

Grade 12 English: Language Structures & Conventions Study Guide

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Free Study Resources for South African Matric Learners

1. Parts of Speech

- Noun: person, place, thing, idea (common, proper, abstract, collective)
- Pronoun: replaces a noun (I, he, she, they, it, we, you)
- Verb: action or state of being (action: run; linking: is, seems, becomes)
- Adjective: describes a noun (the tall building)
- Adverb: modifies verb, adjective, or other adverb (quickly, very, almost)
- Preposition: shows relationship (in, on, at, by, for, with)
- Conjunction: joins words/clauses (and, but, or, because, although)
- Interjection: exclamation (Oh! Wow! Alas!)

2. Sentence Types

- Simple: one independent clause (She ran quickly.)
- Compound: two+ independent clauses joined by coordinating conjunction (She ran and he walked.)
- Complex: one independent + one subordinate clause (Although she was tired, she continued.)
- Compound-complex: combination of both

3. Common Grammatical Errors to Avoid

- Subject-verb agreement: The team **IS** playing (collective noun = singular)
- Dangling modifier: "Running down the road, the shop was seen." -> incorrect (shop cannot run)
- Misplaced modifier: keep modifier next to what it modifies
- Tense consistency: do not switch tenses without reason
- Pronoun reference: make sure pronoun clearly refers to one noun
- Run-on sentences: use punctuation or conjunctions to separate complete thoughts

4. Figures of Speech (Literary Devices)

- Simile: comparison using "like" or "as" (brave as a lion)
- Metaphor: direct comparison, not using "like/as" (she is a lion)
- Personification: giving human qualities to non-human things
- Alliteration: repetition of initial consonant sounds
- Assonance: repetition of vowel sounds within words
- Onomatopoeia: word sounds like its meaning (buzz, crash, hiss)
- Hyperbole: deliberate exaggeration (I have told you a million times)
- Irony: saying the opposite of what is meant; situation opposite of expected
- Oxymoron: contradictory terms together (deafening silence)

5. Punctuation

- Comma: separate items in list; after introductory clause; before coordinating conjunction in compound sentence
- Semicolon: joins closely related independent clauses; in complex lists
- Colon: introduces a list or explanation
- Apostrophe: possession (John's book); contraction (don't)
- Quotation marks: direct speech; titles of short works

Ellipsis (...): omission; trailing off; pause in speech

- Dash: emphasis; aside; sudden break in thought

TIP In comprehension questions: underline the key words in each question first. For language questions: identify the device, quote from the text, then explain the EFFECT on the reader.