun. For example, the word *my* is a possessive adjective ("I'm reading my book"), but the word *mine* is a possessive pronoun ("The book is mine").



# OTHER PRONOUNS

## DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

Demonstrative pronouns are used to refer to things that are either near or far away.

	Singular	Plural
Near	This	These
Far	That	Those

This is my favorite pair of sandals.

Can you put those on Mark's desk?

Be careful to not confuse demonstrative pronouns with demonstrative adjectives. Remember, a demonstrative pronoun takes the place of a noun, while a demonstrative adjective describes a noun.

## INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

Interrogative pronouns are used to refer to nouns in the form of a question.

- what
- which
- who
- whom
- whose

What is the name of that desert?

Who invented the microwave oven?

Which one of you used my pencil?

I found a jacket. Whose is this?

Be careful to not confuse interrogative pronouns with interrogative adjectives. Remember, an interrogative pronoun takes the place of a noun, while an interrogative adjective describes a noun.

## INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

Indefinite pronouns are used to refer to non-specific people, things, or amounts.

- all
- another
- any
- anyone
- anything
- each
- everyone
- few
- many
- neither
- several
- some

We can start the meeting now that everyone has arrived.

I keep telling Eve and Jeremy but neither believes me.



# SEQUENCE

When reading a story or an essay, it's important to understand when an event happened in relation to other events. Writers will often use **sequence words** to show the order of events taking place.

It's easiest to split sequence words into three groups: beginning words, middle words, and end words.

## BEGINNING WORDS

Beginning sequence words and phrases are used to signal the first item or event that is being listed. Here are some common beginning words:

- First
- To begin
- At the onset
- In the beginning
- Starting off
- Originally

**To begin**, let's open our books to page 9.  
The **first** thing on our list is a gallon of milk.

## MIDDLE WORDS

Middle sequence words and phrases are used to introduce an item or event that is listed next. Here are some common middle words:

- Then
- Next
- After that
- In turn
- Consequently
- Second

**Then**, begin reading the first paragraph.  
The **next** item we need to get is a loaf of bread.

## END WORDS

End sequence words and phrases are used to designate the last item or event of a series. Here are some common end words:

- Last
- Finally
- In conclusion
- At the end
- Ultimately
- To finish

**Finally**, answer all of the review questions.  
A box of cereal is the **last** thing on our list.



# TOPICS AND MAIN IDEAS

A **topic** is a word or phrase that everything in a text refers to. The topic is usually expressed in a few words and is the general subject of a paragraph or essay.

## Example

*"Some people say that music helps them to relax and focus when they are studying or working."*

The topic of this statement is "music."

To find the topic of an article or essay, ask yourself two questions:

1. Who/what is the text about?
2. What is the author trying to show/teach to the reader?

The **main idea** of a text is the most important point that is being made by the author in reference to the topic at hand. Generally, the main idea needs to be a full sentence in order to be completely identified and defined.

## Example

*"Some people say that music helps them to relax and focus when they are studying or working."*

The main idea of this statement is that music helps some people relax.

To find the main idea of a statement or paragraph, first find the topic. Then, look for a sentence that states an important point about the topic.

