**Activities for teaching subject vocabulary**

**Noun and noun phrase bingo**

Create bingo cards consisting of key nouns and noun phrases for a topic. Read out definitions or explanations that match the key words. Students put a cross through the term that matches the definition. Students in groups can create their own bingo cards and clues for another group to play, for example to revise a topic.

Geography example on the topic of volcanoes:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| supervolcano | destructive plate boundary |
| caldera | magma chamber |
| a hydrothermal feature | volcanic ash |

* A volcano that erupts at least 1,000 km**3** of material
* A geyser like old Faithful in Yellowstone Park
* Occurring when oceanic and continental plates collide with each other
* A large underground pool of liquid rock found beneath the surface of the Earth
* A volcanic crater formed when a volcano collapses into itself
* Very fine rock and mineral particles created during a volcanic eruption

Extension: choose one of the terms for a 10 second verbal explanation, expanding with detail and examples.

**Creating noun phrase ‘labels’**

The technical term for noun phrase constructions such as ‘*Rakosi, a Stalinist dictator,’* or *Hitler, leader of the Nazi party,* is a ‘noun phrase in apposition’ where the phrase between commas provides more information about, or defines, the noun before it. These noun phrases are a helpful way of writing succinctly and precisely.

* Match the descriptions to create an expanded noun phrase. Then decide which noun phrase will complete the sentence.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| tithes | Satan |
| the devil | evidence of God’s existence |
| ‘proof of the divine’ | sums of money given to the Church |
| leprosy | a leading physician from Ancient Greece |
| Hippocrates | a painful skin disease often resulting in death |

1. People in medieval England were very religious. They were expected to attend services regularly and each month to provide ………………………………………….
2. …………….was often held responsible for sending diseases to people.
3. Blaming sickness on God acted as……………………………………………
4. …………………………….was included in the Bible as an example of punishment for sin.
5. ………………………………….believed that the stars and planets had an impact on health.

Answers - note there will be more than one way of ordering parts in the noun phrase, as indicated:

1. People in medieval England were very religious. They were expected to attend services regularly and each month to provide tithes, sums of money given to the Church.
2. Satan, the devil, was often held responsible for sending diseases to people. OR:

The devil, Satan, was often held responsible for sending diseases to people.

1. Blaming sickness on God acted as ‘proof of the divine’, evidence of God’s existence.
2. Leprosy, a painful skin condition often resulting in death, was included in the Bible as an example of punishment for sin.
3. Hippocrates, a leading physician from Ancient Greece, believed that the stars and planets had an impact on health.

**Adverbials that signal a judgement**

Expand students’ stock of adverbials: single words, phrases and clauses that are useful for signalling the relative importance of information, for example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Clearly | Most importantly | On balance |
| Overall | Crucially | To some extent |
| Mostly | To a degree | Mainly |
| Given that | Weighing up the evidence | In the light of |
| As a result of | Above all | Chiefly |
| Equally | Just as important | In summary |
| Obviously | Significantly | Specifically |

Adverbials like these are often placed first in the sentence (‘fronted adverbials’) and act as links between sentences or paragraphs. They can be particularly helpful for signalling a summary conclusion that prioritises causes or reasons. Practise verbal explanations (eg prepared in pairs/threes) that use adverbials like these to link ideas, and highlight or model their use in written answers, for example:

* *Overall, collectivisation, the 5 Year Plan and Stakhanovites all show to be very important factors that helped the Soviet Union develop and become more industrialised in 1928-32. However, collectivisation was most important as this is what helped the 5 year plan and Stakhanovites to be developed to increase production, and it provided machinery and equipment to develop the economy.*

(Example from Edexcel History high-grade script)

**Adverbials that make comparisons**

Explanations and analyses often require students to make comparisons, for example this History question: *Explain how people cared for the sick, including treatments in hospitals and in the home before 1500* or this Science question: *Write down two similarities between the formation of coal and oil.* Remind students that comparison includes both similarities and differences. Practise making comparisons for a specific topic, using pairs of pictures, text extracts or lists eg facts on a grid arranged in two columns. Use prompts like the ones below to encourage students’ comparative thinking, and to structure ideas. Use talk to build their confidence and fluency in making comparisons and as ‘oral rehearsal’ of a written response.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Both | Each | Neither |
| Similarly | In contrast | Whereas |
| Before | After | Later |
| On the one hand | Yet | However |

**Activities for teaching sentences**

**Sentence Combining**

It can be helpful to show students the effect of using different sentence types by practising combining single-clause sentences in different ways and discussing the impact on clarity and emphasis. Sentence combining can be used across different subjects on a regular basis, for example as a starter activity, using examples from a current topic or task. It’s a quick way of modelling the kind of thinking required in the subject e.g. In Science, the dependency of one thing on another; in History, how one thing causes another. Encourage students to try more than one way of combining single-clause sentences, and discuss which choices make them ‘sound like an expert’ in the subject.

Science examples

A metal reacts with an acid. Bubbles of gas are produced.

Which is more expert sounding?

*A metal reacts with an acid and bubbles of gas are produced*.

Or

*When a metal reacts with an acid, bubbles of gas are produced*.

*Water is a liquid. Many different substances can dissolve in water. Water for drinking must be clean. Dirty water can contain harmful substances and microorganisms.*

Join these sentences to avoid unnecessary repetition and to connect the ideas securely, e.g.:

*Water is a liquid in which many different substances can dissolve*. *Water for drinking must be clean since dirty water can contain harmful substances and microorganisms.*

History examples

*William was a good leader. He was ambitious and determined. He won the Battle of Hastings.*

Which is more expert sounding?

*William was a good leader who was ambitious and determined and he won the Battle of Hastings.*

OR

*William won the Battle of Hastings because he was a good leader who was ambitious and determined.*

(or advanced version: *William’s good leadership, ambition and determination won him the Battle of Hastings*)

*There was a lack of scientific knowledge in medieval England. The causes of illness and disease remained a mystery.*

Try 3 different ways of joining these sentences. Which version do you think most closely links the facts together?

1. *There was a lack of scientific knowledge in medieval England and the causes of illness and disease remained a mystery.*
2. *There was a lack of scientific knowledge in medieval England which meant that the causes of illness and disease remained a mystery.*
3. *Since there was a lack of scientific knowledge in medieval England, the causes of illness and disease remained a mystery.*

**Teaching sentence types**

Single clause sentences

The term refers to sentences with only one verb, which might be a single word or a string of words (a verb phrase) e.g:

*Not all explanations for disease were supernatural or religious.*

*Gorbachev was a reformer.*

*A medieval physician did not have the same level of training as a modern physician.*

*William’s campaigns and tactics had convinced the earls of his military superiority.*

Try:

Cloze activities that focus on providing an apt choice of verb or verb phrase. These can be a mixture of single verbs and verb phrases. For example:

|  |
| --- |
| William’s campaigns and tactics………………….the earls of his military superiority. |
| Edgar’s position ………………..weaker. |
| Many of the best Anglo-Saxon warriors………………at Hastings. |
| The earls at Berkhamstead…………… |
| Choose from: *submitted; was growing; had been killed; convinced* |

As extension, ask pairs of students to produce their own cloze sentences for another pair to complete, deliberately using a mix of single verbs and verb phrases, for example to show how these signify aspects of tense or the difference between active and passive voices:

* The Church thought of disease as a punishment for sin.
* Disease could be viewed as a punishment for sin.

Using single-clause sentences to sum up key ideas

Weaker writers often lose control of their sentences by chaining ideas together so that clarity is lost:

* *Events in Europe in the years 1945-47 led to the Cold War because Nazi Germany had finally been defeated in 1945 and in that year they held two conferences to decide the fate of Germany in Yalta and Potsdam and some would say that Yalta was a success because they agreed to make a United Nations that would try to uphold peace and democracy in Europe and also because the USSR agreed to help the allies defeat Japan.*

Sort into a series of one-clause sentences that will help the writer establish the main points and see the important details, e.g.:

* The fate of Germany was decided in Yalta and Potsdam in 1945.
* The Yalta agreement established the United Nations.
* The USSR allied with European powers against Japan.

‘Topping and tailing’ a paragraph with single-clause sentences

Provide single-clause sentences that could act as topic and summary sentences for a paragraph of information and ask students to decide where to place them.

Example from Geography:

* **Rapid urbanisation causes pressure on the environment.** In Chonquing in China for example, water pollution from factories, including battery waste, affects the water supply of villagers living downstream, causing serious health problems and cancers. Wildlife is devastated and food supplies such as fish are threatened. **Strict environmental controls are needed.**

**Multi-clause sentences**

The term refers to sentences with more than one verb (single word or verb phrase) and covers both co-ordination and subordination. Practise joining clauses in different ways through a drop and drag activity on IWB or by using cut up cards, noting differences in meaning or emphasis created by different combinations, for example:

* Co-ordination: single clauses joined with and/but/or
  + How many different ways can you join these clauses to make good historical sense?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| there was no cure for leprosy | and | lepers were banished from their communities |
| lepers were confined in leper houses | or | they were kept in isolated island communities |
| lepers were dependent on charitable alms | but | there was no formal care for lepers |
| leprosy was spread by very close contact with the infected | so | a disease like leprosy was considered a punishment for sin |

Extension: Use a coordinating comma to create three-clause sentences, eg:

*Lepers were banished from their communities****,*** *kept in isolated island communities* ***or*** *confined in leper houses.*

* Subordination: *one* way of forming a subordinate clause is by using a subordinating conjunction.
  + How many different ways can you join these clauses to make good historical sense?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| people might become ill | although | it could explain both physical and mental illness |
| someone might suffer from a fever | because | there was an imbalance of the four humours |
| the theory of the four humours was popular | if | there was an excess of blood in the body |
| dissection was not allowed by the Church | so that | no scientific evidence for the humours existed |

Extension: experiment with positioning of the subordinate clause that is formed with a subordinating conjunction, and the main clause, noting how this affects meaning and emphasis, eg:

* *Although no scientific evidence for the humours existed, the theory of the four humours was popular because it could explain both physical and mental illness.*
* *Because it could explain both physical and mental illness, the theory of the four humours was popular.*

Model other ways of forming subordinate clauses:

With a non-finite verb that is a present participle (-ing ending), a past participle (-ed or irregular past tense ending) or the infinitive form (to...). Practise forming and using non-finite clauses to add layers of detail and to emphasise cause and effect relationships, for example:

* Change the finite verb to a non-finite verb and add another finite clause to build a more complete picture e.g.:

History examples:

* Hitler ***was defeated*** in Berlin ……***Defeated*** in Berlin, Hitler committed suicide.
* The advance on Berlin ***marked*** the final stage of World War Two……***Marking*** the final stage of World War Two, the advance on Berlin was a race between two Soviet marshals, Zhukov and Konev.
* The capture of Berlin ***expanded*** the influence of the Soviet Union….***To expand*** Soviet influence and Communist ideology, Stalin encouraged the Race to Berlin

Geography examples:

* The London congestion charge ***was introduced*** in 2003….***Introduced*** in 2003, the London congestion charge was designed to cut traffic in central London.
* The London congestion charge ***has resulted*** in a 20% reduction in traffic volume since its introduction….***Resulting*** in a 20% reduction in traffic volume, the introduction of the London congestion charge has also cut road transport Co2 emissions.
* Traffic congestion in Manchester and Edinburgh ***has been reduced***… ***To reduce*** traffic congestion, Manchester and Edinburgh have expanded their tram and bus networks.