

LESSON NOTES - STEP 1

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. (The prepositions in the following examples are written in bold letters.)

Example: The birds sat **under** the trees and searched **for** food.
Prepositional Phrases: “**under the trees**” and “**for food**”

The noun or pronoun that ends this type of phrase is called the “object of the preposition.”

Example: “under the trees” and “for food.”
Object of the Preposition: “trees” and “food”

The main parts of a sentence (like a subject and verb) are NEVER inside a prepositional phrase, so it helps to find all the prepositional phrases first and eliminate them from the sentence before analyzing it. To remove the prepositional phrases from a sentence so you can find the subject and verb easily, simply place [brackets] around the phrase, beginning with the preposition and ending with the object of the preposition. (Use the list of Prepositions on the back of your Sentence Analysis Map or “S.A.M.”)

To find the beginning of a prepositional phrase, look for a preposition. To find the object of the preposition, look for a noun or pronoun that answers the question **whom? or what?** The first word in a prepositional phrase is the preposition, and the last word is the object of the preposition. The words in between are adjectives and adverbs.

Example: One of the girls in the new blue car is my sister.
One [**of** the girls] [**in** the new blue car] is my sister.

“Of” and “in” are prepositions. “Girls” and “car” are objects of the preposition, and the words “the”, “new”, and “blue” are adjectives.

Sometimes prepositions are compound, which means more than one of them has been used in a single phrase. (•Use the list of Compound Prepositions on the back of “S.A.M.”)

Example: [**In case of** fire], use the nearest exit.
“**In case of**” is a **compound preposition**
“fire” is the object of the preposition
(or **object of the compound preposition**, here)

compound.
If so, the objects are joined by a conjunction (and, but, or, etc.).

Example: Barbara was walking [**with** John **and** me].

The word “and” is a conjunction, so... “John” & “me” are both objects of the preposition.

Sometimes even the object of the preposition is

**Note: A comma usually follows an
introductory
prepositional phrase (one that begins the sentence).**

LESSON PRACTICE

Find the prepositional phrases in each of the following sentences and enclose them in [brackets]. Rewrite the prepositional phrases on the first line provided. Then write the label for each word in the prepositional phrase directly below it on the second line. Draw arrows from each word to its label.

1. The flowers in the yellow vase are the first ones from our garden.

[In (prep) the (article) yellow (adj) vase (obj of prep)] [from (prep) our (pronoun) garden (prep of obj)]

2. After the play, the teacher praised Gary for his performance.

[After (prep) the (article) play (obj of prep)] [for (prep) his (pronoun) performance (obj of prep)]

3. In spite of his good intentions, nothing happened.

[In spite of (compound prep) his (pronoun) good (adj) intentions (obj of prep)]

- Note:
- “in”, “from”, “after”, and “for” are on the list of prepositions.
 - “in spite of” is on the list of compound prepositions.
 - “the”, “our”, “yellow”, “his”, and “good” are adjectives that describe the objects of the preposition.
 - “vase”, “garden”, “play”, “performance”, and “intentions” answer the question “what?”

LESSON PRACTICE - OVERHEAD TRANSPARENCY MASTER

Find the prepositional phrases in each of the following sentences and enclose them in [brackets]. Rewrite the prepositional phrases on the first line provided. Then write the label for each word in the prepositional phrase directly below it on the second line. Draw arrows from each word to its label.

1. The flowers in the yellow vase are the first ones from our garden.

Answer: The flowers [in the yellow vase] are the first ones [from our garden].

in	the	yellow	vase		from	our	garden
preposition	adjective	adjective	object of the preposition		preposition	adjective	object of the preposition

2. After the play, the teacher praised Gary for his performance.

Answer: [After the play], the teacher praised Gary [for his performance].

After	the	play		for	his	performance
preposition	adjective	object of the preposition		preposition	adjective	object of the preposition

3. In spite of his good intentions, nothing happened.

Answer: [In spite of his good intentions], nothing happened.

In spite of	his	good	intentions
preposition	adjective	adjective	object of the preposition

Note: • “in” “from” “after” and “for” are on the list of prepositions.

• “in spite of ” is on the list of compound prepositions.

• “the” “our” “yellow” “his” & “good” are adjectives that describe the objects of the preposition.

• “vase” “garden” “play” “performance” & “intentions” answer the question “what?”

GROUP PRACTICE

INSTRUCTIONS: Find the prepositional phrases in the sentences that follow. Enclose each prepositional phrase in [brackets] and label each word in the prepositional phrase. (You may wish to copy this to a separate sheet of paper.)

- At our house every person in the family spends one night weekly doing the dishes.
[At (prep) our (pronoun) house (obj of prep)] [in (prep) the (article) family (obj of prep)]
- Mando was flying his kite above the trees in the bright sunshine.
[Above (prep) the (article) trees (obj of prep)] [In (prep) the (article) bright (adj) sunshine (obj of prep)]
- The class walked along the narrow trail around the dinosaur display.
[Along (prep) the (article) narrow (adj) trail (obj of prep)] [Around (prep) the (article) the dinosaur (adjective) display (obj of prep)]
- Traffic fines are used for the support of the city government.
[for (prep) the (article) support (obj of prep)] [of (prep) the (article) city government (obj of prep)]
- Lynn put words in French and Spanish on the chalkboard.
[in (prep) French (compound obj of prep) and (conjunction) Spanish (compound obj of prep)] [on (prep) the (article) chalkboard (obj of prep)]
- Some of the guests were not pleased with the party.
[of (prep) the (article) guests (obj of prep)] [with (prep) the (article) party (obj of prep)]
- In spite of the decision of the jury, I am innocent.
[In spite of (compound preposition) the (article) decision (obj of prep)] [of (prep) the (article) jury (obj of prep)]
- Hurry and get out of the rain and under the awning.
[of (prep) the (article) rain (obj of prep)] [under (prep) the (article) awning (obj of prep)]
- The man underneath the car has been working throughout the night.
[underneath (prep) the (article) car (obj of prep)] [throughout (prep) the (article) night (obj of prep)]

10. Since his phone call, I have been laughing at his message on the answering machine.

[Since (prep) his (pronoun) phone (adj) call (obj of prep)] [at (prep) his (pronoun) message (obj of prep)] [on (prep) the (article) answering machine (obj of prep)]

11. Under his expert care, all patients will feel better about themselves.

[Under (prep) his (pronoun) expert (adj) care (obj of prep)] [about (prep) themselves (obj of prep)]

12. Did you leave your homework in the locker at school?

[In (prep) the (article) locker (obj of prep)] [at (prep) school (obj of prep)]

13. By tonight or tomorrow, the committee will have decided on our fate.

[By (prep) tonight (compound obj of prep) or (conjunction) tomorrow (compound obj of prep)] [on (prep) our (pronoun) fate (obj of prep)]

14. The Nile River is among the longest rivers in the world.

[among (prep) the (article) longest (adj) rivers (obj of prep)] [in (prep) the (article) world (obj of prep)]

15. We prefer the second week in June for our vacation.

[in (prep) June (obj of prep)] [for (prep) our (pronoun) vacation (obj of prep)]

16. Who played Butch Cassidy in the movie we saw last night?

[in (prep) the (article) movie (obj of prep)]

17. Please get me a sandwich from the refrigerator.

[from (prep) the (article) refrigerator (obj of prep)]

18. In case of rain we will take our umbrellas to the game.

[In case of (compound prep) rain (obj of prep)] [to (prep) the (article) game (obj of prep)]

19. Her cat dragged one of her socks into the yard.

[of (prep) her (pronoun) socks (obj of prep)] [into (prep) the (article) yard (obj of prep)]

20. The post office is located across the street from the bank on Main Street.

[across (prep) the (article) street (obj of prep)] [from (prep) the (article) bank (obj of prep)] [on (prep) Main Street (obj of prep)]

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

INSTRUCTIONS: Find the prepositional phrases in the sentences that follow. Enclose each prepositional phrase in brackets and label each word in the prepositional phrase. (You may wish to copy this to a separate sheet of paper.)

1. Did you take your letter jacket to the banquet at the YMCA?
[to (prep) the (article) banquet (obj of prep)] [at (prep) the (article) YMCA (obj of prep)]
2. By July or August, our time in the sun will have tanned our skin.
[By (prep) July (compound obj of prep) or (conjunction) August (compound obj of prep)] [in (prep) the (article) sun (obj of prep)]
3. Darlene was riding her bike along the path in the city park.
[along (prep) the (article) path (obj of prep)] [in (prep) the (article) city park (obj of prep)]
4. We will take our water jugs to the game in case of hot weather.
[to (prep) the (article) game (obj of prep)] [in (prep) case (obj of prep)] [of (prep) hot (adj) weather (obj of prep)]
5. Please get me a napkin from the table.
[from (prep) the (article) table (obj of prep)]
6. Bobbie's dog buried one of his bones in the flower bed.
[of (prep) his (pronoun) bones (obj of prep)] [in (prep) the (article) flower (adj) bed (obj of prep)]
7. The class chose the last week in May as the date for their reunion.
[in (prep) May (obj of prep)] [as (prep) the (article) date (obj of prep)] [for (prep) their (pronoun) reunion (obj of prep)]
8. Who ate the popcorn in the bowl on the counter?
[in (prep) the (article) bowl (obj of prep)] [on (prep) the (article) counter (obj of prep)]
9. The Empire State Building is one of the tallest buildings in the United States.
[of (prep) the (article) tallest (adj) buildings (obj of prep)] [in (prep) the (article) United States (obj of prep)]
10. The custodian in the hallway has been painting the building throughout the year.

[in (prep) the (article) hallway (obj of prep)] [throughout (prep) the (article) year (obj of prep)]

11. I have been listening to his excuses about his tardies for weeks.

[to (prep) his (pronoun) excuses (obj of prep)] [about (prep) his (pronoun) tardies (obj of prep)] [for (prep) weeks (obj of prep)]

12. Under his watchful guidance, all students will learn more about fractions and percentiles.

[Under (prep) his (pronoun) watchful (adj) guidance (obj of prep)] [about (prep) fractions (compound obj of prep) and (conjunction) percentiles (compound obj of prep)]

13. Stand near the door and give these programs to the guests.

[near (prep) the (article) door (obj of prep)] [to (prep) the (article) guests (obj of prep)]

14. In spite of the wishes of the family, we got married.

[In spite of (compound prep) the (article) wishes (obj of prep)] [of (prep) the (article) family (obj of prep)]

15. Roberto taught a word in Spanish to the class.

[in (prep) Spanish (obj of prep)] [to (prep) the (article) class (obj of prep)]

16. Most of the flowers wilted after the wedding.

[of (prep) the (article) flowers (obj of prep)] [after (prep) the (article) wedding (obj of prep)]

17. Sand paper is used for the smoothing of the table top.

[for (prep) the (article) smoothing (obj of prep)] [of (prep) the (article) table (adj) top (obj of prep)]

18. The beauty shop is two blocks down the street from the mall.

[down (prep) the (article) street (obj of prep)] [from (prep) the (article) mall (obj of prep)]

19. The dog loped along the narrow path around the lake.

[along (prep) the (article) narrow (adj) path (obj of prep)] [around (prep) the (article) lake (obj of prep)]

20. At our church, every member of the congregation spends one Sunday a month cleaning the sanctuary.

[at (prep) our (pronoun) church (obj of prep)] [of (prep) the (article) congregation (obj of prep)]

THE WRITING CONNECTION

Using Prepositional Phrases

- A. Finding the elements of a sentence is much easier if the prepositional phrases are removed and the sentence is shorter. Try it. Remove the prepositional phrases from the following sentences and write the shortened sentence. A sample has been done for you.

Sample: [~~After the dance~~], the children were sitting [~~on the floor~~] [~~in the gymnasium~~].

Answer: The children were sitting.

1. Clowns in the rodeo have one of the most dangerous jobs in all of sports.

Clowns have one.

2. Under the tall umbrella near the lifeguard stand, the surfer rested.

The surfer rested.

- B. Using prepositional phrases in different parts of the sentence can provide sentence variety and improve your writing. Rewrite the following sentences and move the prepositional phrases around. A sample has been done for you. (Don't forget the punctuation rule regarding introductory prepositional phrases!)

Sample: The cool breeze blew [through the trees].

Answer: **Through the trees, the cool breeze blew.**

3. The dancer stood on the stage with a bouquet of flowers in her arms and took a bow.

The dancer in her arms stood on the stage and took a bow with a bouquet of flowers.

4. I have been talking to his parents about his problems for weeks.

For weeks I have been talking about his problems to his parents.

5. Both coaches in the Super Bowl prepared their teams for a full year.

Coaches prepared their teams for a full year in the Super Bowl

(continued next page)

THE WRITING CONNECTION: USING PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES (CONTINUED)

- C. Use a prepositional phrase to combine the following pairs of sentences into one sentence. Be sure you do not change the meaning. A sample has been done for you.

6. The smell came from his dirty feet. The smell was in the room.

The smell from his dirty feet was in the room

7. Mrs. Thompson bought a house. The house was in a new neighborhood.

Mrs. Thompson bought a house in a new neighborhood.

8. The children are looking for toys. They are looking around the house.

The children are looking for toys around the house

9. The orchestra began the overture. It began at seven o'clock.

The orchestra began the overture

10. The clothes are black and white. The clothes are in the closet.

The black and white clothes are in the closet

11. The dogs slept peacefully. The dogs were on the sofa.

The dogs slept peacefully on the sofa.

12. The student spoke to the principal. He was in trouble.

The student that was in trouble spoke to the principal