

Grammar Objective of the Week: The effective use of dashes

The dash (-) is frequently used in informal writing to separate information that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence. While commas and brackets are often used instead of a dash - particularly in more formal texts - dashes can still be very useful when you wish to indicate a particular thought process. Take this sentence for example: *Thousands of children - like the girl in this photograph - have been left homeless.* Here the dashes provide important information that is nevertheless not essential to the overall meaning of the sentence; the dashes also give the sentence a more conversational feel - as if the writer is talking to you directly.

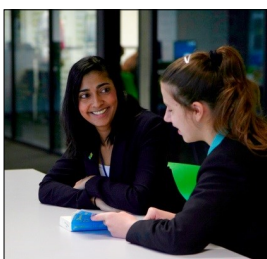
When a dash comes towards the end of a sentence, more prominence is given to the words that come after it: *Things have changed a lot in the last year - mainly for the better.* As a further example, look at the effect of the dash in the next sentence: *One thing's for sure - he doesn't want to face the truth.* Here there is a strong conversational feel to the sentence; the dash also provides an element of drama and impact.

Finally, a dash can be used to replace the words "it is" or "they are". Compare this next sentence, in which I have used "it is", to the one after in which I have used a dash. *There is someone we should elect president; it is Olivia. / There is someone we should elect president - Olivia!* How would you describe the effect this has on the meaning or tone of the sentence? As I hope you can see, the skilful and sparing use of dashes can have a positive impact upon your writing. Why don't you experiment with one in your writing today?

By Mr Harris, Assistant Senior Leader, English

Message from the Principal, Ms Bora

As always, I am sure all parents are continuing to ensure students complete as much **"reading, revising and practising questions"** as possible. However, a recent survey showed us that some parents are still not aware that they can check progress online through the SLG (see the



Links section of our website), including access to exemplar materials taught within lessons from earlier in the year. Parental IT sessions are held in the library every Thursday 4-6 pm .

Finalists attend Thank You Letter Awards Ceremony

Nuzha Noukri (Year 7) and Bushra Khanom (Year 8) attended the first ever Thank You Letter Awards Ceremony on Tuesday at Birmingham University. Over 15,000 students entered the Thank You Letter competition and both students were shortlisted for the Secondary School category. Students had to write a letter of gratitude to someone who has guided or inspired them in their lives.



Dr Tom Harrison - head of research for character education in schools at Birmingham University - opened the awards explaining how important **gratitude** and character development can be. He also expressed his elation from reading all the competitors' entries: "It's hard not to be impressed by the power of sentiment and emotion from these letters".



Greg Rutherford - Long Jump gold medallist at the 2012 summer Olympics - also attended the awards and gave a rousing speech about his trails, tribulations and search for motivation. He described his gratitude to his parents and how his thoughts at both low and high points was always drawn to them: "behind it all, there was my mum and dad and all their support". Rutherford MBE awarded the prizes and certificates for the two runners-up and winner for each category.

The students ended their visit by going to the fine art gallery at the university. They said "It was interesting to see many famous and well known pieces of art. Some pieces of art were very creative and intriguing."



By Ms Pugh, Nuzha Noukri (Year 7) and Bushra Khanom (Year 8)

Four out of four wins for WA's Debate Mate team!

Last week I took ten students to the second round of the Debate Mate Urban Debate League. The students acquitted themselves admirably, making compelling and well structured arguments on two topics: This house would introduce a quota for ethnic and racial minorities in the police services; This house would punish football teams for the behaviour of their fans.



Their strong performance earned them four wins out of four and we left the event delighted at our continuing success!

By Mr Payne, Teacher of English

WA rugby raises the bar



Rugby at WA has been hitting new heights this term with record attendance to training sessions and stronger links with the RFU

and the local club, Kilburn Cosmos. The pressure is on to channel this impressive student commitment into matches. Currently:

- This week, there was a Year 7 and 8 tournament involving Westminster Schools. More on that coming soon...
- I am finalising which Year 9 tournament to enter, so keep up to date with the TTB PowerPoint
- The Year 10 rugby players are training hard because they are edging nearer to their sevens tournaments

With all this Rugby going on at school there is probably just enough energy left for students to remember to watch the Six Nations on the BBC which will conclude on the 22nd March!

By Mr Walker, Teacher of Maths



What's on

FREE IT classes for parents - Thursdays 4 - 6pm; WA Library

FREE Art classes for parents and community

FREE Arabic Triple P Parenting Group for parents with teenagers - this course has now ended successfully

FREE Adult English classes - every Wednesday

To express interest in any of the above, please email Mr Gothard: AGothard@westminsteracademy.biz

Mock Exam Results Evening (Year 7, 9 and 10) - Tuesday 24th March

Year 8 Parents' and Mock Evening - Wednesday 25th March

Enrichment Day - Wednesday 1st April

LONDON YOUTH GAMES 2015



WHAT

- 25 FREE competition days covering 30 sports
- 114,000 young people representing 33 London boroughs, competing for the coveted Jubilee Trophy
- A stepping stone in the career of international and Olympic athletes
- Events include: angling, athletics, badminton, basketball, BMX, boccia, canoeing, cricket, cycling, diving, fencing, football, handball, hockey, judo, squash, swimming, table tennis, tag rugby, tennis, trampolining, triathlon/aquathlon, volleyball and weightlifting.

WHEN

The London Youth Games competition days take place between February and July 2015. Trials will be taking place throughout the year.

WHERE

Trials take place at venues across the city. Visit: Westminster.gov.uk/Londonyouthgames to see what trials are taking place and when.

CONTACT

For further information, contact: Kim Longbon.
Call: 07538 654 211
Email: klongbon@westminster.gov.uk

WHO

Open to young people aged 7-18 of all abilities, who live or go to school in London. To represent Westminster, competitors must live or study in Westminster.

HOW

Take part in trials to be in with a chance to represent Westminster at the London Youth Games. You can drop in and trial for more than one event. Details are listed at Westminster.gov.uk/londonyouthgames

Questions about specific sports or training?

@ActiveWCC and include

#TeamWestminster



Active School!

Help us to gain new equipment and opportunities in sport and healthy living through the Sainsbury's Active Kids scheme! Please bring in your Sainsbury's vouchers to reception or Mr Windmill.

We're collecting for Active Kids!

Help us reach our target by collecting vouchers when you shop at Sainsbury's

sainsburys.co.uk/ActiveKids

Active Kids 2014

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