**Unit -4**

**Basic Writing Skills**

**4.1 Sentence Structures**

A sentence is a group of words arranged in a meaningful way. To ask a question or to share feelings one has to form sentence. Knowledge of proper sentence making improves our writing. Noun (cup), Pronoun (he), Verb (fast), Adverb (slowly), Adjective (easy), Conjunction (and), Preposition (in) and interjection (bravo) can be parts of sentences.

Combination of a **subject** and a **predicate** makes a sentence. A subject can be a noun or a pronoun. Remaining words are part of predicate. In predicate we describe the activity done by the subject.

Example: Rohan speaks English fluently.

(Subject) + (Predicate)

In English the common sentence structures are

(1) S + V = Subject + Verb

Ex: Rohan writes.

Rohan (Subject) + Writes (Verb)

(2) SVO = Subject + Verb + Object.

Ex: Rohan speaks English.

Subject is (Rohan), verb is (speaks) and object is (English).

(3) SVA = Subject + Verb + Adjective

Ex. Rohan is smart.

Rohan (Subject) + is (Verb) + smart (Adjective)

(4) SVA = Subject + Verb + Adverb

Ex. Rahul runs slowly.

Rahul (Subject) + runs (Verb) + slowly (Adverb)

(5) SVN = Subject + Verb +Noun

Ex: Rahul is a teacher.

Rahul (Subject) + is (Verb) + a teacher (Noun).

**4.1.1 There are three types of sentences**

(1) A simple sentence has one subject and one predicate. It contains an Independent clause and describes a single action. Ex:- I read a book

(2) A compound sentence is made of two or more simple sentences. It may have conjunctions like and, but, or Ex:- I will read a book or I will play.

(3) A complex sentence expresses more than one action or thought. It is made up of an independent and a dependent clause. Ex:- I like to drive a car which is very fast.

**4.2 Use of phrases and clauses in sentences**

Phrase is a part of a sentence. It means a group of words without a subject or a verb.

Without a subject or verb a ‘predicate’ can’t be formed. A phrase can’t be used alone. Phrases can be very short – or quite long. Examples of phrases are:

“Before lunch”

“Waiting for the rain to stop”.

Clause is a group of words that has a subject and a predicate both. It is a part of a sentence. Sometimes it acts as a sentence and some time it does not work as a sentence. Two main types of clauses are independent clause and dependent clause.

(1) Independent clause is a part of a sentence that expresses a complete meaning.

Example: The weather is pleasant.

(2) Dependent clause is a part of a sentence that does not expresses a complete meaning. It is usually connected to an independent clause.

Example: (1) The weather is pleasant because it rained yesterday. OR

(2) The weather is pleasant so I am going for a walk.

**4.3 Importance of Proper Punctuation**

**4.3.1 Introduction to punctuation marks**

**(1) Full stop (.)**

It marks the end of a sentence.

Ex - I will go to the zoo**.**

Follows most initials.

Ex - John F**.** Kennedy

**(2) Question mark (?)**

Marks the end of a direct question.

Ex - Why are you late**?**

**Or**

How do you know**?**

**(3) Comma (,)**

Used to separate three or more single items on a list.

Ex - They ate pears, apples, plums, grapes and oranges.

Used to indicate a slight pause in a sentence.

Ex - I wore my favourite dress**,** the blue one.

Used to separate parts of a sentence.

Ex - The teacher**,** Mr. Owen**,** looked up.

**(4) Speech marks (“”)**

Placed around what is said.

Ex - Nisha said, “You sit there”.

Used around a quotation within another quotation.

Ex - Nisha said, “I told him to sit there, but he said ‘No’ to me”.

**(5) Apostrophe ’ (‘)**

Used to show ownership of an object.

Ex - Tim’s hat.

Used to show that letters have been missed out. (Contraction)

Ex - I don’t know what happened.

**(6) Exclamation mark (!)**

Used after something is shouted.

Ex - “Help!”

Used after an order is given.

Ex - “Come here!”

Used after a strong feeling is expressed.

Ex - “I am so happy!”

**(7) Semicolon (;)**

Used to indicate a pause longer than a comma but shorter than a full stop.

Ex - I only ate one cake for tea; I wish I had eaten two.

Used to separate groups of more than one word in a list.

Ex - “I took two books; four or five pencils; three pens; and a ruler.

**(8) Colon (:)**

Used to introduce a quotation.

Ex - The farmer said: “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.”

Used before dialogue in a script.

Ex - Cat**:** Lunch!

Mouse**:** You’ll be lucky.

Used to introduce a list.

Ex - We will need**:** Paper, pens, pencils.

**(9) Hyphen (-)**

Used to join two separate words together to form a new expression.

Ex - Box-office

Fairy-tale

(Can you think of any other words which can be joined together using a hyphen to make a new expression?)

**(10) Brackets ( )**

Used to separate a word or phrase from the rest of the sentence, while providing extra information.

Ex - The dermatologist **(**skin specialist**)** looked at the back of my knee and gave me some cream for the sore patch of skin.

**(11) Dash (\_)**

Used as a sign of interruption.

Ex - The police-officer began,

“The reason why I am here**-**”

“I don’t care why you are here,” interrupted the man.

**4.3.2 Importance of proper punctuation**

We prefer speaking compare to writing. We use pose, rising tone or exclamation while speaking. In writing these expressions are called punctuations. Today with the full use of technology we use social media and emails. Our language usage is changing faster. We use short phrases, acronyms, abbreviations. In general chatting or email we write BBFN meaning bye bye for now. To avoid complexity of writing we should use proper punctuations.

It may prove us uneducated and unprofessional. Improper punctuation can give words a different meaning. It creates misunderstanding. A small mistake may result in to a big loss. In professional life we may fail to get a contract. In personal life it can cost as the end of relations.

For example:

Your book, John.

Your book, John?

He was bitten by a dog which hurt him.

He was bitten by a dog, which hurt him.

Take the sentence - A woman without her man is nothing. Now see the difference punctuation makes:

A woman, without her man, is nothing.

A woman: without her, man is nothing.

Look at this sentence – it’s difficult to understand without punctuation.  
Ex - ive lost the oil can you find it for me.

So we need a capital letter, apostrophe, a full stop/ period in there, and either a question mark or exclamation mark/point.

I've lost the oil. Can you find it for me?  
I've lost the oil can. You find it for me!

The comma is essential for writing lists, separating, bracketing and pausing. (,)

I collect silver, paper, hats and chairs.  
I collect silver paper, hats and chairs.  
I collect silver, paper hats and chairs.

Let’s eat, papa.

Let’s eat papa.

**4.4 Creating Coherence**

Coherence means logical unity of a sentence. Coherence in a sentence makes it effective. Proper sequence of words and phrases helps to get correct meaning. For a good coherence in sentences we should use connectives. There are two linking devices overt and covert. Overt devices are plainly stated. Covert devices are hidden and indirect.

**4.5 Organizing principles of paragraphs in documents**

**What is the structure of a paragraph?**

Topic Sentence: Mostly the paragraph starts with a topic sentence. It talks about the matter of the paragraph. It has the theme of the paragraph. It must be short and sweet. The development of a paragraph depends on topic sentence.

Supporting Sentence: These sentences are the linking part with topic sentence. Supportive sentences develops the matter or theme of the paragraph. It may have explanations, examples, data or statistics. It represents the central idea of the paragraph.

Closing Sentence: Closing sentences are the concluding sentences. It links introduction and supporting sentence. Mostly it recalls the message given in paragraph. It is the essence of the matter.

**Characteristics of a good paragraph**

1. **Unity:** Unity means the link between sentences of the paragraph. It states the main idea of topic in different words. It is a kind of support for the idea.
2. **Coherence:** Logical order of sentence arrangement is very important for a good paragraph. Development of the paragraph according to the plan is a part of coherence.
3. **Development of the Idea:** we write a paragraph of an essay to develop a particular idea. It is necessary to build an idea in a proper way. The selection of an example of a data must be authentic and proper.
4. **Vocabulary:** Words are the medium to pass on the message. They must be carefully chosen. Improper selection of words can kill the idea of the passage. Spellings must be correct and synonyms must be correct.

**Parameters of writing a paragraph.**

1. Use simple and clear sentences.
2. Avoid long sentences.
3. Use examples ate proper time.
4. Try to knit the paragraph smoothly by using proper sentence.
5. Use different but relevant phrases instead of over using same words.
6. Prefer Active voice instead of Passive voice
7. Fuzzy or misleading information is not allowed.
8. Personal examples are not allowed.
9. Start with a good introduction.
10. Concludewith strong closing sentence.