Basic Sentence Construction
Word Forms

- Sentences can contain Nouns, Verbs, Adverbs, Adjectives, and Prepositions.
Nouns

• Nouns include people, places, and things and can be singular or plural.
• Nouns can be concrete or abstract.
• Concrete nouns are touchable, such as cat, fish, bird, scissors, cup, table, etc.
• Abstract nouns include ideas such as happiness, sadness, harmony, etc.
Noun Placement

• Nouns can be the subject, direct object, indirect object, or object of a preposition in a clause.
Noun Practice

• Name two concrete nouns.
• Name two abstract nouns.
Verbs

- Verbs indicate action and can be conjugated to indicate tense.
- Verbs can also link a subject and a subject compliment in order to describe a subject.
Verb Placement

- Verbs typically go after the subject of a sentence to indicate the action the subject is taking.
Verb Practice

• Name two action verbs.
Descriptive words: Adjectives and Adverbs

• Adjectives describe nouns
  • Pretty, ugly, blue, large, small

• Adverbs describe verbs
  • Often identifiable by “ly” endings
  • Prettily, horribly, often, well
Adjective placement

• Adjectives go before the noun: “Pretty girl,” “ugly bruise,” “blue dog,” etc.
• The exception to this rule: when an adjective is used as a subject complement. (More on this later.)
Adverb placement

- Adverbs need to go near the verb they are describing, but do not always need to go before or after a verb.
- Examples: “He ran merrily” “He happily sang.” (They are both acceptable.)
Examples

• The **big, black** cat jumped *happily* onto my lap.
• He played his **electric** guitar *merrily* along with his **favorite** song.
Descriptives Practice

• Use an adjective to describe something.
• Use an adverb to describe an action.
Prepositions

• Prepositions are also added to sentences to indicate location in space or time.
• Think of everything a squirrel can do to a tree!
Prepositional phrases

• Nouns behind prepositions indicate where/when something happened
• Called “objects of prepositions.”
• Make up prepositional phrases
Examples

• The dog ran **around** the tree.
• Katie dances **in** her apartment.
• My cat cuddles with me **at** night.
Preposition Practice

• Try to create a prepositional phrase
English Sentence Structure

• Complete sentences must contain a **subject** and a **predicate**.
  • Subject: usually a noun that indicates what the sentence is about
  • Predicate: verb or verb phrase describing what is happening to the subject.
  • Can be very simple to very, very complex.
Examples of simple sentences

• The dog ate.
  • Subject: “dog;” predicate: “ate.”

• Katie dances.
  • Subject: “Katie;” predicate: “dances.”

• I am hungry.
  • Subject: “I;” predicate: “am hungry.”
Sentence Practice

• Create a simple sentence.
Using linking verbs

• Linking verbs do not have action, per se, but are used to describe a noun.
• Sometimes they are “to be” verbs: am, is, are, was, were, etc.
• The word used to describe the noun that comes after the linking verb is called the subject complement.
When do we use linking verbs?

• To describe the subject of the sentence rather than giving it an action.
  • Example: “The cat is tired,” “I am hungry,” “He is pretty.”
Linking Verb Practice

- Create a sentence with a linking verb
Objects

- Sentences can also have objects.
- Objects are nouns which receive an action.
Examples of sentences with objects

• The boy ate chocolate cake.
  • “The boy” is the subject; “ate” is the predicate; “chocolate cake” is the object.

• Katie threw the ball.
  • “Katie” is the subject; “Threw” is the predicate; “the ball” is the object.
Direct vs. Indirect Object

• Two types of objects: direct vs. indirect
• Direct objects: answers the question “what,” or “who?”
• Indirect objects answer the question, “to whom,” or “for what?”
Example

• Katie threw the ball to Whitney
  • Subject: “Katie;” Predicate: “threw;” Direct object: “the ball;” indirect object: “Whitney.”
Object Practice

• Create a sentence with a direct and indirect object
Putting it all together

• The big, black cat happily chased the mouse down the hallway.
Now you try!

• Create a sentence with:
  • An adjective and adverb
  • A direct object
  • A prepositional phrase
Other considerations

• There are other things sentences can contain, such as coordinating conjunctions, subordinate conjunctions, and relative pronouns.
• Come to our advanced sentence structure workshop to learn more!