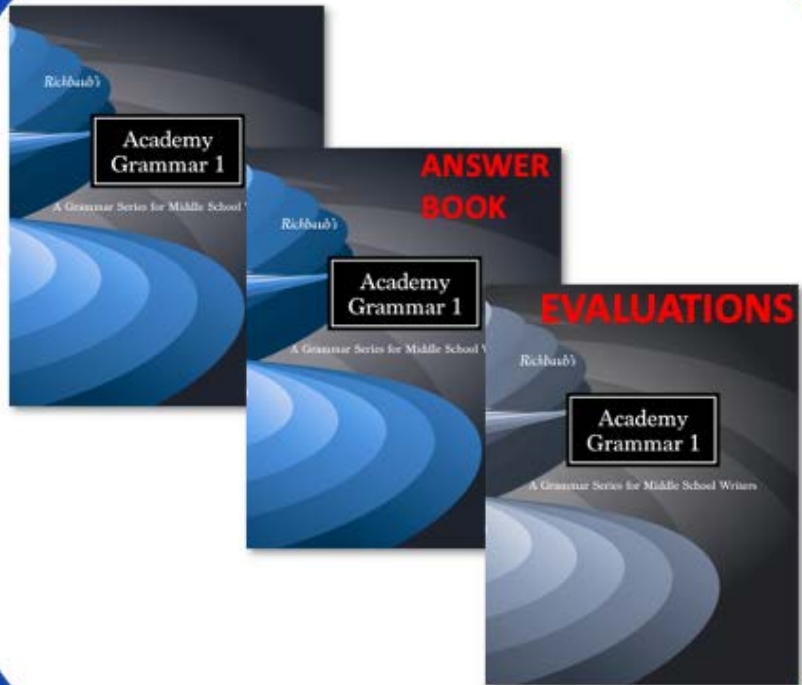


2 yr. Grammar

Year 1 Materials

- 1. Student Workbook with Lessons & Practice**
- 2. Workbook Answer Book**
- 3. Evaluations (Tests) with Keys**



Year 1: lessons / practice / tests
Year 2: REVIEW then even MORE lessons / practice / tests!

Everything you need to teach the first year of a two-year foundational grammar program!

Richbaub's

Academy Grammar

A Grammar Series for Middle School Writers

Introduction

Teaching grammar is important, but not many agree on how to best deliver this knowledge to our students or how deep to go. A complicating factor is that conveying this special knowledge about the language does not immediately yield sublime prose with every written draft or perfect elocution with each utterance, but what can be counted on is that, in whatever academic or professional pursuits lie ahead for our students, an understanding of grammar must be in place if they are to have a chance to become expert communicators via the English language.

On the most practical level, teaching writing in middle school is certainly facilitated when teachers and students are familiar with action and linking verbs and can identify introductory elements like prepositional and participial phrases, subordinate clauses, and adverbs. Understanding grammatical forms also brings clarity to punctuation rules.

In high school, when communicating about writing, teachers frequently use grammatical terms with students, such as fragment, subordinate clause, misplaced modifier, preposition, conjunction, pronoun usage, run-on, parallel structure, agreement, etc. and a background in grammar undoubtedly makes this knowledge more accessible.

But how much time can middle school teachers allot to teaching grammar when they are also charged with teaching other aspects of writing, as well as reading, literature, and vocabulary? Which grammar topics should be covered and in what sequence? Which topics do not require formal study? Which topics should be left for future study?

Good news: Richbaub's grammar materials were created to answer these questions for middle school teachers!

Richbaub's grammar materials are always suitable in scale, rich in spiraled content, and developmentally appropriate for students. Building on the basic grammar taught at the elementary level, Richbaub's completes students' foundation in rudimentary grammar and secures a context for all future references to and lessons in grammatical things.

In addition, Richbaub's very clearly communicates to students that the study of grammar is all about better writing, i.e. understanding the English language's patterns and components and practicing putting words together in the clearest, most effective, and most correct way.

And for teachers, Richbaub's materials provide the perfect grammar strand, fitting seamlessly beside the reading, literature, writing, and vocabulary study in today's middle school English classrooms.

Welcome to Richbaub's!

Richard Gieson, Jr.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 Getting a Foothold: Prepositions, Nouns, & Pronouns..... 9

1.1 - Prepositions & Prepositional Phrases 9

 Practice for Evaluation 1 11

 •The Basic Structure of a Prepositional Phrase 13

 Exercise 1 14

1.2 - Objects of Prepositions 15

 Exercise 2 17

 •Multiple Objects of Prepositions & Conjunctions 18

 Exercise 3 19

 Activity: Make a Prepositional Phrase Poem! 20

 Extra Practice for Evaluation 2 21

1.3 – Introduction to Nouns & Pronouns 22

 •Noun Basics 22

 Exercise 4 23

 •Study of Pronouns 25

1.4 – Personal Pronoun Usage in Prepositional Phrases 27

 Exercise 5 29

 Extra Practice for Evaluation 3 30

1.5 – Indefinite, Demonstrative, & Reflexive Pronouns 32

 Exercise 6 34

 Extra Practice for Evaluation 4 35

1.6 – Comma Usage with Introductory Prepositional Phrases 37

 Extra Practice for Evaluation 5 39

CHAPTER 2 Punctuating Dialogue..... 40

2.1 – Introduction to Punctuating Dialogue 40

2.2 – Quotation Marks in Dialogue 41

2.3 – Commas, Periods, & Other End Marks in Dialogue 42

2.4 – Capital & Lowercase Letters in Dialogue 43

2.5 – Interrupted Quotations 44

2.6 – Multiple Speakers & Paragraph Breaks 46

 Exercise 7 47

 Extra Practice for Evaluation 6 49

CHAPTER 3 The Heart of Good Writing: All About Verbs.....	50
3.1 – Introduction to Verbs.....	50
3.2 – How to Find the Verb in a Sentence.....	52
Exercise 8.....	53
•A Big Reason Verbs Can Be So Difficult to Master.....	54
3.3 – Verbs in the Infinitive Form.....	56
3.4 – More Verb Forms.....	58
3.5 – Helping & Main Verbs in Verb Phrases.....	59
Exercise 9.....	61
Activity: Incredible Verb Search!.....	62
3.6 – How to Find the Verb Phrase in a Sentence.....	63
Exercise 10.....	65
3.7 – “Polluted” Verb Phrases.....	67
Exercise 11.....	70
Extra Practice for Evaluation 7.....	72
3.8 – Action Verbs vs. Linking Verbs.....	73
•How to Tell the Difference Between Linking & Action Verbs.....	74
•Tricky Verbs.....	78
Exercise 12.....	79
Extra Practice for Evaluation 8.....	80
CHAPTER 4 Thinking Carefully About the Verbs in Your Writing.....	82
4.1 – Introduction to Verbs & Writing.....	82
4.2 – Limiting the Use of Helping Verbs.....	83
Exercise 13.....	84
4.3 – Using Action Verbs Rather Than Linking Verbs.....	85
Exercise 14.....	86
4.4 – Using the Active Voice in Your Writing.....	88
Exercise 15.....	89
Activity: Incredible Crossword Puzzle!.....	90
CHAPTER 5 The Key to Clarity: All About the Subjects of Sentences.....	91
5.1 – Introduction to Subjects.....	91
5.2 – The Relationship Between Subjects & Verbs.....	92
Exercise 16.....	93
5.3 – Locating Subjects in Sentences.....	94
Exercise 17.....	95
Extra Practice for Evaluation 9.....	96

5.4 – Personal Pronouns & Subjects	97
Exercise 18	98
5.5 – Multiple Subjects, Multiple Verbs, & Compound Sentences	100
•Punctuating Compound Sentences	101
Exercise 19	102
Extra Practice for Evaluation 10	103
CHAPTER 6 Introduction to Participial Phrases & Appositives.....	105
6.1 – What Is a Phrase?	105
6.2 – Participial Phrases	107
6.3 – Appositives	109
Exercise 20	111
Exercise 21	112
6.4 – Utilizing Participial Phrases to Improve Your Writing	113
Exercise 22	115
Exercise 23	116
REFERENCE.....	117
40 Prepositions in Verse	119
Index	120

Preview

Chapter 3**The Heart of Good Writing: All About Verbs****3.1 – Introduction to Verbs**

Many times, the key to improving a sentence lies in improving the sentence's verb. A better verb can improve a sentence's clarity as well as its imagery, and paying attention to the placement of verbs plays a role in having better sentence variety.

Therefore, a grammatical understanding of verbs is a very powerful thing to possess—it's one of the advantages expert writers have over average writers. Experts' verb knowledge includes knowing the difference between action and linking verbs, understanding helping verbs, and being able to discern the difference between active and passive voice writing. If you pay close attention, you too can possess this special knowledge!

A. In dealing with verbs, it's impossible to avoid mentioning subjects, too.

Do you know what a subject is? A subject is simply the main person or thing a sentence is about. Subjects are always nouns or pronouns.

However, before getting in depth about subjects, it's important to first get in depth about verbs.

B. Every sentence has at least one verb. There are two kinds of verbs: action verbs and linking verbs.

C. Action Verbs 🌀

Sometimes the verb tells what the subject of a sentence does, did, or will be doing. This is when the verb is showing action. Verbs showing action have been cleverly named Action Verbs.

In the afternoon Bill *built* a bookcase for his son. (The subject, Bill, did something—he *built* a bookcase.)

D. Action verbs don't just show physical action like building, running, and shoving. They also show mental and emotional activity. The following sentences all have action verbs:

1. Alex *loves* his dog.
2. Kate *thought* about her project for two weeks.
3. For his birthday Will *wanted* a new bicycle.

E. Linking Verbs ∞

Sometimes, a subject of a sentence isn't really doing anything; instead, it is just *being* something. In this case, the verb is called a Linking Verb because it is the word that links the subject to something it is or is being.

∞
After the game I *was* very happy. (*I* is the subject and *happy* is what the subject was being—these words are linked by the verb *was*.)

∞
That notebook *is* really thick. (*Notebook* is the subject and *thick* is what it is—these words are linked by the verb *is*.)

F. Compare Action and Linking verbs with the examples below:

Action Verb:

⚙️
Rashid *brought* the cake to the party. (*Brought* is a verb showing action—the subject, Rashid, actually did something.)

Linking Verb:

∞
Zoe *was* upset yesterday. (*Was* is a linking verb—the subject, Zoe, was not doing anything; there was no action. Zoe was just being *upset*.)

G. One of the most important things someone can learn regarding grammar is how to tell the difference between action verbs and linking verbs. More on that later.

H. For now, let's continue ourselves with trying to recognize which word in a sentence is the verb.

Scholar Zone

During the time of the Roman Empire and before the birth of the English language, Romans came to England, or "Britain" as they called it. With them, the Romans brought the alphabet of their Latin language.

Here's the alphabet the Romans brought to England in the first century CE (AD):

Roman Latin A B C D E F G H I L M N O P Q R S T V X Y Z

The Roman Latin alphabet has fewer letters than our modern English alphabet. **What are the missing letters and sounds?**

3.2 – How to Find the Verb in a Sentence

A. Here’s a little trick you can use to narrow your search for a sentence’s verb: Make the sentence say the opposite of what’s actually being said.

Example sentence: **In the morning Michael brushed his teeth.**

B. Step 1: Insert a word or words that make the sentence say the “opposite”:

had not
In the morning Michael brushed his teeth.
 ^

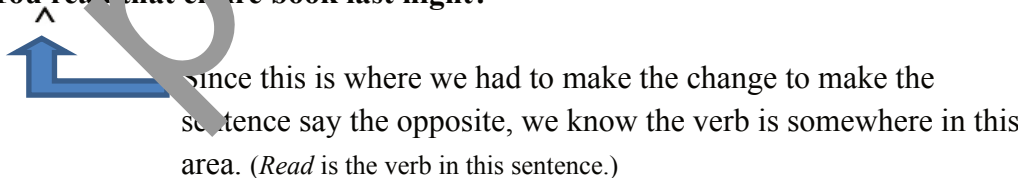
C. Step 2: Now go back to the original example sentence and look in the general vicinity where you had to make the change. This is where the verb will be found.

D. In our example the word *brushed* is the verb.

E. Other examples:

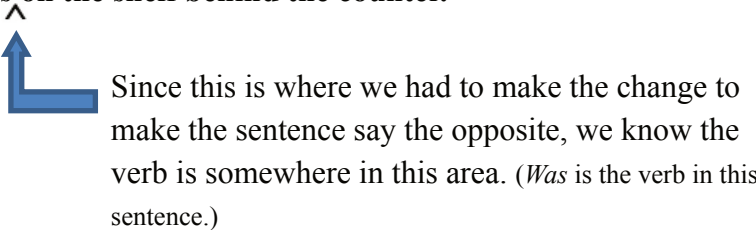
You read that entire book last night?

did not
You read that entire book last night?
 ^



The baseball hat was on the shelf behind the counter.

not
The baseball hat was on the shelf behind the counter.
 ^





Exercise 8

Part 1: Underline the verb in each sentence. **In one sentence, two words go together to make the verb.** In the other sentences, the verb is a single word.

Hint: Verbs are NEVER inside prepositional phrases, so patient, wise students will first mark prep. phrases to make searching for verbs easier!

1. On Tuesday we drove through the Painted Desert in Arizona.
2. The kids over there were on my track team last spring.
3. The lady behind the counter glared at me and my friend.
4. No one enjoys soggy cereal.
5. I have noticed three tiny eggs in the nest on that branch.



Did you find the two-word verb? Verbs that include more than one word are called “verb phrases,” which you will soon learn more about...

Part 2: Once you have correctly identified the verbs in the sentences above, list them below, then take a stab at deciding if each is acting (A) or linking (L).

- | Verbs from the sentences above: | Circle A or L: |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. _____ | A or L? |
| 2. _____ | A or L? |
| 3. _____ | A or L? |
| 4. _____ | A or L? |
| 5. _____ | A or L? |

Hang in there—much more is to come about how to tell the difference between action and linking verbs!

A Big Reason Verbs Can Be So Difficult to Master

A. Every sentence has at least one verb, but as you’re beginning to see, verbs can look and work differently from sentence to sentence.

B. Since verbs are such shape shifters, there are many terms associated with the study of verbs. So far you have been introduced to three terms:

Action Verbs

Linking Verbs

Verb Phrases

C. Of these terms, students have the most trouble grasping exactly what a **verb phrase** is.

D. Before getting in depth with action verbs and linking verbs and before we learn even more terms related to verbs, let’s develop some familiarity with what exactly a “verb phrase” is.

E. In the simplest terms, verb phrases are verbs that include more than one word. Verbs do not always consist of more than one word, but often they do; that’s just how the sometimes confusing English language works. Sorry!

Examples:

sentence	verb
I will be staying at a cabin near Lake Woodsong.	will be staying (<i>verb phrase</i>)
Surprisingly, your puppy sat quietly between us.	sat (<i>NOT a verb phrase</i>)
Colorful t-shirts are my favorite ones.	are (<i>NOT a verb phrase</i>)
He has become a very good friend.	has become (<i>verb phrase</i>)
We should hurry.	should hurry (<i>verb phrase</i>)

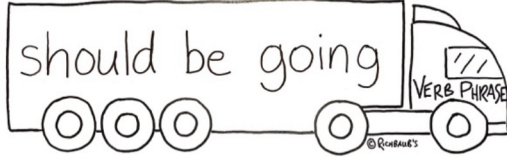
F. Can you see that **verb phrases** are simply verbs that include more than one word?


The extra words in these verbs (*will, be, has, should*) are called “helping verbs.”

More about helping verbs coming soon to a page near you!


Verb Phrases vs. Single-Word Verbs

Below, the trucks help you visualize verb phrases, which include “helpers”; the cars represent single-word verbs, which have no helpers.

Tomorrow we  to the gift shop.

My brother  to college last week.

No one at the party  the banana cupcakes.

She  over the hot coals!

That TV show  my dad's favorite.

Henry  incorrect about the date.

If you're paying close attention, you will notice that some verbs, like *is*, work alone sometimes while other times they are part of a verb phrase.

Humor Break!

A man is washing his car with his son. The son asks, “Dad, can’t you just use a sponge?”

3.3 – Verbs in the Infinitive Form

A. When verbs are first “born,” they are in a form called the “infinitive form.” The infinitive form of a verb looks a lot like a prepositional phrase—but it’s NOT a prepositional phrase!

B. Here’s a verb in the infinitive form: **to cook**. Here’s another: **to sing**. So the infinitive form is *to* + a verb.

C. Of course, *to* can also be a preposition, but *to* + a verb is NOT a prepositional phrase—there there are no verbs in prepositional phrases.

D. Below, circle only the prepositional phrases:

to me to eat to be to wonder
to walk to the store to Joseph to begin

Do you understand the difference between infinitive and prepositional phrases that begin with *to*?

E. With a verb in its infinitive form, you can’t make a sentence by just adding a subject, i.e., you can’t say, “Mary to cook.” Of course, you can say, “Mary cooks.”

The verbs that have subjects—the ones you need to make a sentence—are never in the infinitive form.

Scholar Zone

Roman Latin A B C D E F G H I L M N O P Q R S T V X Y Z

Although the Roman alphabet looks mighty familiar, the Romans themselves did not use it for English! The Romans spoke Latin, and this is the alphabet they used to write Latin. (BTW, the word “Latin” comes from the original name of the region in Italy where Rome was built, “Latium.”)

Lots of Latin has worked its way into English over the centuries. For instance, you might recognize the following Latin words:

EXIT (to go out) ABDOMEN (belly) ALIBI (elsewhere)

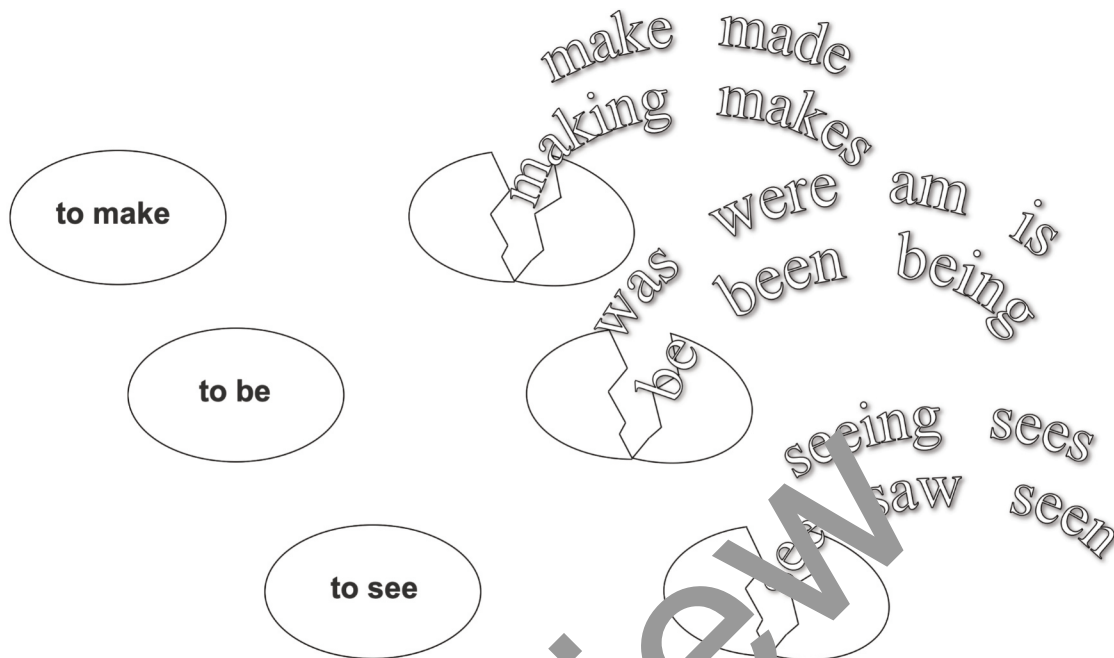
Warning... Super Scholar Zone!:

Do you know the meanings of the following Latin words?

TERRA =

ULTRA =

F. Think of an infinitive as an egg. To use the verb, you crack it open and get something completely new and usable.



G. You *can* use verbs in the infinitive form in your sentences. Just remember that an infinitive is never THE verb—the one that goes with the subject. In other words, a verb in the infinitive form is never the thing the subject is being or doing.

Examples:

I **like** to go (to the movies) (on Saturdays).

Above, *I* is the subject and *like* is the verb. “To go” is an infinitive. You see, the subject isn’t going anywhere; the subject likes something.

Josephine always **wanted** to be (in a movie) (with a Hollywood star).

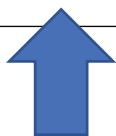
Above, *Josephine* is the subject and *wanted* is the verb. “To be” is an infinitive. Josephine was not being anything; she wanted something.

3.4 – More Verb Forms

A. Verbs have many different forms. The infinitive form is just one form. Two other forms are the present tense and the past tense.

Here is an example of one verb’s various forms:

infinitive	present tense		past tense	
to ask	base form	ask: “I ask,” “We ask,” etc.	“ed” form	asked: “I asked,” “You asked,” etc.
	“s” form	asks: “She asks,” “He asks,” etc.		
	“ing” form	asking: “I <u>am</u> asking,” etc.		



FAQ’s:

B. What’s the word *am* doing in there right above the arrow??

The word *am* is helping the verb work in this sentence. You couldn’t say, “I asking.”

Actually, *am* has even become part of the verb. The verb in this sentence would be “am asking.”

Other words we use to help verbs work are *was*, *be*, *were*, *can*, *may*, and many more!
For example:

was asked

were asking

can ask

may be asking

C. What about the future tense??

To speak about doing something in the future, English requires you to use one or more helping verbs. For example:

She **will ask** you about your homework. (*The verb in this sentence is “will ask.”*)

My brother **will be asking** you for a ride to school. (*The verb in this sentence is “will be asking.”*)

3.5 – Helping & Main Verbs in Verb Phrases

A. Sometimes a verb is made up of a few words in order to get the verb into just the right tense or to express just the right meaning:

Jenna **jogs** in the park. (The verb is a single word.)

Jenna **is jogging** in the park. (The verb is made up of two words.)

Jenna **should have been jogging** in the park. (The verb is made up of four words!)

B. Again, multiple-word verbs are called “verb phrases,” so a sentence may contain a single-word verb OR a verb phrase.

C. In a verb phrase the last word is the “main verb.” The other words are “helping verbs.”

Under the bridge Johnny **may be fishing** for trout.

helping verbs = may, be
main verb = fishing
verb = may be fishing

D. It’s important to really understand that in a verb phrase, the last word is always the “main verb”; the other words are “helping verbs” and **the whole thing together is what you would call “the verb.”** So, if you’re looking at a sentence that has a verb phrase and your teacher asks, “What’s the verb in this sentence?” don’t just state the *main verb*—state the entire verb phrase.

E. Words ALWAYS used as **just helping verbs**:

would	can	may
could	will	might
should		must

Factoid

These words weren’t always confined to just these forms; their other forms have more or less simply fallen out of usage. English is an ever-evolving language!

“Retired” forms of...

- *will*: wilt, wouldst
- *could*: canst, couldst
- *should*: shall, shalt, shouldst
- *may*: mayest, mayst

F. The following words are used sometimes as helping verbs and sometimes as main verbs—and some can even be used as single-word verbs. You might think of these guys as “all-purpose” verbs:

be	are	is	have	do
been	am	was	had	does
		were	has	did

G. Examples:



He is in the kitchen. (*Is* is single-word verb in this sentence.)



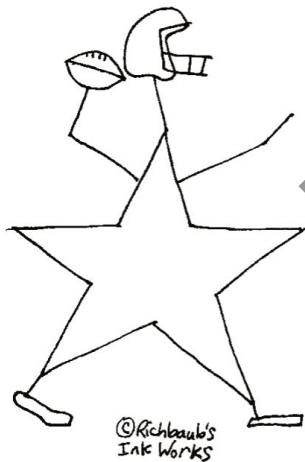
He is swimming in the ocean. (Here, *is* is now a helping verb. *Swimming* is the main verb. What we would call “the verb” is “is swimming.”)



I have been to Maine in the summertime. (*Been* is often a helping verb, but in this sentence it is the main verb of a verb phrase. *Have* is a helping verb. The verb is “have been.”)

H. Consider the following sentence:

The team with the star quarterback should have won that game.



Now, if your teacher were to ask you, “What is the verb in this sentence?” of course you would answer

_____.

(Did you answer correctly?)

I. CHALLENGE: Turn and talk to a neighbor and explain what a helping verb is! (HINT: See item “A” on p. 59.)



Exercise 9

Part 1: Circle the pronouns (see p. 27 & 32-33 if you need a refresher on pronouns). You may circle one or more than one word in each line.

1. Tim I many all road some
2. we group this team mom us
3. walk to been anyone several people

Part 2: Circle the personal pronouns below that you are allowed to use in a prepositional phrase (see p. 27 if you need a refresher on personal pronoun rules for prep. phrases). You may circle one or more than one word in each line.

4. he whom him I she
5. you they her we
6. me us who them him

Part 3: In the line below each sentence, write out one part of the sentence as directed.

7. The military men met with the president to plan a strategy for the blockade.

What's the infinitive (see p. 56) in the above sentence? _____

8. At the end of the game the star player should have made that layup.

What's the verb in the above sentence? _____

9. Thomas has never sat between Jennifer and me before.

What's the prepositional phrase in the above sentence? _____

10. That missed field goal would have given my team the lead.

Write only the helping verb(s) from the above sentence: _____

11. I pointed to the chili powder and told my sister never to cook with that.

What's the demonstrative pronoun (see p. 33) in the above sentence? _____

12. John was being very rude during David's presentation yesterday.

Write only the main verb from the above sentence: _____

Activity: Incredible Verb Search!

Verbs to find:

was walking
did run
slammed
am seeing
should leave
will be
could have been
ate
jog
must go
throw
have read
become
had
scrape
might push
would be driving

N U Z W H D O D L D L Z H H G
L Q E O N A N T I J J C S E N
L Q M U A X V D H V P U S M I
E B L L I W R E Z R P J L O K
D A H D E U R L R T O P A C L
L V E B N V O C H E E W M E A
J Q V E W S A G M O A Y M B W
X Y N D G S I E T W A D E L S
O C D R Q M G H L S Y N D F A
A L K I T M J S U D U I U U W
U Z F V S C A P E L M R U C
U M W I M X T U Z U C U W J T
T A I N M S E E I N G O A Z
H T N J L Q M R W N G P H J
N E L B E V A H D L U O C C S

Are you paying attention to the fact that verbs are sometimes made up of one word and sometimes made up of more than one word?

Chapter 4

Thinking Carefully About the Verbs in Your Writing

4.1 – Introduction to Verbs & Writing

A. Now that you've had some experience with verbs in a grammatical way, it's time to use that knowledge to improve your writing!

B. Good writers are very skilled with their verbs. They know how powerful good verb usage is. So, what are the most-important things to learn about verb usage?

C. There are three main ways a person can improve his or her writing through attention to verbs:

1. **Limit the use of helping verbs.**
2. **Use action verbs rather than linking verbs** whenever possible.
3. **Use the “active voice” in your writing.** In other words, when using action verbs, make sure that the subject of the sentence is doing the action.

Scholar Zone

The earliest speakers of what would become the English language were northern Europeans who invaded England in the 5th and 6th centuries AD (CE), after the Roman Empire collapsed. They were from various tribes, including the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Franks, and Frisians, but we have come to refer to them generally as the “Anglo-Saxons.”

English, or “Anglish,” was a combination of the assorted Germanic languages these invaders spoke. English also gradually adopted the Latin alphabet the Romans had earlier brought to Britain. A new language had been born, a language with a Latin alphabet and heavy with Germanic words, but not nearly finished!

Over the next several hundred years, many new words would enter the language, and spellings and pronunciations would be adjusted. Old English would be very tough for a modern-day English speaker to read. Then came Middle English, and finally Modern English in the 16th century. Modern English has continued to evolve, but 16th century English, which is the English William Shakespeare used, can be read fairly easily by today's English speakers.

Warning... Super Scholar Zone! Any idea how England got its name?

4.2 – Limiting the Use of Helping Verbs

A. Helping verbs are often unnecessary. Consider the underlined verbs in the following sentences:

1. As Tom slept, the cat was napping on the windowsill.
2. As Tom slept, the cat napped on the windowsill.

Is there any difference in meaning between sentences 1 and 2?

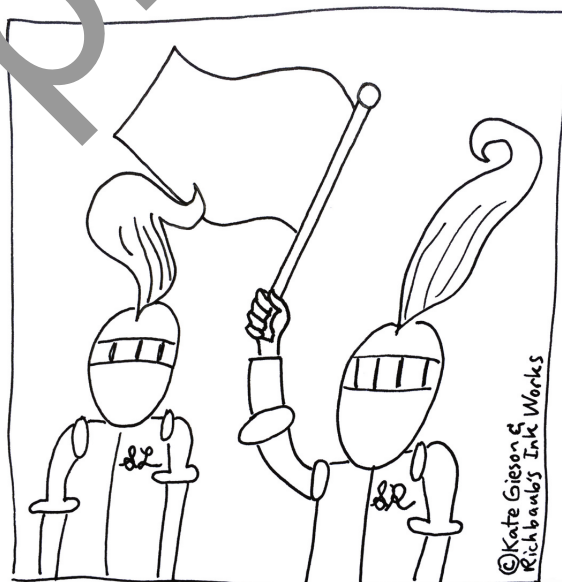
Good writers know that using extra, unnecessary words is a no-no! Therefore, sentence 2 above is better writing than sentence 1.

B. Helping verbs are necessary sometimes. They can put a verb into just the right tense. In one of the sentences below, the helping verb *has* plays an important role.

1. Sheila has run in many marathons.
2. Sheila runs in many marathons.

Sentence 1 states that Sheila has, in the past, run marathons. It also implies that she may or may not run marathons anymore. Sentence 2 states that Sheila has run and still runs marathons.

C. The point is to recognize helping verbs in your writing and eliminate them whenever it's possible to do so.



Sir Lancelot with his lesser-known brother, Sir Render.



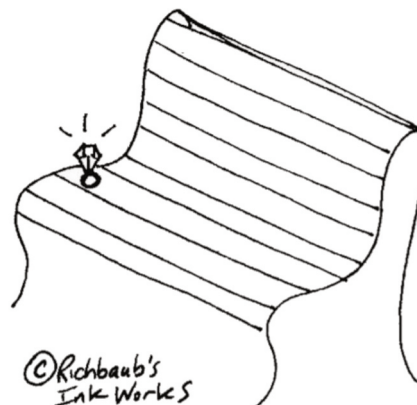
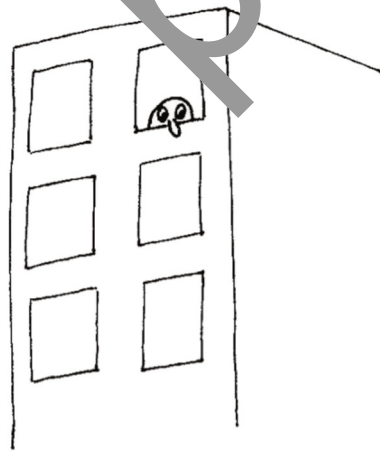
Exercise 13

Directions: Read the following passage. If you notice any unnecessary helping verbs (or other unnecessary words), cross them out. You may need to adjust the endings of verbs, too.

Different writers will make different choices, so just do your best!

Yesterday Hugh was running in the park when he noticed something shiny that was sitting on one of the park benches along his route. He didn't think much of it, but when he had returned to his apartment, his curiosity about the object he had seen glimmering on that park bench was beginning to really bother him. He decided to go back and check it out.

As he was approaching the bench, he noticed that an old woman was now sitting on the bench near where he had seen the shiny object. He was wondering if the object had belonged to her. Suddenly, she stood up, turned, and, with a huge smile on her face, walked off. Her clothes were tattered and filthy, but a giant diamond ring was sparkling on her left hand!



4.3 – Using Action Verbs Rather Than Linking Verbs

A. Beginning writers often overuse linking verbs like *was*, *is*, *were*, *are*, etc. Avoiding the over-use of such words should be a goal for all writers.

B. Linking verbs relate information in the least visual way. Writing comes alive when authors use words to plant images in readers' minds, and action verbs have the power to do this!

For example:

1. Joe was at the bus stop for twenty minutes.
2. Joe stood at the bus stop for twenty minutes.

Above, the verb *stood* relays an image to the reader. It's not an incredibly descriptive action verb, but the linking verb *was* relates nothing, and the reader is left to wonder if Joe is slouching, sitting, reading, napping, shivering, or whatever. Don't force your readers to do all of this wondering!

C. Some verbs are better than others. Even some action verbs are overused. Your challenge as a writer is to pick the verb that most accurately describes to your reader what you see in your mind when you're composing a sentence.

For example:

1. Jaclyn took a book from her locker and ran to class.
2. Jaclyn grabbed a book from her locker and ran to class.

Above, both sentences have action verbs. Which sentence is better? Why?

D. In summary, limiting linking verbs and choosing interesting action verbs WILL improve your writing!



Exercise 14

Part 1: In the following sentences cross out the linking verbs and replace them with action verbs. You may need to cross out more than just the linking verb in some sentences, and in some cases you may even have to add a few words. Hint: Give the subject something to do!

1. This morning Tara was in the backyard.
2. The guests were upset at their waiter.
3. The summer sun is high in the sky at noon.
4. Under the waves near the beach were schools of silver fish.
5. During the lecture several students became very sleepy.

Part 2: In the following sentences put a box around each verb (they're all action verbs). In the spaces under each sentence, suggest **three action verbs** that could replace the original verb. **If you can also eliminate helping verbs, then do so.**

6. Behind the security guard the thief was walking toward the vault.

_____ , _____ , _____

7. Manny looked through his notebook for his missing assignment.

_____ , _____ , _____

8. On Fridays we usually have pizza for dinner.

_____ , _____ , _____

9. Will you please get that hat for me?

_____ , _____ , _____

10. In the wild, wolves will follow their prey sometimes for days.

_____ , _____ , _____

(Do you know why sentence 8 has no comma after its introductory prep. phrase, but sentence 10 does?)

Scholar Zone

As the English language worked out its kinks during its early years, one thing to think about was if there were enough letters to represent all of the sounds people were using. After all, the ancient Runic alphabet had quite a few more letters and sounds than the Roman Latin alphabet.

Some sounds unique to the old Runic alphabet faded out of English, but some remained, so more letters were added to the Roman alphabet for the sounds that English speakers had adopted. A couple of additional letters were added over time to clarify similar or confusing spellings and pronunciations.

Runic	ᚠ ᚢ ᚦ ᚨ ᚱ ᚴ ᚷ ᚻ ᚾ ᚿ	ᛚ ᛛ ᛜ ᛝ ᛞ ᛟ ᛠ ᛡ ᛢ ᛣ	ᛤ ᛥ ᛦ ᛧ ᛨ ᛩ ᛪ ᛫ ᛬ ᛭	ᛮ ᛯ ᛰ ᛱ ᛲ ᛳ ᛴ ᛵ ᛶ ᛷ	ᚹ ᚺ ᚽ ᚿ ᛚ ᛛ ᛜ ᛝ ᛞ ᛟ ᛠ ᛡ ᛢ ᛣ	ᛤ ᛥ ᛦ ᛧ ᛨ ᛩ ᛪ ᛫ ᛬ ᛭	ᛮ ᛯ ᛰ ᛱ ᛲ ᛳ ᛴ ᛵ ᛶ ᛷ	ᚹ ᚺ ᚽ ᚿ
Early Latin	A B C D E F G H I	L M N O P Q R S T V	X	Æ	Œ			
Roman Latin	A B C D E F G H I	L M N O P Q R S T V	X Y Z					
Modern English	A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z							

Write your name out in...

(Use Modern English letters if letters in your name are not available.)

Runic:

Early Latin:

Modern English:

Which version of your name do you like best??



4.4 – Using the Active Voice in Your Writing

A. When using action verbs, **make sure that the main person or thing your sentence is about (the subject) is doing the action.**

For example:

1. The ball was kicked through the goalposts by Junior.

The focus (subject) of sentence 1 is the ball, but the ball didn't do anything—something was done *to* it. It was Junior who actually did something. Therefore, Junior and what he did should be the subject of the sentence:

2. Junior kicked the ball through the goalposts.

B. Above, sentence 1 is an example of “passive voice” writing because the grammatical subject of the sentence, ball, is not doing what the verb says (“was kicked”). The person who did the kicking is buried in a later prepositional phrase.

Sentence 2 is written in the preferable “active voice.” Active voice means that the sentence is organized so that the person or thing doing what the verb says is in the subject position. Passive voice writing is not incorrect, and there are certainly times when it works just fine, but active voice writing is often the better choice.

C. You may notice that when you pay attention to eliminating helping verbs, you sometimes end up changing a sentence around from passive to active voice.

Examples:

Passive Voice:

Dinner was served to us by a bearded man in a velvet jacket.

Active Voice:

A bearded man in a velvet jacket served us dinner.

D. So think “active voice” when writing. Create sentences where the subjects actually *do* something!



Exercise 15

Part 1: Write “A” or “P” in the blank before each sentence depending on whether the sentence is written in the active (A) or passive (P) voice.

- _____ 1. The baby frog was handed to Mike by the science teacher.
- _____ 2. During the thunderstorm the child cried for his mommy.
- _____ 3. The surfer was easily flipped over by the massive wave.
- _____ 4. Maya planted a giant sunflower outside her bedroom window.

Part 2: Using the given verbs and prepositional phrases, construct sentences written in the active voice. Try to limit your sentences to 12 words or less, and don't forget to try to avoid using any helping verbs.

5. chased up the tree

6. hit over the fence

7. protected in the cedar chest *(This is a tough one!)*

8. planned by my parents



Exercise 9

Part 1: Circle the pronouns (see p. 27 & 32-33 if you need a refresher on pronouns). You may circle one or more than one word in each line.

1. Tim I many all road some
2. we group this team mom us
3. walk to been anyone several people

Part 2: Circle the personal pronouns below that you are allowed to use in a prepositional phrase (see p. 27 if you need a refresher on personal pronoun rules for prep. phrases). You may circle one or more than one word in each line.

4. he whom him I she
5. you they her we
6. me us who them him

Part 3: In the line below each sentence, write out one part of the sentence as directed.

7. The military men met with the president to plan a strategy for the blockade.

What's the infinitive (see p. 56) in the above sentence? to plan

8. At the end of the game the star player should have made that layup.

What's the verb in the above sentence? should have made

9. Thomas has never sat between Jennifer and me before.

What's the prepositional phrase in the above sentence? between Jennifer and me

10. That missed field goal would have given my team the lead.

Write only the helping verb(s) from the above sentence: would, have

11. I pointed to the chili powder and told my sister never to cook with that.

What's the demonstrative pronoun (see p. 33) in the above sentence? that

12. John was being very rude during David's presentation yesterday.

Write only the main verb from the above sentence: being



Exercise 10

In this exercise helping verbs play an important role:

Helping Verbs				
would could should will can	may might must	*are *am *be *been *is *was *were	*have *had *has	*do *does *did
*Multi-purpose word. Can be a helping verb, a main verb in a verb phrase, and/or even a verb all by itself.				

Part 1: Underline the verbs. If the verb is a verb phrase, include ALL of the words (helping verb[s] **and** main verb). Consider marking prepositional phrases to make your search easier.

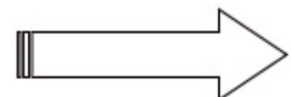
- The children did sit (at their desks.)
- (Around the edge) of the lake the geese searched (for a snack)
- The cookies (inside the box) have melted (in the summer heat.)

Part 2: In the sentences below, surround the prepositional phrases with parentheses. A verb can never be inside a prepositional phrase, so be careful.

- My grandfather lives (with mom and me) (in our log cabin)
- The grass (next to the fence) was growing very tall.
- Those jets may fly (in the air show) (on Saturday)

Part 3: Go back to sentences 4, 5, & 6 above and underline the verbs.

There's More



Part 4: Sentence Puzzles ❏❏❏ Compose sentences with different kinds of verbs. Limit your sentences to 12 words or less—keep it simple! **Also, please remember what an “o.p.” is:** It’s the *object of the preposition*, the noun or pronoun at the end of a prep. phrase.*

answers will vary

7. Use a single-word verb and a prepositional phrase that includes two personal pronoun o.p.’s. If you don’t remember what a personal pronoun is, flip back to p. 27 to refresh your memory!

During the break I plan to exercise with him and her.

8. Use a verb phrase and a prepositional phrase with a demonstrative pronoun as the o.p. If you don’t remember what a demonstrative pronoun is, flip back to p. 33 to refresh your memory!

Jackie will cook with this.

9. Begin with a prepositional phrase that has an indefinite pronoun for the o.p., then use a single-word verb. If you don’t remember what an indefinite pronoun is, flip back to p. 32 to refresh your memory!

To everyone in our group, the hike seemed way too difficult.

10. Use a verb phrase and a prepositional phrase that includes a reflexive pronoun for its o.p. If you don’t remember what a reflexive pronoun is, flip back to p. 33 to refresh your memory!

My little brother has learned how to make his bed by himself already.

11. Use a single-word verb and a verb in the infinitive form. If you don’t remember what an infinitive is, flip back to p. 56 to refresh your memory!

The grass began to grow after three days of rain.

12. Begin this sentence with a prepositional phrase that has two personal pronoun o.p.’s, and then use a verb phrase. If you don’t remember what a personal pronoun is or the rules for using them, flip back to p. 27 to refresh your memory!

In front of me and her the surfers were riding blue waves toward the shore.

**PREPS
for You!**
*(you’re
welcome)*

about
above
across
after
against
along
around
at
before
behind
below
beneath
beside
between
beyond
by
down
during
for
from
in
in front of
inside
instead of
into
near
next to
of
off
on
out
over
through
to
toward
under
until
up
with
without

*See Teacher’s Note about sentence puzzles, p. 127. [go to Teacher’s Notes](#)



Exercise 11

Part 1: In the blank after each sentence, write out the verb. If you find a verb phrase, don't include non-verbs when you write out the verb!

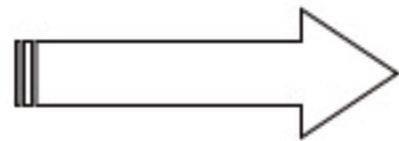
1. I may ~~not~~ be going to college soon. may be going
2. In front of the house a tall tree created a huge patch of shade. created
3. The boy between Jenna and me might be sleeping. might be sleeping
4. The bus did arrive at the bus stop. did arrive
5. Mr. Riches is ~~not~~ teaching at Wonderwood Middle School. is teaching

Part 2: Surround prepositional phrases with parentheses. A verb can never be inside a prepositional phrase, so be careful. (The blank line after each sentence is for Part 3 of this exercise.)

6. (Behind Asad and her) I could see three more people. could see
7. My mom went (for a jog) (along the river walk). went
8. I would ~~not~~ tell my parents a lie. would tell
9. (Next to my neighbor's house) three purple flowers bloomed yesterday. bloomed

Part 3: Go back to sentences 6, 7, 8, & 9 above and, in the blank after each sentence, write out the verb. If you find a verb phrase, don't include non-verbs in it!

There's More



Name: _____	Date: _____
-------------	-------------

Evaluation 5: Nouns vs. Pronouns + Comma Usage with Introductory Prepositional Phrases

Part 1: Write sentences with prepositional phrases and good comma usage. Use the check boxes () to make sure your sentences are complete.

1. Write an **original** sentence that begins with one prepositional phrase . Try to limit your sentence to 12 words or less—keep it simple. Be careful to punctuate correctly.

2. Write an **original** sentence that begins with two prepositional phrases in a row . Limit your sentence to about 15 words.

3. Write an **original** sentence that contains three prepositional phrases . (It doesn't matter where they are located or how long your sentences are.) Surround each prepositional phrase with parentheses .

Part 2: Locating prepositional phrases in sentences **and** identifying objects of prepositions

SURROUND each prepositional phrase with parentheses <input type="checkbox"/> , and CIRCLE each object of the preposition (o.p.) <input type="checkbox"/> .	Is the o.p. a noun or a pronoun?
4. The aroma of Mom's spaghetti sauce filled the entire house.	
5. I will give you ten dollars for that.	
6. My uncle arrived from the airport completely exhausted.	

(Part 2 continued)

SURROUND each prepositional phrase with parentheses <input type="checkbox"/> , and CIRCLE each object of the preposition (o.p.) <input type="checkbox"/> .	Is the o.p. a noun or a pronoun?
7. My sister keeps her perfume on her dresser.	
8. The candy I bought is for everyone.	
9. The referee handed the football to him.	
10. At dinner we discussed our vacation plans.	

Reminder: Did you remember to **CIRCLE** the o.p.'s in Part 2 (sentences 4-10 above)?

Name:

Date:

Evaluation 6: Punctuating Dialogue**Part 1:** Write the letter of the correct answer on the blank line next to the item number._____ 1. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. "In this book," the teacher said, "which stories do you like the least? Choose only one".
- B. "In this book," the teacher said, "Which stories do you like the least? Choose only one."
- C. "In this book," the teacher said. "Which stories do you like the least? Choose only one."
- D. "In this book," the teacher said, "which stories do you like the least? Choose only one."

_____ 2. Which of the following dialogues has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
"Wait a second." Said Bobby.
"You're acting crazy, Jim." Added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"
- B. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
"Wait a second", said Bobby.
"You're acting crazy, Jim", added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class"!
- C. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
"Wait a second," said Bobby.
"You're acting crazy, Jim," added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"
- D. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
"Wait a second," Said Bobby.
"You're acting crazy, Jim," Added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"

_____ 3. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. I replied, "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said, "Sure. Have fun, honey!"
- B. I replied, "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said, 'Sure. Have fun, honey!'"
- C. I replied, "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said 'Sure. Have fun, honey!'"
- D. I replied "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said, 'Sure. Have fun, honey!'"

_____ 4. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. "Are you coming?" asked Tom, "You need to get on the bus right away."
- B. "Are you coming?" asked Tom, "you need to get on the bus right away."
- C. "Are you coming?" asked Tom. "You need to get on the bus right away."
- D. "Are you coming"? asked Tom. "You need to get on the bus right away".

_____ 5. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. My mother always said, 'Haste makes waste.'
- B. My mother always said, "Haste makes waste".
- C. My mother always said, "Haste makes waste."
- D. My mother always said 'Haste makes waste'.

_____ 6. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. "I don't know," Louise said, "If he will be there."
- B. "I don't know", Louise said. "If he will be there".
- C. "I don't know", Louise said. "if he will be there".
- D. "I don't know," Louise said, "if he will be there."

_____ 7. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. Bill said, "why are you following me?"
- B. Bill said "why are you following me"?
- C. Bill said, "Why are you following me"?"
- D. Bill said, "Why are you following me?"

Part 2: Find the capitalization and/or punctuation errors.

8. Below, circle the letters and/or punctuation marks that are written/used incorrectly in the following quotation. Hint: There are two things wrong.

“my sister lives in Seattle,” said Mary, “Where does your sister live?”

9. Below, circle the letters and/or punctuation marks that are written/used incorrectly in the following quotation. Hint: There are three things wrong.

The clerk Said: “We are all out of those shoes. They were so popular”!

10. Below, circle the letters and/or punctuation marks that are written/used incorrectly in the following quotation. Hint: There are two things wrong.

“The campsite is just around the next bend.” Said my dad.

Evaluation 5 Key
page 1 of 2

Name:	Date:
-------	-------

Evaluation 5: Nouns vs. Pronouns + Comma Usage with Introductory Prepositional Phrases

Part 1: Write sentences with prepositional phrases and good comma usage. Use the check boxes (✓) to make sure your sentences are complete.

1. Write an **original** sentence that begins with one prepositional phrase . Try to limit your sentence to 12 words or less—keep it simple. Be careful to punctuate correctly. *answers will vary*

Toward morning I tossed and turned as thunder boomed outside.

2. Write an **original** sentence that begins with two prepositional phrases in a row . Limit your sentence to about 15 words. *answers will vary*

In a book about soccer I learned all about the World Cup tournament.

3. Write an **original** sentence that contains three prepositional phrases . (It doesn't matter where they are located or how long your sentence is.) Surround each prepositional phrase with parentheses . *answers will vary*

(From Boston) we traveled south (toward my grandmother's house) in South Carolina

Part 2: Locating prepositional phrases in sentences and identifying objects of prepositions

SURROUND each prepositional phrase with parentheses (), and CIRCLE each object of the preposition (o.p.) ().	Is the o.p. a noun or a pronoun?
4. The aroma (of Mom's spaghetti (sauce)) filled the entire house.	NOUN
5. I will give you ten dollars (for (that))	PRONOUN
6. My uncle arrived (from the (airport)) completely exhausted.	NOUN

Evaluation 5 Key
page 2 of 2

(Part 2 continued)

SURROUND each prepositional phrase with parentheses (), and CIRCLE each object of the preposition (o.p.) .	Is the o.p. a noun or a pronoun?
7. My sister keeps her perfume (on her dresser)	NOUN
8. The candy I bought is (for everyone)	PRONOUN
9. The referee handed the football (to him)	PRONOUN
10. (At dinner) we discussed our vacation plans	NOUN

Reminder: Did you remember to CIRCLE the o.p.'s in Part 2 (sentences 4-10 above)?

Evaluation 6 Key
page 1 of 2

Name: _____

Date: _____

Evaluation 6: Punctuating Dialogue**Part 1:** Write the letter of the correct answer on the blank line next to the item number.**D** 1. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. "In this book," the teacher said, "which stories do you like the least? Choose only one".
 B. "In this book," the teacher said, "Which stories do you like the least? Choose only one."
 C. "In this book," the teacher said. "Which stories do you like the least? Choose only one."
 D. "In this book," the teacher said, "which stories do you like the least? Choose only one."

C 2. Which of the following dialogues has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
 "Wait a second." Said Bobby.
 "You're acting crazy, Jim." Added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"
- B. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
 "Wait a second", said Bobby.
 "You're acting crazy, Jim", added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"
- C. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
 "Wait a second," said Bobby.
 "You're acting crazy, Jim," added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"
- D. Jim leaped onto the desk and shouted, "Come on!" There was thunder in his voice, but the other students were unsure of what to do.
 "Wait a second," said Bobby.
 "You're acting crazy, Jim," Added Mary. "That sound isn't a fire alarm—it's the bell to begin class!"

B 3. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. I replied, "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said, "Sure. Have fun, honey!"
 B. I replied, "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said, 'Sure. Have fun, honey!'"
 C. I replied, "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said 'Sure. Have fun, honey!'"
 D. I replied "When I asked my mom if I could go, she said, 'Sure. Have fun, honey!'"

Evaluation 6 Key
page 2 of 2

C 4. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. "Are you coming?" asked Tom, "You need to get on the bus right away."
- B. "Are you coming?" asked Tom, "you need to get on the bus right away."
- C. "Are you coming?" asked Tom. "You need to get on the bus right away."
- D. "Are you coming"? asked Tom. "You need to get on the bus right away".

C 5. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. My mother always said, 'Haste makes waste.'
- B. My mother always said, "Haste makes waste".
- C. My mother always said, "Haste makes waste."
- D. My mother always said 'Haste makes waste'.

D 6. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. "I don't know," Louise said, "If he will be there."
- B. "I don't know", Louise said. "If he will be there".
- C. "I don't know", Louise said. "if he will be there".
- D. "I don't know," Louise said, "if he will be there."

D 7. Which has NO errors with punctuation or capitalization?

- A. Bill said, "why are you following me?"
- B. Bill said "why are you following me"?
- C. Bill said, "Why are you following me?"
- D. Bill said, "Why are you following me?"

Part 2: Find the capitalization and/or punctuation errors.

8. Below, circle the letters and/or punctuation marks that are written/used incorrectly in the following quotation. Hint: There are two things wrong.

Ⓞmy sister lives in Seattle," said Mary, "Where does your sister live?"

9. Below, circle the letters and/or punctuation marks that are written/used incorrectly in the following quotation. Hint: There are three things wrong.

The clerk ⓄSaid: "We are all out of those shoes. They were so popular Ⓞ!"

10. Below, circle the letters and/or punctuation marks that are written/used incorrectly in the following quotation. Hint: There are two things wrong.

"The campsite is just around the next bend. Ⓞ Said my dad.

Page 9*

The italicized introductions to each chapter and several chapter topics are very important, and it is highly recommended that you read them aloud to students. Too often, we assume that the relevance of the material we teach is self-evident, and that is certainly not the case with something as abstract as grammar.

Each introduction may also be used to instigate a bit of discussion about what students already know. For instance, after reading the introduction to section 1.3, you might ask students to tell you what they already know about when to use *I* vs. when to use *me*, or about how nouns might be used to create imagery in one's writing.

In short, each italicized introduction communicates to students the practical value of the topics and concepts ahead, i.e., how they will directly benefit as students and writers from what they are about to learn—and this is crucial to getting students to “buy in” and appreciate the journey!

Page 9**

It can be a little daunting to ask your students to memorize 40 prepositions. Memorizing seems so out of vogue, but it is a good exercise—one that will build confidence since it's a challenge where students will surprise themselves. They CAN do it! Memorizing is, of course, a skill that will transfer for them into other classes, from the periodic table of elements in science, to formulas in math, to facts in social studies. Memorizing is a valuable academic skill!

Regarding grammar, memorizing the prepositions at the beginning of this study gives students a solid understanding of the kinds of words prepositions are, and it will definitely enhance their ability to compose sentences using prepositions and to find prepositional phrases.

Be sure to make memorizing the prepositions fun: Talk about memorizing techniques, recite together the spooky “prepositions in verse” poem, give students time to practice in pairs in class, look up “prepositions songs” online, etc. Also, feel free to make the task less daunting by breaking the evaluation into smaller chunks (two quizzes on 20 prepositions, etc.).

Having said all of that, it is not absolutely necessary to require students to memorize 40 prepositions. Simply post a big list in your classroom for them to refer to when necessary. Memorizing the prepositions could even be an extra-credit challenge.

Finally, the prepositions list on this page is not complete—there are other prepositions in the world! When composing sentences or even on a prepositions quiz, students will sometimes use other prepositions such as *like*, *except*, *underneath*, etc., and that's totally fine, of course.

Page 18

There are several types of conjunctions in English, and coordinating conjunctions (*for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*) are the most basic. They join sentences and words. You are generally not supposed to begin a sentence with a coordinating conjunction because their job is to connect things, not begin. Of course, students will encounter sentences beginning with *and*, for instance, in the books they read. Authors have “creative license” to do such things, but remember that the rules of grammar studied in this book pertain to academic writing. In an academic (or professional) setting, one is expected to follow the rules!

Correlative conjunctions are similar to coordinating conjunctions, but they work in pairs: *either...or*, *neither...nor*, *not only...but also*, *both...and*, and *just as...so*.

Subordinating conjunctions are completely different. These words create dependent (subordinate) clauses when added to the start of a sentence (which makes the sentence no longer a complete sentence!). Subordinating conjunctions are very common, but early middle schoolers do not naturally use them very often. Therefore, subordinating conjunctions are a grammar teaching point for upper middle school and high school.

Some common subordinating conjunctions: *as*, *although*, *after*, *when*, *while*, *unless*, *because*, *before*, *if*, *since*. (*After* and *before* can also function as prepositions—see entry for Page 19 below for more information.)

An acronym commonly used to refer to common subordinating conjunctions is “AAAWWUBBIS.”

Page 19

A word about the prepositions *after*, *before*, and *until*

Students may become confused at times when dealing with words which appear on the prepositions list that are not always prepositions. The preposition *for* is one example of a word that often is a preposition but also can be a conjunction:

The book was for my uncle. (*For* is a preposition.)

I woke up extra early, for I did not want to miss the bus on the first day of school. (*For* is a conjunction—a word that, along with the comma, connects two independent clauses to create one compound sentence.)

For is not a big issue since it's mostly used as a preposition and not so much as a conjunction.

The most problematic prepositions that students will encounter are *after* and *before*.

These often-used words can also be subordinating conjunctions. When used as subordinating conjunctions, *after* and *before* begin groups of words that, unlike prepositional phrases, also include subjects and verbs. *Until* operates similarly but is less often used by middle school students.

We grabbed a snack before dinner. (*Before* is a preposition.)

I carefully packed my backpack before I left school yesterday. (*Before* is a subordinating conjunction, which creates a subordinate clause, a.k.a. a dependent clause.)

- A dependent clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a verb, but it cannot stand on its own because it is not a complete thought.
- (An independent clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a verb that is a complete thought and can stand on its own as a complete sentence.)

After swim practice we were completely exhausted. (*After* is a preposition.)

After the game ended, fans quickly headed to the stadium's exits. (*After* is a subordinating conjunction.)

I stayed until the end of the movie. (*Until* is a preposition.)

You may not leave until you have cleaned up your work station. (*Until* is a subordinating conjunction.)

Clauses include subjects and verbs; phrases do not. Students often unknowingly create subordinate clauses when attempting to create prepositional phrases beginning with *after* and *before* (and occasionally with *until*).

The main thing to keep in mind is that prepositional phrases never include verbs.* If a student creates or marks something that he or she believes to be a prepositional phrase, but something that includes a verb, they may very well be looking at a subordinate clause.

*** With more advanced sentence structures, sometimes there actually are verb forms in prepositional phrases. See Teacher's Note for p. 60 for a discussion of these unique verb forms (the information about gerunds and infinitives on p. 126-127 of this Teacher's Note is most relevant concerning prepositional phrases).**

Page 27 *

Who and *whom* are actually officially classified as either interrogative pronouns (when they begin questions) or relative pronouns (when they begin subordinate clauses).

A complete list of the personal pronouns would include the possessive case personal pronouns, in addition to the objective and nominative cases. —→