

Analyzing Sentence Parts — Complete

To communicate clearly and correctly in writing, one must use complete sentences and correct grammar. In order to do this, one must understand the functions of various words in a sentence. These pages explain some of the basics of identifying some parts of speech and sentence parts.

There are eight different parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

These pages will discuss the following sentence parts: subject, verb, indirect object, direct object, predicate nominative, and predicate adjective.

These pages will discuss the following sentence patterns: SV, SVO, SVIO, SVN, and SVA.

Steps in identifying sentence parts:

1. **Find the prepositional phrases.** Prepositional phrases start with a preposition and end with the object of the preposition. The object of the preposition answers "Who?" or "What?" after the preposition. Put parentheses () around each prepositional phrase.

We mark prepositional phrases first because there will ***not*** be a S, V, O, I, N, or A inside a prepositional phrase.

Some common prepositions: about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, as, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, by, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, into, near, of, off, on, onto, opposite, outside, over, past, since, through, to, toward, under, underneath, until, up, upon, with, within.

2. **Find the verb(s).** Change the tense (time) of the sentence and see which word(s) changes. This word is probably the verb or at least part of the verb. Verbs show action or state-of-being. Look for "helping verbs" which may be part of a multi-word verb. Mark all verbs with a capital "V."

Helping Verbs: is, are, was, were, be, am, been, being, have, has, had, do, does, did, may, might, must, can, could, shall, should, will, would.

3. **Find the subject.** Ask "Who?" or "What?" in front of the verb. The subject answers this question. The subject will be a noun (name of a person, place, thing, or idea) or pronoun (word that takes the place of a noun). Mark the subject with a capital "S."
4. **See if there is a direct object.** Ask "Who?" or "What?" after the verb. If there is a word that answers this question, that word is probably the direct object. Mark this word with a capital "O."

