

First Year At Harrow

Sir Winston S. Churchill

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- listen to texts and critically analyse the situations/events.
- engage in extended discussions and critique taking into account other speakers' viewpoints and presenting one's own with clarity and coherence.
- use pre-reading and while-reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within texts including biases and opinions.
- Ask and answer higher-order questions to guide/assess reading (e.g., Why is the author saying this right now? Why did the author choose this word? How is this different from what I read somewhere else?)
- evaluate different points of view (e.g., first-person, third-person narrative) examine an author's point of view or purpose in a text. Critique how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.
- use gerunds, infinitives, and participles.
- demonstrate knowledge and application of parts of speech in oral and written communication in varying degrees of complexity.
- write multiple paragraphs of free writing for fluency, creativity, brainstorming or pleasure. Proofread and edit texts for errors in;
 - sentence structure.
 - subject/verb agreement.
 - noun/pronoun agreement.
 - reference words, connectives/transitional devices.
 - punctuation and spelling.

Pre-Reading

- a) How do good educational institutions groom the students?
- b) What sort of questions are asked by your examiners?

I had scarcely passed my twelfth birthday when I entered the inhospitable regions of examinations, through which for the next seven years I was destined to journey. These examinations were a great trial to me. The subjects which were dearest to the examiners were almost invariably those I fancied least. I would have liked to have been examined in history, poetry and writing essays. The examiners, on the other hand, were partial to Latin and mathematics. And their will prevailed. Moreover, the questions which they asked on both these subjects were almost invariably those to which I was unable to suggest a satisfactory answer. I should have liked to be asked to say what I knew. They always tried to ask what I did not know. When I would have willingly displayed my knowledge, they sought to expose my ignorance. This sort of treatment had only one result; I did not do well in examinations.

While-reading

What were the examiners partial to?

This was specially true of the entrance examination to Harrow. The Headmaster, Mr. Welldon, however, took a broad minded view of my Latin prose: he showed discernment judging my general ability. This was the more remarkable, because I was found unable to answer a single question in the Latin paper. I wrote my name at the top of the page. I wrote down the number of the question '1'. After much reflection I put a bracket round it thus '(1)'. But there after I could not think of anything connected with it that was either relevant or true. Incidentally there arrived from now herein particular a blot and several smudges. I gazed for two whole hours at this sad spectacle: and then merciful ushers collected my piece of foolscap with all the others and carried it up to the Headmaster's table. It was from these slender indications of scholarship that Mr. Welldon drew the conclusion that I was worthy to pass into Harrow. It is very much to his credit. It shows that he was a man capable of looking beneath the surface of things: a man not dependent on paper manifestations. I have always had the greatest regard for him.

In consequence of his decision, I was in the course placed in the third, or the lowest division of the Fourth, or bottom, Form. The names of the new boys were printed in the selected list in alphabetical order and my correct name, Spencer-Churchill, began with an, 'S'. I gained no more advantage from the alphabet than from the wide sphere of letters. I was in fact only two from the bottom of the whole school; and these two, I regret to say, disappeared almost immediately through illness or some other cause.

While-reading

What was Churchill's position in the class?

I continued in this unpretentious situation for nearly a year, by being so long in the lowest form I gained an immense advantage over the cleverer boys. They all went on to learn Latin and Greek and splendid things like that. But I was taught English. We were considered such dunces that we could learn only English. Mr. Somervell---a most delightful man, to whom my debt is great---was charged with the duty of teaching the stupidest boys the most disregarded thing---namely, to write mere English. He knew how to do it. He taught it as no one else has ever taught it. Not only did we learn English parsing thoroughly, but we also practised continually English analysis. Mr. Somervell had a system of his own. He took a fairly long sentence and broke it up into its

components by means of black, red, blue and green inks: Subject, Verb, Object, Relative Clauses, Conditional Clauses, Conjunctive and Disjunctive Clauses! Each had its colour and its bracket. It was a kind of drill. I did it almost daily. As I remained in the Third three times as long as anyone else, I have three times as much of it. I learned it thoroughly. Thus, I got into my bones the essential structure of the ordinary British sentence---which is a noble thing. And when in after years my school fellows who had won prizes and distinction for writing such beautiful Latin poetry and pithy Greek epigrams had to come down again in common English, to earn their living or make their way, I did not feel myself at any disadvantage. Naturally I am biased in favour of boys learning English. I would make them all learn English; and then I would let the clever ones learn Latin as an honour, and Greek as a treat. But the only thing I would whip them for is not knowing English. I would whip them hard for that.

While-reading

Why was Churchill indebted to Mr. Somervell?



Post-reading

Give your view point about learning English.

Notes and Comments

Sir Winston S. Churchill (30th November, 1874---24th January, 1965) was a British statesman, soldier and writer who twice served as Prime minister of the United Kingdom, from 1940 to 1945 during the second World war, and again from 1951 to 1953. He is rated as the most famous politicians of all, twice politician and an inspirational leader in time of war. He led Britain to victory in World war Two. Churchill remains to this day one of the most popular and significant figures in political history.

Churchill's strength was his rhetoric. The exhilarating and rousing effect of his speeches was always responded with cheers and applause by the public.

He addressed the nation after Germany surrendered in 1945, by saying, "This is your victory". The people replied, "No, it is yours". Such was the relationship of the public and their wartime leader.

He was awarded the Nobel prize in literature in 1953 for his many published works.

On 24th January, 1965 his ailing health took a toll on him and he passed away. Six sovereigns, 15 heads of state and almost 6000 people attended his state funeral.

Theme

The main theme explored in "First Year at Harrow" by Sir Winston Churchill is the experience of a young boy entering a prestigious boarding school and the challenges of adapting to a new environment. Here are some key aspects of the theme:

Culture Shock: Churchill, a young and somewhat sheltered boy, finds himself in a world of strict discipline, rigorous academics, and a social hierarchy different from anything he's known.

Self-discovery: Through his struggles and triumphs at Harrow, Churchill begins to understand his strengths and weaknesses, forming the foundation for his future character.

Finding One's Place: The essay explores the anxieties and uncertainties of fitting in at a new school, making friends, and finding a sense of belonging.

The value (or lack thereof) of traditional education: Churchill reflects on the emphasis on classics like Latin and Maths, which he disliked, contrasting it with his own interests in history and storytelling.

The theme can also be seen through the lens of perseverance and overcoming adversity. Despite his initial struggles, Churchill eventually finds his footing at Harrow, demonstrating the importance of resilience in the face of challenges.

Glossary

Words	Meanings	Synonyms
inhospitable	uninviting	unwelcoming, hostile
invariably	always	
fancied	liked	
partial	had a taste for	
display	make a show of	
expose	let light on, bring to view	
broad-minded	liberal	
discernment	understanding	
reflection	thought	
relevant	to the point	
smudge	dirty mark	
usher	door keeper	
slender	thin, small, poor	
unpretentious	unassuming	
dunce	fool	
components	forming parts of something	

structure	form	
pithy	short, keeping to the point, full of force	
epigrams	short, pointed sayings	
bias	have a tendency to favour	
treat	thing that gives great pleasure.	

Comprehension

a) Answer the following questions.

- 1 Describe the significance of the First Year at Harrow.
- 2 Explain the way themes of resilience and self-discovery are explored.
- 3 Write down the reason Churchill could not do well in the examination.
- 4 Students can use this chapter for examination. Discuss.
- 5 Churchill was taught English at Harrow and not Latin and Greek. Was it a gain or loss?
- 6 Highlight the points to prove that 'First Year at Harrow' is a compelling read for students.
- 7 Write an appreciation or criticism of Churchill's views in regard to the study of Latin, Greek and English.
- 8 Relate Mr. Welldon's importance at Harrow and his judgement about Churchill.
- 9 Analyze Mr. Somervell as an English teacher.

b) Choose the best answer for each question.

1. What was Churchill's general feeling about examinations?
 - (a) He excelled in them and found them enjoyable.
 - (b) He found them stressful and struggled to perform well.
 - (c) He viewed them as a necessary evil for learning.
 - (d) He had no strong opinion about them.
2. What subjects were considered most important by the examiners at Harrow?
 - (a) English and History
 - (b) Science and Mathematics
 - (c) Latin and Greek
 - (d) Art and Music
3. Why was Churchill placed low on the entrance exam list?
 - (a) He cheated and was caught.
 - (b) He excelled in all subjects except English.
 - (c) He did poorly in most subjects, especially Latin.
 - (d) He arrived late for the exam.

4. In what subject did Churchill excel at Harrow?
- (a) Latin
 - (b) Mathematics
 - (c) English
 - (d) History
5. Why did Churchill believe learning English was more valuable than Latin and Greek?
- (a) He found English more interesting and enjoyable.
 - (b) English was necessary for success in all fields.
 - (c) He believed English was a more practical language.
 - (d) All of the above
6. What is the main point Churchill is trying to convey in "First Year at Harrow"?
- (a) The importance of a good education at a prestigious school.
 - (b) The limitations of traditional examination systems.
 - (c) The value of hard work and perseverance in overcoming challenges.
 - (d) The importance of studying Latin and Greek for success in life.

Oral Communication

1. Divide the class in groups to exchange views after listening the text to critically analyse the situations/events about the previous knowledge regarding the personality of Sir S. Winston Churchill.
2. Engage students in extended discussions and critique taking into account other speakers' viewpoints and presenting one's own with clarity and coherence about Harrow, location, country, weather and the living conditions. They should provide authentic information. The use of a globe can be ideal for the better comprehension of the students.
3. A debate can be arranged to know the interest of different students in different subjects and by furnishing reason, it can be an interesting activity.

Inference

4. How difficult it is to settle in a new school, and adjusting with the new environment?
 5. Do you agree that struggle and determination can make things easier?
- c) Evaluate different points of view (e.g., first-person, third-person narrative) examine an author's point of view or purpose in the story. Critique how the author distinguishes his position from that of others in this story.

Grammar and Vocabulary

a) Parts of Speech

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are parts of speech that connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. English has seven coordinating conjunctions—for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so—which you can remember using the mnemonic FANBOYS: For indicates causation: "We left a day early, for the weather was not as clement as we had anticipated."

Conjunctions



Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions coordinate or join two or more sentences, main clauses, words, or other parts of speech which are of the same syntactic importance.

- F=for
- A=and
- N=nor
- B=but
- O=or
- Y=yet
- S=so

Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are parts of speech that join dependent clauses to independent clauses. These important word and phrases may also introduce adverb clauses.

- after, although, as, as soon as
- because, before, by the time
- even if, even though, every time
- if, in case, now that, once
- since, so that, than, the first time
- unless, until, when, whenever
- whether or not, while, why

Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions correlate, working in pairs to join phrases or words that carry equal importance within a sentence. Like many of the most interesting parts of speech, correlative conjunctions are fun to use.

- as / as, both / and
- either / or, hardly / when
- if / then, just as / so
- neither / nor, not only / but also
- no sooner / than, not / but
- rather / than, scarcely / when
- what with / and, whether / or

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Activity: Identify the conjunction in each sentence and determine its type (coordinating, subordinating, or correlative).

1. My friend and I are going to the park.
2. She will go to the store after she finishes her homework.
3. Neither my sister nor I like sushi.
4. He is both tall and athletic.
5. I wanted to go to the concert, but I couldn't get tickets.
6. We can go to the beach if the weather is nice.
7. She likes both chocolate and vanilla ice cream.
8. He went to the party although he wasn't feeling well.
9. You can have either cake or ice cream for dessert.
10. They can play outside when they finish their chores.

b) Adverb

An adverb is a word that modifies (describes) a verb ("he sings loudly"), an adjective ("very tall"), another adverb ("ended too quickly"), or even a whole sentence ("Fortunately, I had brought an umbrella.").

Adverbs and Their Types, Definitions and Examples

Adverbs of Manner Describe how an action is performed. quickly, slowly, happily, carefully, loudly	Adverbs of Place Indicate the location or direction of an action. here, there, everywhere, inside, outside	Adverbs of Time Specify when an action takes place. now, then, soon, later, yesterday	Adverbs of Frequency Express how often an action occurs. always, often, sometimes, rarely, never
Adverbs of Degree Modify the intensity or degree of an adjective or adverb. very, extremely, quite, too, enough	Adverbs of Certainty Indicate the level of certainty or probability. definitely, certainly, surely, probably, maybe	Adverbs of Negation Express the absence or denial of an action. not, never, no, hardly, scarcely	Adverbs of Affirmation Confirm the truth or validity of an action. yes, certainly, indeed, absolutely, surely
Adverbs of Comparison Used to compare the degree of one action to another. more, less, most, least, equally	Adverbs of Duration Indicate the length of time an action takes place. briefly, temporarily, permanently, momentarily	Adverbs of Conjunction Connect and show the relationship between two clauses or sentences. However, Nevertheless, Meanwhile, T	Adverbs of Sequence Show the order or sequence of actions. firstly, secondly, finally, then, next

Activity: Go through the given sentences and identify the type of adverb used in each sentence.

1. The boy practised his speech regularly.
2. The phone kept ringing constantly.
3. Those people have gone out.
4. I have heard this story before.
5. Are you quite sure?
6. You are driving too carelessly.
7. I always try my best.
8. You are quite right.
9. He solved the problem quickly.
10. I have heard enough.
11. The boy often makes the same mistake.
12. Why are you still here?
13. I could hardly recognise him.
14. The little kid is too shy to sing.
15. The horse galloped away.

c) Tenses

Gerunds, Infinitives, and Participles

VERBALS	DEFINITIONS	FUNCTIONS...	EXAMPLES
Gerunds	-ing verb acting as a noun	as the subject of a verb	Reading improves comprehension skills.
		as the object of a verb	He prefers swimming.
		as the subject nominative	Jogging is a very good exercise.
		as the predicate nominative	His favourite pastime is gardening.
		as the object of a preposition	His can't escape from learning.
Participles	-ing or -ed/-en verb acting as an adjective	as a noun modifiers - Past Participle (-ed verb)	The injured man was waiting outside.
		as a noun modifiers - Past Participle (-en verb)	The man with a broken hand waited outside.
		as a noun modifiers - Present Participle (-ing verb)	The sleeping dog caused a delay.
Infinitives	to and a verb acting as a noun, adjective or adverb	as a noun - the - subject of a sentence	To sleep was his greatest need.
		as a noun - the - object of a verb	I need to go to work.
		as an adjective - noun modifier	The way to go is through the woods.
		as an adverb - noun modifier	She loves to talk.

Activity: Read each of the following sentences to determine whether the sentence contains a gerund, participle, or infinitive. At the left of the number, write G, P, or I.

- 1) Facing college standards, the students realized that they hadn't worked hard enough in high school. _____
- 2) Swimming in your pool is always fun. _____
- 3) The college recommends sending applications early. _____
- 4) Mrs. Ali, showing more bravery than wisdom, invited 100 guests to a party. _____
- 5) To be great is to be true to yourself and to the highest principles of honor. _____
- 6) He won the game by scoring during the overtime period. _____
- 7) Rayyan is expected to program computers at his new job. _____
- 8) Her most important achievement was winning the national championship. _____
- 9) Going to work today took all my energy. _____
- 10) The student left in charge of the class was unable to keep order. _____

Commonly used Phrasal verbs

Learn and practice these commonly used phrasal verbs in your daily routine.






Phrasal Verb	Meaning	Example Sentence
Add up	Make sense or be logical	His story doesn't add up.
Blow up	Explode or become very angry	The car blew up after the crash.
Bring out	Highlight or publish	The event brought out the best in her.
Carry on	Continue doing something	She carried on with her studies despite problems.
Carry out	Perform or complete a task	The experiment was carried out successfully.
Check out	Examine or leave a place	You should check out that book!
Come across	Find something by chance	I came across an old photo.
Come up with	Think of an idea or solution	She came up with a brilliant plan.
Cut off	Stop or disconnect	The phone was cut off during the call.
Drop off	Leave someone or something somewhere	I'll drop you off at the station.
Fall apart	Break into pieces or become emotionally unstable	The chair fell apart after years of use.
Fall out	Have a disagreement	They fell out over a trivial issue.
Fill in	Complete a form	Please fill in this application form.
Get along	Have a good relationship	They get along well with each other.
Get away	Escape	The thief managed to get away.
Give in	Surrender or yield	He finally gave in to their demands.
Go ahead	Proceed	You can go ahead with your plan.
Go over	Review or examine something	Let's go over the report again.
Hang on	Wait for a short time	Hang on! I'll be right there.
Hang out	Spend time socially	They like to hang out at the mall.
Hold on	Wait or grip tightly	Hold on while I find the information.
Keep up	Maintain the same level	It's hard to keep up with him.
Let down	Disappoint someone	Don't let me down this time.
Look into	Investigate	We need to look into this matter further.
Pass out	Faint	He passed out from exhaustion.
Pick up	Collect someone or something	I'll pick you up at 8 PM.
Put up with	Tolerate	She can't put up with her friend's behavior anymore.

Task: Search and learn more phrasal verbs with their meanings and learn them for daily use.

Writing

Multiple paragraphs of free writing for fluency, creativity, brainstorming or pleasure

THE WRITING PROCESS

STAGE	DEFINITION	TIPS FOR THE WRITER
 Prewriting	Brainstorm ideas and organize your topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about what you want to say.• Talk about your ideas with a friend to find a main idea.• Use a list or web to organize your ideas.
 Drafting	Create a rough copy of your writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write your ideas in order.• Read your work out loud and note places where you stumble.• Ask a friend for his or her feedback.
 Revising	Improve your writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try out different beginnings and endings.• Use quotes or add dialogue.• Include descriptive words.• Add detail to develop important parts.
 Editing	Proofread your work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure you have complete sentences, correct spelling, and necessary capitalization and punctuation.• Reread to see if each sentences make sense,• Ask a friend to proofread your work.
 Publishing	Create a clean final copy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Type your writing or copy it neatly onto new paper.• Think of an interesting title.• Share your writing.

Sentences structure

A simple sentence structure has one independent clause: "I rode my bike." A compound sentence has at least two independent clauses: "I got in my car, and I drove into town." In that sentence, both clauses can stand on their own as complete sentences.

Subject/verb agreement

Verbs must agree with subjects in number and in person (1st/2nd/3rd). **EXAMPLE:** The dog drinks his water every day. "Dog" is a singular subject; "drinks" is a singular present tense verb. A common mistake in S-V Agreement is to assume that present tense verbs ending in "s" (ex: drinks, runs, dances) are plural.

Noun/pronoun agreement

Pronoun/Noun (Antecedent) Agreement Pronouns always take the place of a noun. The noun is referred to as the antecedent of the pronoun and the pronoun must agree with the noun that the pronoun replaces. When we refer to agreement, we are referring to number, person, and gender.

Reference words, connectives/transitional devices

Words or phrases used to create logical links between sentences, paragraphs, and sections of a paper. For example: The proposed solution to the problem did not work. Therefore, we attempted a second solution. However, this solution was also unsuccessful.

Write multiple paragraphs in an essay about "My First Day at College" of free writing for fluency, creativity, brainstorming or pleasure. Proofread and edit text of this essay for errors in ;

sentence structure.

subject/verb agreement.

noun/pronoun agreement.

reference words, connectives/transitional devices

Teacher's Note

- Help them to use gerunds, infinitives, and participles.
- Ask them to demonstrate knowledge and application of parts of speech in oral and written communication in varying degrees of complexity.
- Let them write multiple paragraphs of free writing for fluency, creativity, brainstorming or pleasure.
- Proofread and edit texts for errors in ;
 - sentence structure.
 - subject/verb agreement.
 - noun/pronoun agreement.
 - reference words, connectives/transitional devices.