

GCE A LEVEL

English Language

Thinking about Language a brief introduction
to language

Read the following sentences.

1. *A the tree broken is.
2. *The baby sleeping cot in.
3. *A jumps horse under the fence because too much there is noise.
4. *Ball kicks boy the.
5. *Students has writed a essay.
6. *Some dogs happy are running above the beach.

Can you work out what is wrong?

1. Rewrite the sentences so that they make sense.
2. Try to describe the problems in each case.

We can recognise when sentences are not well-formed because we have an inbuilt knowledge of grammar. This knowledge helps us construct meaningful sentences and identify why the examples above are unacceptable.

Learning about the grammar of a language formalises our instinctive knowledge—it gives us the terminology to describe language in use precisely and the ability to communicate more effectively.

Definitions of 'language'

Noun

language (*countable and uncountable, plural languages*)

1. (*countable*) A **body** of **words**, and set of methods of combining them (called a **grammar**), understood by a **community** and used as a form of **communication**. (*Wiktionary*)

language, *n.* (and *int.*)

Pronunciation: Brit. /'læŋgwɪdʒ/, U.S. /'læŋɡwɪdʒ/

Etymology: < Anglo-Norman *langage, language, langwage, laungage, launage* and Old French ... ([Show More](#))

1.

a. The system of spoken or written communication used by a particular country, people, community, etc., typically consisting of words used within a regular grammatical and syntactic structure. Also *fig.* (*Oxford English Dictionary*)