

From the Sideline: Expect respect. Teach students to give proper responses while making eye contact. Don't allow grunts for answers. We have the students say, "Yes, ma'am" or "No, sir."

Chapter

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects^A

Have you ever fished off a bridge? Have you ever tossed twigs from a bridge and watched them sail beneath and beyond? Have you ever walked across a bridge to which tourists flock, snapping pictures and catching their breath in amazement, such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco? Rickety wooden footbridges on a park trail, ancient stone bridges built by the Romans, incredibly huge bridges that are accomplishments of modern engineering—they all have something in common. Bridges are constructed to provide passage over such things as rivers, ravines, or roadways.

Similarly, certain parts of speech act as grammatical bridges that provide passage within a sentence. For instance, the predicate verb can act like a bridge connecting the subject to something else. That something is called a *direct object*. The direct object receives the action of the verb. For example, in the sentence "The children made a paper boat," the predicate verb *made* is the bridge connecting the subject *children* with the direct object *boat*.

Now, let us point out that there are some bridges that actually go nowhere. They are bridges that have one or both ends that do not lead to something. That may seem silly because bridges are meant to span, or go between, two different banks, but there is nothing ridiculous about predicate verbs that do not take a direct object. They are simply a different class of predicate verb. For example, in the sentence "The paper boat sank," the predicate verb doesn't need a direct object to receive the action. The poor homemade boat simply sank, end of sentence. This chapter covers the different kinds of verbs, focusing on predicate verbs that connect subjects and direct objects—in other words, verbs that are bridges to something.

^ATo make the chapter's opening analogy easy for students to imagine, show your students pictures of famous bridges, such as the Brooklyn Bridge or the Golden Gate Bridge. Then, show a picture of a bridge that has one or both ends leading to nowhere, such as the one in Italy called Ponte Rotto, or the Broken Bridge (<http://capress.link/wol2a0401>). While this site includes the bridge's history, a Wikipedia article includes photographs that may project more clearly (<http://capress.link/wol2a0402>).

^BRead the poem “The Blind Men and the Elephant” by John Godfrey Saxe, which is included in the literary appendix. Discuss the poem before identifying direct objects in the excerpt we discuss.

Ideas to Understand^B

In his poem “The Blind Men and the Elephant,” John Godfrey Saxe describes six blind men who try to determine the nature of an elephant. Unable to see the huge beast, each man reaches a conclusion about the whole animal based on what he can feel. The problem is that each man is touching only the part of the elephant’s body that he happened to stumble upon. Here are the lines that describe the first man’s observation:

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
“God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!”¹

From the

Sideline: Another way to classify verbs is according to their *tense*, which shows when an action occurs. The simple present and past tenses can be indicated with transitive, intransitive, and linking verbs alone. But helping verbs are required to indicate the simple future tense.

The first line of this stanza contains the principal elements and expresses a complete thought, so it could stand as a complete sentence: “The First approached the Elephant.” Notice that the predicate verb *approached* is the bridge between the subject *First* and something else; the verb leads from the subject directly to an object, namely the *Elephant*. *Elephant* completes the meaning of the verb *approached* because it tells what the first man approached. The First approached *what*? The First approached the *Elephant*. A direct object is an objective element that tells what the subject is acting on. It is a noun or pronoun after a transitive verb. It answers the question *what?* or *whom?* after the verb in a sentence.

The only kind of verb that connects to a direct object is a transitive verb. Understanding all the different kinds of verbs helps you identify the ones that are transitive and therefore helps you identify direct objects too. As you may know, verbs are divided into four groups, or classes, according to their meaning and their use in a sentence—*transitive verbs*, *linking verbs*, *intransitive verbs*, and *helping verbs*.

The *transitive*[■] verb is a verb that always has an objective element and tells *what* or *whom* the subject is acting on in a sentence. A transitive verb is the bridge that connects the subject and direct object, as we saw in the sentence “The First approached the Elephant.” *What* did the first man approach? The first man approached the *elephant*.

1. John Godfrey Saxe, “The Blind Men and the Elephant,” in *Anthology of Children’s Literature*, ed. Edna Johnson, Carrie Scott, and Evelyn Sickels (Cambridge, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), pp. 63–64.

To the Source:

■ transitive

The word *transitive* comes from the Latin word *transire*, meaning “to cross.” A transitive verb makes a transition from the subject to the direct object.

There is another type of verb called a *linking verb*. Rather than creating a bridge to a direct object like a transitive verb, this verb joins the subject to the predicate like an equal sign. For example, in the sentence “An elephant is a wall,” an elephant is being a wall. In the next two chapters, we will discuss more about linking verbs and the way they join subjects to predicates.

The *intransitive verb* is a predicate verb that expresses action like transitive verbs do, but it does not have an objective element. There is no need to ask *what?* or *whom?* after an intransitive verb because intransitive verbs do not need objects to complete them. For example, this sentence is complete in itself: “The blind man commented.” In a way, *commented* is a bridge to nowhere. The Latin roots of *intransitive* include not only *transire* (to cross) but also *in*, which means “not.” It does *not* cross over. The intransitive verb does not take an objective element or join a subject to a predicate.

The *helping verb*, or auxiliary verb, helps another verb express its meaning. *Auxiliary* is from the Latin word *auxilium*, meaning “to aid, help, support.” A helping verb is placed alongside a transitive, linking, or intransitive verb to form a *verb phrase*. Both words work together as one action, as in this sentence: “The elephant *is smirking*.” Both verbs—*is* and *smirking*—work as one unit, a verb phrase that tells the action of *elephant*.

Knowing the four classes of verbs enables you to identify the kind of verb that this chapter focuses on: transitive verbs. Now let’s look more closely at what they bridge: *subjects*, which are nouns or pronouns, and *direct objects*, which are also nouns or pronouns. Just as bridges can connect two banks or cliffs, transitive verbs connect nouns or pronouns.

A subject or direct object can be either a proper[■] noun or a common[■] noun. A *proper noun* names a particular person, place, or thing. Its first letter is always capitalized, which helps you identify it. The names of people, cities, states, and even things such as the Liberty Bell are examples of proper nouns. A *common noun* is any noun that is not a proper noun. *Flashlights, maps, erasers*, and even *acorns* are examples of common nouns. If a noun can be preceded by an article adjective (*the, a*, or *an*), it is likely a common noun.

Here is a sentence with a proper noun as a subject and a common noun as a direct object: “John Godfrey Saxe wrote a poem.” The subject names a particular person, and the direct object names any poem. They

From the

Sideline: Point out to the students Saxe’s bending of grammatical rules for artistic reasons (poetic license). He capitalizes nouns that are usually common nouns, such as *Elephant*, *First*, *Second*, and so on. By turning the common nouns into proper nouns, he makes them into the names of the characters in the poem.

When you work on common and proper nouns with the students, we suggest using a silly chant in a fake British accent: “A proper noun is capitalized. A proper noun is capitalized. A proper noun is capitalized. Use a gruff voice: “A common noun is not.”

To the Source:

■ proper

The word *proper* comes from the Latin word *proprius*, meaning “one’s own, particular to itself.”

To the Source:

■ common

The word *common* comes from the Latin word *communis*, meaning “public, shared by many, or general.”

are connected with the transitive verb *wrote*. Sometimes the direct object can be a proper noun too, as in this sentence: “The elephant was called Magnus.” The subject *elephant* is a common noun, but the direct object is the name of an elephant, the proper noun *Magnus*.

II Pause for Punctuation

- ◇ An **abbreviation** is a short form of a word or title. Abbreviations for most units of measurements are written in lowercase letters and are followed by periods.

inch/inches = in. foot/feet = ft. yard/yards = yd. mile/miles = mi.

- ◇ Abbreviations for metric units *do not* end with periods.

millimeter/millimeters = mm centimeter/centimeters = cm

kilometer/kilometers = km meter/meters = m

Terms to Remember

As you may have noticed, this chapter includes a lot of terms. Learning these two new songs will help you recognize all the concepts and remember all the definitions.

- ◇ Direct Object (1–9)
- ◇ Four Classes of Verbs (1–10)



^cModel how to mark the sentence on the board while the students chorally analyze it. Say aloud the words in gray. When the analysis is complete, have the students lead you in diagramming the sentence on the board.

Sentences to Analyze and Diagram^c

Now you are ready to analyze sentences that contain transitive verbs and direct objects. That means the order of analysis that you’ve learned so far will be slightly changed. You will still need to identify the subject and then the predicate first, but then you are to identify the direct object. Next, identify each modifier (adverbs and adjectives) starting at the end of the sentence (right-hand side) and working toward the beginning.

Follow these steps to analyze the following sentence with your teacher’s guidance. Remember to mark the sentence as you say the analysis aloud.

Blind men observe an elephant
 |adj ↑ |adj ↑ do

- First, read the sentence aloud. “Blind men observe an elephant.”
- “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- “This sentence is about *men*. So, *men* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Since *men* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above it.)
- “This sentence tells us that men *observe*. So, *observe* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *men*.” (Since *observe* tells us something about *men*, double underline the predicate and place a capital letter *P* above it.)
- “It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs.” (Since *observe* shows action, place a capital letter *V* to the right of the letter *P*.)
- “*Elephant* tells us *what* men observe.” (Since *elephant* tells what men observe, draw a circle around it.)
- “So, *elephant* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of an action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* men observe.” (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)
- (Now move from right to left from the end of the sentence to the beginning.) “*An* tells us *how many* elephants.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) “So, *an* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective (or article).” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- “*Blind* tells us *what kind* of men.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) “So, *blind* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective.” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)

From the

Sideline: The Sentence Bank, which you’ll find at the end of this chapter, contains extra practice sentences along with analysis scripts.

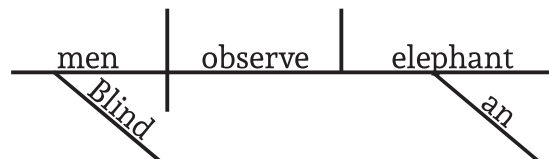
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Sideline: Students can now abbreviate the first part of the analysis script because at this point they should have a firm foundation in identifying both what a sentence is and what kind of sentence it is. If your students are not confident, they may continue with the full script used in previous chapters.

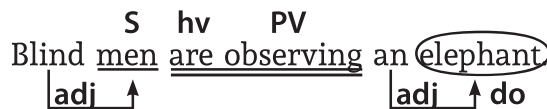
When you diagram a sentence that includes a transitive verb, the subject, predicate verb, and direct object all rest on the baseline. The subject is located on the left and is separated from the verb by a vertical line that crosses the baseline. The verb is between the subject and the direct object. The direct object rests to the right side of the direct object line, which is a vertical line that *does not* cross the baseline. If any modifiers are present, they will be written on diagonal lines under the nouns or verbs they modify.



In the following diagram, notice that *men* is the subject and is written on the left side of the baseline. The dividing line separates the subject and the predicate verb—*observe*—while the word *elephant* is written on the right side of the baseline with the direct object line separating *observe* and *elephant*. The two adjectives—*blind* and *an*—are written on diagonal lines under the words they modify.



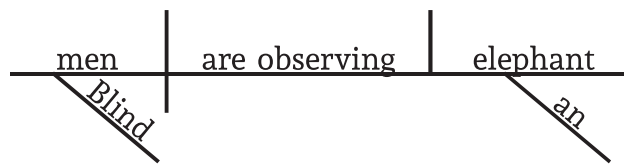
As you may remember, when you analyze a sentence that has a verb phrase and a direct object, helping verbs and transitive verbs are individually marked with *hv* and *PV*. Both words, however, are double underlined.



When you diagram a sentence that has a verb phrase and a direct object, place the helping verb and transitive verb together. For example, in the sentence “Blind men are observing an elephant,” the verb phrase *are observing* is placed on the baseline between the two vertical lines. Re-

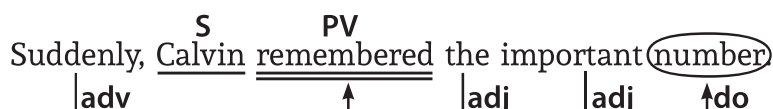


member, when you diagram a sentence that has a direct object modified by an adjective, the adjective is written on a diagonal line slanting from left to right underneath the direct object.

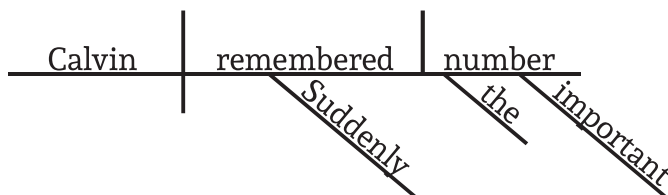


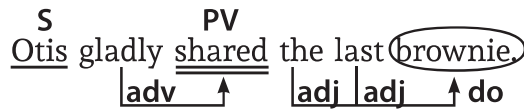
Sentence Bank

Model the sentence analysis on the board while students recite aloud from memory the lines in quotation marks. Then diagram the sentence on the board together.

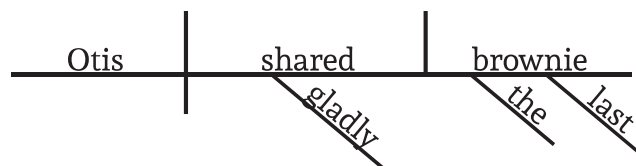


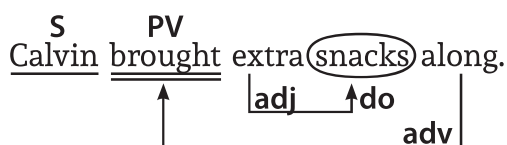
- (First, read the sentence aloud.) “Suddenly, Calvin remembered the important number.”
- “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- “This sentence is about *Calvin*.” (Underline the subject.) “So, *Calvin* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- “This sentence tells us that Calvin *remembered*.” (Double underline the predicate.) “So, *remembered* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Calvin*.” (Place a capital letter *P* above the predicate.) “It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs.” (Place a capital letter *V* to the right of the *P*.)
- “*Number* tells us *what* Calvin remembered.” (Draw a circle around the word.) “So, *number* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of the action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* Calvin remembered.” (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)
- “*Important* tells us *what kind* of number.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) “So, *important* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective.” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- “*The* tells us *which* number.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies and connect the line to the modifying line of the word *important*. The two modifying lines are joined and draw a straight line toward the word they modify.) “So, *the* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective (or article).” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- “*Suddenly* tells us *when* Calvin remembered.” (Draw a straight line down from the adverb, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) “So, *suddenly* is an adverbial element because it modifies a verb. It is an adverb.” (Write *adv* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)



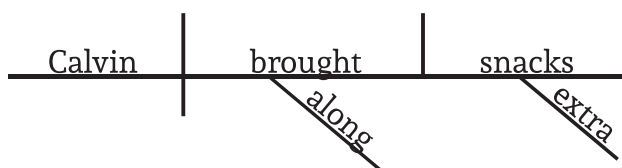


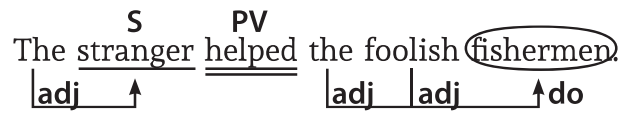
- a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) "Otis gladly shared the last brownie."
- b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."
- c. "This sentence is about *Otis*." (Underline the subject.) "So, *Otis* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about." (Place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- d. "This sentence tells us that *Otis shared*." (Double underline the predicate.) "So, *shared* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Otis*." (Place a capital letter *P* above the predicate.) "It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs." (Place a capital letter *V* to the right of the *P*.)
- e. "*Brownie* tells us *what* *Otis* shared." (Draw a circle around the word.)
- f. "So, *brownie* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of the action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* *Otis* shared." (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)
- g. "*Last* tells us *what kind* of brownie." (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) "So, *last* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective." (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- h. "*The* tells us *which* brownie." (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies and connect the line to the modifying line of the word *last*. The two modifying lines are joined and point, with a straight line, toward the word they modify.) "So, *the* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective (or article)." (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- i. "*Gladly* tells us *how* *Otis* shared." (Draw a straight line down from the adverb, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) "So, *gladly* is an adverbial element because it modifies a verb. It is an adverb." (Write *adv* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)





- (First, read the sentence aloud.) “Calvin brought extra snacks along.”
- “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- “This sentence is about *Calvin*.” (Underline the subject.) “So, *Calvin* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- “This sentence tells us that Calvin *brought*.” (Double underline the predicate.) “So, *brought* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Calvin*.” (Place a capital letter *P* above the predicate.) “It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs.” (Place a capital letter *V* to the right of the *P*.)
- “*Snacks* tells us *what* Calvin brought.” (Draw a circle around the word.)
- “So, *snacks* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of the action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* Calvin brought.” (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)
- “*Along* tells us *how* Calvin brought.” (Draw a straight line down from the adverb, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) “So, *along* is an adverbial element because it modifies a verb. It is an adverb.” (Write *adv* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- “*Extra* tells us *which* snacks.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies.) “So, *extra* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective.” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)





- a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) "The stranger helped the foolish fishermen."
- b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."
- c. "This sentence is about *stranger*." (Underline the subject.) "So, *stranger* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about." (Place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- d. "This sentence tells us that stranger *helped*." (Double underline the predicate.) "So, *helped* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *stranger*." (Place a capital letter *P* above the predicate.) "It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs." (Place a capital letter *V* to the right of the *P*.)
- e. "*Fishermen* tells us *whom* the stranger helped." (Draw a circle around the word.)
- f. "So, *fishermen* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of the action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *whom* the stranger helped." (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)
- g. "*Foolish* tells us *what kind* of fishermen." (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) "So, *foolish* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective." (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- h. "*The* tells us *which* fishermen." (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies and connect the line to the modifying line of the word *foolish*. The two modifying lines are joined and point, with a straight line, toward the word they modify.) "So, *the* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective (or article)." (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- i. "*The* tells us *which* stranger." (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) "So, *the* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective (or article)." (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)

