

SECTION

5

DISCOURSE AND
CONVERSATION,
SUMMARISING TEXT
AND FORMS OF
ADJECTIVES



ORAL LANGUAGE

READING

GRAMMAR

Conversation/Communication in Context

Summarising

Grammar Usage

INTRODUCTION

This section is made up of three strands and three sub-strands. The section will expose you to appropriate registers to communicate completely in varied speech contexts, employing summarising as a technique for text comprehension and interpretation and using the appropriate vocabulary for formal and informal situations. This section will also enable learners explore their ability to analyse or appreciate and retell a story, bringing out the parts and the elements of a given story. This way, you will be able to reduce the information the story contains to either general or specific by way of summarising. Lastly, the section looks at these descriptive words which are called adjectives. The learning tasks will help boost your confidence in your use of language in everyday discourse-speech and writing. The interactive use of 21st-century skills and inculcation of moral values will enhance your participation and help develop your critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

At the end of the section, you will be able to:

- Use language appropriately in different speech situations (formal and informal).
- Analyse and retell the main parts of stories orally from short videos, drama, and other texts.
- Use various forms of Adjectives correctly in contexts.

Key Ideas

- **Discourse or Conversation** is a form of communication between two or more people, typically involving a natural, spontaneous and reciprocal exchange of thoughts, ideas, and information through spoken or written language.
- **Formal Language** is the language used for professional or academic purposes.
- **Informal Language** is the language used when communicating with friends or family in either writing or in conversation.

- **Parts of a story:** The parts of a story are the sections or areas that are put together to give the frame or the structure of the story. These main parts include the introduction, the main body and the conclusion.
- **Elements of a story:** The elements of a story are the components or characteristics that combine or work together to make the story be realised. These elements are the plot, setting, characters, conflict/climax, and the point of view.
- **Adjectives:** Adjectives are words that describe nouns.
- **Attributive adjectives:** They are adjectives that come before the noun they describe/qualify.
- **Predicative adjectives:** They are adjectives that follow linking verbs.
- **Linking verbs:** A linking verb is a verb like be, feel, seem or taste that, rather than describing an action, helps to describe a state of being or a sensory experience.
- **Degree:** In grammar, degree is used in connection to adjectives to show the extent or intensity of what is described.

ORAL LANGUAGE: DISCOURSE AND CONVERSATION

Conversation is an everyday thing. It can be done with our friends, parents, teachers, people in authority and others from all walks of life. Conversation seeks to evaluate one's knowledge of using language appropriately in varied speech contexts. It is therefore essential to note that communication or conversation varies according to context (formal and informal). Hence, conscious efforts need to be made to help in the use of the appropriate registers or vocabularies in different speech contexts.

Conversation Or Communication

Conversation or communication in context can be a dynamic and interactive process that involves:

1. **Listening:** Paying attention to others' messages.
2. **Responding:** Reacting to others' messages.
3. **Feedback:** Providing cues such as nodding or asking questions.
4. **Turn-taking:** Alternating between speaking and listening roles.
5. **Dialogue:** Exchanging ideas and building on each other's thoughts.

Conversation can be:

- a. Casual (small talk, socialising)
- b. Informative (sharing knowledge, explaining)
- c. Persuasive (convincing, negotiating)
- d. Therapeutic (counselling, supporting)
- e. Creative (brainstorming, problem solving)

Effective conversation involves;

- a. Active learning
- b. Clear communication
- c. Empathy and understanding
- d. Open-mindedness
- e. Respectful tone

Conversations are essential in building relationships, resolving conflicts and exchanging ideas in personal and professional settings.

Communication is the process of sharing information, ideas, and messages between individuals, groups, or organisations through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour. It involves the transmission, reception, and interpretation of information, and is a vital aspect of human interactions and relationships.

Skills Needed for Effective Conversation

1. Active Listening
2. Clear and Concise Language.
3. Empathy and Understanding
4. Non-judgmental Attitude
5. Open-mindedness
6. Respectful Tone
7. Clarity and Specificity
8. Feedback and Follow-up

Formal Language

This is characterised using Standard English, more complex structures, infrequent use of personal pronouns, and lack of colloquial or slang terms.

Formal Language is Characterised by the Following Features

1. **Objectivity:** Formal language aims to be objective, avoiding personal opinions and biases.
2. **Precision:** Formal language uses exact and accurate words and phrases to convey meaning.
3. **Complexity:** Formal language often employs complex vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammar.
4. **Impersonality:** Formal language tends to be impersonal, avoiding contractions, colloquialisms, and slang.
5. **Standardisation:** Formal language follows established rules, conventions, and standards.

6. **Formality of tone:** Formal language maintains a professional, polite, and respectful tone.
7. **Avoidance of colloquialisms:** Formal language avoids everyday expressions, idioms, and colloquial phrases.
8. **Use of technical vocabulary:** Formal language often incorporates specialised terminology and jargon.
9. **Clear structure:** Formal language typically follows a logical and organised structure.
10. **Attention to grammar and syntax:** Formal language adheres to strict grammatical and syntactical rules.

These features help to convey authority, respect, and professionalism in formal communication, such as academic writing, business reports, and official documents.

Informal Language

This allows the use of non-standard English forms, colloquial vocabulary and typically shorter sentence structures. Informal language also refers to the casual/conversational way people communicate in everyday situations.

Informal language is characterised by the following features:

1. **Colloquialisms:** Informal language uses everyday expressions, idioms, and slang.
2. **Conversational tone:** Informal language has a relaxed, friendly, and casual tone.
3. **Contractions:** Informal language frequently employs contractions (e.g., “don’t” instead of “do not”).
4. **First and second person pronouns:** Informal language often uses “I,” “you,” “me,” and “we.”
5. **Slang and colloquial vocabulary:** Informal language incorporates regional and cultural slang.
6. **Flexibility in grammar and syntax:** Informal language may disregard certain grammatical rules.
7. **Use of idioms and phrasal verbs:** Informal language frequently employs idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs.
8. **Emphasis on tone and gesture:** Informal language relies heavily on non-verbal cues like tone of voice and body language.
9. **Regional dialects and accents:** Informal language often reflects local dialects and accents.
10. **Spontaneity:** Informal language is often spontaneous and unstructured.

These features are commonly found in everyday conversations, social media, text messages, and casual writing, like blogs or social posts. Informal language helps establish rapport, build relationships, and create a sense of community and shared experience.

Activity 5.1

Call a friend and practise the conversation in the video shown in the link below by identifying the vocabulary used in the conversation.

Lisa, wake up! - Conversation in English - English Communication.

https://youtu.be/5ulpI_BP8Sg?si=HYWUFwMKjXebxF6a

Activity 5.2

Invite three (3) of your friends and do this activity with them. Now, listen to your friends as they converse in the classroom or describe a scene either in the market or request a favour and identify whether the words, they will use in their conversations are formal or informal.

Activity 5.3

Study the conversations below and practise with a friend

Formal conversation:

Halima: Good morning, this is Halima. May I speak to Jennifer, please?

Secretary: Good morning, hold on, please. I'll put you through.

Halima: Thank you.

Secretary: You're welcome. I'm terribly sorry Jennifer is not available at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?

Halima: Yes, please. Could you tell her that Halima called?

Secretary: Yes, of course.

Halima: Thank you very much, good day!

Secretary: Goodbye!

Informal conversation, between friends:

Zainab: Hey, it's me! How are you?

Beatrice: Hi Zainab! I'm good, and you?

Zainab: I'm great! Do you want to go to the cinema tonight? They are showing Twilight!

Beatrice: Sounds like fun! What time shall we go?

Zainab: There is a showing at seven o'clock.

Beatrice: Perfect, I'll buy popcorn if you buy a drink!

Zainab: Ok, no problem. See you later!

Beatrice: Cool, see you in a bit.

Hotel reservation

Miss Boat: Good evening, may I speak to the hotel manager please?

Manager: Speaking, how can I help you?

Miss Boat: Hello, I would like to book two rooms for four nights from next Monday please.

Manager: No problem, would you like double beds or single beds?

Miss Boat: Singles are fine, thank you. Is breakfast included in the price?

Manager: Yes, it is. That will be GH₵100.00 altogether. How would you like to pay?

Miss Boat: I will pay when we arrive. Many thanks for your help.

Manager: No problem. See you next week. Goodbye.

Miss Boat: Goodbye!

EXTENDED READING

- Black Star Series Book 1
- https://youtu.be/5ulpI_BP8Sg?si=HYWUFwMKjXebxF6a
- https://youtu.be/QTPA9f49hnc?si=T-6AMgfTc_Nni_9z

READING: PARTS AND ELEMENTS OF A STORY

In our daily interactions with others, we say things about ourselves, about people around us, and even about other creatures in our environment. All the talk we make are in one way or the other considered stories. We may be doing this to convince our listeners to accept what we are saying to let them understand a particular idea or to let them be informed about the situation we are talking about.

Parts of a Story

The parts of a story are the sections that are put together to give the frame or the structure of the story. The aim here is to focus on the language used in writing in general, and in the specific areas of the text. These main parts include the introduction, the main body and the conclusion.

1. **Introduction:** The introduction serves as an opening to a story or a text. In the introductory statement, the writer or the speaker hints to the audience about what is going to happen in the text. With this hint, the audience prepare their minds on what is going to be given to them.
2. **The main body:** The main body of a text is the section in which the detailed information of the text is brought out. Here, the writer outlines all that is needed to be known by the audience. This can be done by discussing the ideas in paragraphs

but making sure the paragraphs are well linked or connected to form a unified story or text.

3. **Conclusion:** After saying all that is needed in the body, the speaker draws curtains on the information that is delivered. This is to signal to the audience that everything is said and done.

Elements of a Story

The elements of a story are the components or characteristics that combine or work together to make the story real. These elements are the plot, setting, characters, conflict/climax, and point of view.

1. **Plot:** the plot is the chronological arrangement of the events or the actions that drive the story. It describes what the story is told about. The plot lets the reader know what is happening, describes the problems the characters are trying to solve, and gives details on how they attempt to solve them. To keep your readers engaged and interested, your story should include these plot elements: exposition (exposing or declaring the content of the story), rising action (increasing the tempo of the actions), climax (the peak or highest point), falling action (declining or coming down), and resolution (when a problem is solved).
2. **Setting:** This is the physical location and the point in time in which the plot takes place. It could be at home, marketplace, farm, church (place setting), or could be in the morning, afternoon, evening (time setting) or even seasonal (dry season, Christmas festivities etc.).
3. **Characters:** The characters are the people, animals, beings or personified objects driving your story. The writer or persona makes the characters carry out the actions in the story. A story can have many characters or just one main character as its focus.
4. **Conflict/Climax:** The conflict is the problem or issue of the story. This is what the main character is trying to resolve (solve).
5. **Point of view (POV):** Point of View describes the lens through which the story is being told. There are different points of view to consider. These include first-person (I, we, our etc.), second person (you), and third person (he, she, they etc.).

Activity 5.4

Read the following story carefully and carry out the activities on it.

One day, Clement was making fun of his sister, Afua, for being so slow.

“Do you ever get anywhere?” he asked with a mocking laugh.

“Yes,” replied Afua, “and I get there sooner than you think. I’ll run you a race and prove it.”

Clement was much amused at the idea of running a race with Afua, but for the fun of the thing, he agreed. So, Mr. Jacob, their father, who had agreed to act as judge, marked the distance and started the runners off.

Clement was soon far out of sight, and to make Afua feel very deeply how ridiculous it was for her to try a race with him, he met some little children beside the road and decided to stop and watch them play until Afua was catching up, then he will speed up again. As he watched on, he got caught up in the children's play and soon forgot that he was running a race with his sister.

Afua meanwhile kept going slowly but steadily, and after a time, passed the place where Clement was playing with other children. When he remembered that he was in a racing competition with Afua, he ran as fast as his legs could carry him but could not overtake Afua in time.

The race is not always to the swift.

Activity 5.5

1. With the aid of the story above, identify the main parts, and the paragraphs that contain each of them. **Note:** You can do this with a friend.
2. Identify the elements of the story above.
3. Give a summary of the story above.
4. With the help of the elements identified, think creatively and write a story in your own words. Post the story on the classroom wall for your colleagues to critique.

EXTENDED READING

- New Gateway English for Senior High School Book 1
- Old newspapers
- Sample texts
- Black Star Series Book 1

GRAMMAR: ADJECTIVES

You have already learned that nouns are words that name. These words, however, are not used in isolation but in connected speech. To describe a word and distinguish one thing from another, adjectives are used. Adjectives help to bring life to the language or our expressions. It helps paint a vivid picture of our experiences in life. Adjectives are words that describe nouns. Examples include enormous, doglike, silly, yellow, fun and fast. They can also describe the quantity, colour, shape, size etc. of nouns, such as many, yellow, narrow, huge etc.

Functions of Adjectives

The function of an adjective is linked to the position of the adjective in a sentence. Adjectives have two main positions in a sentence. Depending on the position of the adjective, it can function either as an attributive or predicative adjective.

Attributive Function of Adjectives

Adjectives that come immediately before the nouns they qualify are said to have an attributive function or use. For example:

- a. Maggie wore a beautiful hat to the gari-eating contest.
- b. Furry dogs may overheat in the summertime.
- c. My cake should have sixteen candles.
- d. The scariest villain of all time is Kweku Ananse.

Predicative Function of Adjectives

Sometimes, in a sentence, adjectives can qualify nouns without appearing right before them.

Instead, they appear after the linking verbs like **become, feel, seem, remain, and grow**. When adjectives appear after the verbs, they are said to have predicative use.

In the sentences below, adjectives have been used predicatively:

- a. That cow is **charging**. (**charging** is describing 'cow')
- b. The perfume smells **good**. (**good** is qualifying 'perfume')
- c. Driving is **faster** than walking. (**faster** is a comparative adjective qualifying 'driving')

Degrees of Adjectives

Adjectives come in three forms, known as degrees. These are absolute/positive/base, comparative and superlative. Look at the sentences below:

- a. Running is **fast**. – absolute
- b. Driving is **faster**. – comparative
- c. Rockets are **fastest**. – Superlative

Absolute/Positive Degree of Adjectives

It is the base form of the adjective which simply describes the noun or pronoun. For example: a **cool** guy; a **messy** desk; a **rigid** guideline; an **awful** situation; a **mischievous** cat.

Comparative Degree of Adjectives

This makes a comparison between two things, indicating that one has a greater degree of quality than the other. It is formed by adding the suffix **-er** (or just **-r** if the adjective already ends with an **e**) to the absolute form of the adjective. Similarly, **more** can be used with the adjective to show comparative degree.

In general, for two-syllabic adjectives ending in **-le, -ow, -ure or -y**, the comparative degree can be formed by adding **-er or -r** while **more** can also be used for adjectives of two or more syllables.

For example: a **cooler** guy; a **messier** desk; a **more rigid** guideline; a **more awful** situation; a **more mischievous** cat.

Superlative Degree of Adjectives

It is used to compare three or more things, indicating that one has the highest degree of quality. It is usually formed by adding the suffix **-est** to the absolute form. Adjectives of two or more syllables add the word **most**. When you use an article with a superlative adjective, it will almost always be the definite article **the** rather than **a** or **an**.

For example: the **coolest** guy; the **messiest** desk; the **most rigid** guideline; the **most awful** situation; the **most mischievous** cat.

Note the Following Examples.

1. Adjectives that use **-er** and **-est** endings include:
 - a. Adjectives of one syllable. For example:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Long	longer	longest
Old	older	oldest
 - b. Adjectives of two syllables that end in **-le, -ow, -ure, -y**. For example:

Nobel	nobler	noblest
Happy	happier	happiest
 - c. Adjectives which occur with **more** and **most** for comparative and superlative respectively but never occur with the ending **-er or -est**. For example:

Interesting	more interesting	most interesting
Peaceful	more peaceful	most peaceful
 - d. Some adjectives have irregular comparative and superlative forms. For example:

Good	better	best
Far	farther	farthest

- e. In the rare circumstance where three different adjectives are used rhetorically together, the order is generally **TIME, MANNER, PLACE** as in:

The **late-running, overheating, local** train finally arrived.

Activity 5.6

1. Describe yourself with a word in relation to the following:
 - a. Physical appearance (height, weight, hair, eyes)
 - b. Personality traits
 - c. Skills and abilities (e.g. Athletic and artistic)
 - d. Character and values
 - e. Emotional state

These words that you have used to describe yourself are what we call adjectives. In a sentence, write down what you understand adjectives to be.

NB: You can do this with a friend.

2. Take a sheet of paper and divide it into 5; write the following words on them:
A shy person, A strong person, A slow movement, An old person, An angry person
 - a. Act them out in front of one of your peers to guess the act. After that, discuss the positions of the adjectives.
3. Read the sentence below:
They are ***happy***.
Change the subject (***They***) and the adjective ***happy*** to create new sentences.
Get creative!
What do you observe about the position of the adjective?
4. Create correct sentences from the jumbled-up sentences below:
 - a. is exciting most party the I've been this ever to.
 - b. cake more one is delicious we had this the than yesterday.
5. Show the comparative and superlative forms of these adjectives: **Attractive, dazzling, obedient, short, tiny**

For example:

Absolute	Comparative	Superlative
<i>soft</i>	<i>softer</i>	<i>softest</i>
Attractive		
Dazzling		
Obedient		
Short		
tiny		

3. Reflect on your answers; join a peer and discuss both of your answers, making room for each other's opinion where answers vary; identify sameness in your answers also and discuss.
4. Share your answer with your other peers or classmates (when the opportunity avails itself)

EXTENDED READING

- New Gateway English for Senior High School Book 1, A.B.K. Dadzie et al, pages 28 – 29
- English for Senior Secondary Schools Book 1, Prof. Naa Afarley Sackeyfio et al, pages 11 – 12
- Organised English Grammar, John F. Wiredu, page 49 – 57

Review Questions

ORAL LANGUAGE

Watch the conversation below on YouTube by clicking on the link provided and answer the questions that will follow using the right vocabulary. <https://youtu.be/bSZXVLGIuF4?si=ARrpTT3xOtuPFw1I>

1. What was the teacher's response when the student asked if she could go in?
2. What was the name of the student?
3. What subject did the student say she passed this year?
4. What work does the student's dad do?
5. State the language used in the following:
 - a. friendly letters
 - b. formal letters
 - c. formal speech writing
 - d. when speaking with your school headteacher
6. Watch the short video here using this link: https://youtu.be/QTPA9f49hnc?si=T-6AMgfTc_Nni_9z

Examine the language used in the video you just watched. What did you notice?

READING

1. What are the main parts of a story?
2. Identify the elements of a story.

GRAMMAR

1. Complete the table:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Safe		
	greener	
		Most dangerous
	farther	
Impatient		
Foolish		
		worst

2. Use the adjectives, polite and salty, to form two sentences for each, one of each pair to reflect attributive while the other reflects predicative use.
3. Identify and state the functions of the adjectives in the following sentences:
 - a. The red car belongs to my father.
 - b. The scholarship has been awarded to the brilliant boy in the school.
4. For each of the following sentences, choose the correct order of adjectives to fill the blank spaces:
 - a. I was thrilled to receive a book with my order.
 - i. Big, beautiful, leather-bound
 - ii. Leather-bound, big, beautiful
 - iii. Beautiful, big, leather-bound
 - b. I have been shopping for perfect chopsticks.
 - i. Japanese long sushi
 - ii. Long Japanese sushi
 - iii. Long sushi Japanese

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Service (GES)



List of Contributors

Name	Institution
Beatrice Antwiwaa Boateng	Oti Boateng SHS, Koforidua
Jennifer Afua Kyei-Baffour	Sakafia Islamic SHS, Kumasi
Isabella Sika Keh	Achimota School
N-yalamba Jerry Njomoun	Tatale E.P. Agric SHS