



# Growing Your Grammar Skills

**Understanding Sentences**

**Grades  
4-6**



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ISBN 978-1-935468-30-1  
Item No.: 308623



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# *Sentence Type*

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Since this is about sentences, what exactly *is* a sentence?

One of the most common definitions of a *sentence* is “a group of words that begins with a capital letter, ends with a period, question mark, or exclamation point, and expresses a complete thought.”

Now, create some alternative interrogative sentences of your own. Remember that they should offer two or more possible answers.

Should I use the **red, blue, or green token** for playing the game?



***Exclamatory sentences*** express powerful emotions.

**Wow! We're going to the circus today!**



# *Sentence Punctuation*

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How do you know when to use an exclamation point and when to use a period? What's the difference between these two sentences?

**Stop the car.**

**Stop the car!**

The difference is that the first is an ordinary request. Maybe I want you to stop the car so I can buy a soda. The second sentence has some serious emotion behind it. Maybe you need to jam on the brakes to avoid an accident.



Using a period or an exclamation point depends on how much excitement, emotion, or importance you want the sentence to show. If the statement is something you would yell, or something that shows a lot of emotion, then it takes an exclamation point. If it is something you would say more calmly, then it takes a period. Sometimes you simply need to use your own judgment. Look at the following pairs of sentences.

**Jim, back away from that rattlesnake before it bites you!**

**The speaker is excited. Use an **exclamation point**.**

Noun phrases can work as many different sentence parts, but for now, you need to be able to recognize when they are subjects.

**Many team members arrived late for the party.**

The noun phrase is “*many team members*,” and it is the subject. It explains who was late. That is the function of subjects. They explain who or what the sentence is about.