

**From the Sideline:** Expect eager listeners. Teach students to give their full attention to you before you begin. We say, “Don’t ever teach without it, or you will never get it.”

<sup>A</sup>Treat your students to sour hard candies or chocolate kisses while you brainstorm together ways to describe the flavors or textures using sentences with predicate adjectives, such as “The chocolate kiss is *creamy*.”

# Chapter

# 6

## Predicate Adjectives<sup>A</sup>

Imagine standing in the middle of a candy store surrounded by colorful, delicious sweets. What would you choose if you could sample anything you wanted? Would you choose something *fruity*, *minty*, or *nutty-fudgy* flavored? As you stand there happily munching, you might say, “This truffle is *rich*!” or maybe, “This jawbreaker is *sour*!” The words you would use to describe the flavors are adjectives. *Rich* tells *what kind* of truffle, and *sour* tells *what kind* of jawbreaker. Notice that the adjectives in the sentences were in a specific place. The sentences didn’t say “rich truffle” or “sour jawbreaker.” Instead, the descriptive sentences are arranged like this: This truffle (noun) is (linking verb) rich (adjective). That means that the adjective in those sentences is a special kind of adjective—it’s a predicate adjective.

Like predicate nominatives, predicate adjectives are joined to a subject by a linking verb—usually one of the Be Verbs. Unlike predicate nominatives, which rename the subject, predicate adjectives describe a quality of the subject. Predicate nominatives are nouns; predicate adjectives are, well, adjectives: Candy (subject) is (linking verb) *sweet* (predicate adjective).

### Ideas to Understand

Now you know all three kinds of predicates: predicate verbs, predicate nominatives, and predicate adjectives. All predicates tell us something about the subject, but predicate nominatives and predicate adjectives *complete* the subject, which is why they are also called subject *complements*. A **predicate adjective** is an adjective that follows a linking verb

### From the Sideline

**Sideline:** Consider reading aloud the whole poem, which is in the literary appendix, and brainstorming with your students lists of synonyms for the predicate adjectives Rossetti uses, which are all colors. For example, synonyms for *pink* include *rosy*, *salmon*, *blush*, and *fuchsia*. Notice that in the poem a subject, linking verb, and predicate adjective follows each question.

### From the Sideline

**Sideline:** Every time your students hesitate about the differences among *to*, *two*, and the adverb *too*, use a rhythmic chant, as if it's a cheer at a sporting event:  
T-O . . . preposition!  
T-W-O . . . the number two!  
T-O-O . . . means *also* and *very* (ad-verb)!

and tells a quality of the subject. In sentences in which there is a predicate adjective, the principal elements are fully completed when there is a subject, a linking verb, and a predicate adjective.

In the poem “What is Pink?” Christina Rossetti wonders how to define all the different colors of the rainbow. She answers each of her own questions with a subject, a linking verb, and a predicate adjective:

What is pink? a rose is pink  
By the fountain’s brink.  
What is red? a poppy’s red  
In its barley bed.<sup>1</sup>

**fountain:** a spring or the start of a stream  
**poppy:** a bright red flower  
**barley:** a cereal grain

In the first line, the word *rose* is the subject, and *pink* is a predicate adjective because it modifies the subject. It describes a quality of the subject. The two words are joined by the linking verb *is*: “A rose is pink.”

The function of the linking verb is to glue the subject and predicate together. Without the linking verb, the predicate does not make sense. “A rose pink” is nonsense, but “A rose is pink” makes perfect sense. Rossetti could have glued the adjective to the noun by writing “a pink rose,” but instead she purposely places *pink* in the predicate following the linking verb. That way, she emphasizes that the quality of a rose is to be pink. In other words, Rossetti says, “The rose is being pink.” A linking verb connects the subject to the predicate by expressing a state of being. While the most common linking verbs are the Be Verbs—*am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, *were*, *be*, *being*, *been*—there are other linking verbs, called sensory linking verbs, which will be introduced in *Well-Ordered Language Level 3*.

Remember that adverbs can modify adjectives since they answer the question *how?* about the adjectives. That means that adverbs can modify predicate adjectives too. For instance, Rossetti could have written in the poem, “The rose is *very* pink.” *Very* is an adverb that tells *how pink* the rose is. She could also have written, “A sunflower is *not* pink.” *Not* is an adverb that tells *how pink* the sunflower is; in other words, it is *not* pink. Other adverbs that often modify predicate adjectives are *so*, *too*, and *never*.

You might be interested to know that because of the poem “What is Pink,” the poet has a variety of rose named after her: the Rossetti Rose. Can you guess what color it is? Pink! There is something grammatically

1. Christina G. Rossetti, “What is Pink?” *Rossetti Poems* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), p. 135.

interesting about that rose too. *Rossetti* is a proper noun because it names a particular person, but that proper noun becomes an adjective in the flower's name. It answers the question *which rose?* It is the *Rossetti* rose. When a proper noun is used as an adjective, it is called a **proper adjective**. Like nouns, most adjectives are common rather than proper, so the first letter of a proper adjective is capitalized to make it stand out. Proper adjectives function just like other adjectives, modifying nouns or pronouns. They can even be predicate adjectives, as in this example: "That rose is *North American*."

### From the Sideline

**Sideline:** Proper adjectives are derived from the proper noun names of places or people, often with slight changes to the ending of the word, such as in *English* or *Shakespearean*.

## II Pause for Punctuation

- ◊ Add hyphens when an age is an adjective placed before a noun.  
**Example:** Five-year-old Max is celebrating a birthday.
- ◊ Do *not* add hyphens when an age is used as a predicate adjective.  
**Example:** Max is five years old today.

## Terms to Remember

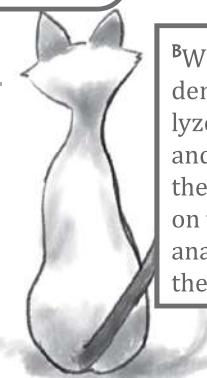
Because you got a jump-start in the last chapter with the definition of predicate adjectives, you won't be learning any new terms in this chapter, but be sure to review the following:

- ◊ Adjective (1–8)
- ◊ Verb and Helping Verb (1–6)
- ◊ Be Verbs (2–2)
- ◊ Predicate Nominative and Predicate Adjective (2–3)

**From the Sideline:** The Sentence Bank at the end of this chapter contains four extra practice sentences and their scripts.

## Sentences to Analyze and Diagram<sup>B</sup>

Predicate adjectives are like predicate nominatives in that they both need linking verbs. They are also like predicate nominatives in that even though they are part of the predicate, when analyzed they are not double underlined with the verb. With



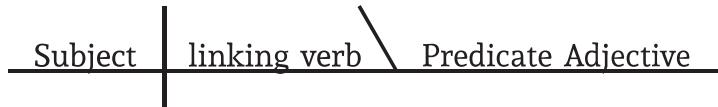
<sup>B</sup>While the students orally analyze the sentence and mark it in their books, model on the board the analysis and then the diagram.

your teacher's guidance, use the steps below to analyze the following sentence.

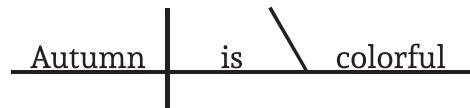
S      lv      PA  
Autumn is colorful.

- a. First, read the sentence aloud. "Autumn is colorful."
- b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."
- c. "This sentence is about *autumn*. So, *autumn* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about." (Since *autumn* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- d. "This sentence tells us that *autumn* is *colorful*." (Double underline only the linking verb.) "So, *colorful* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *autumn*." (Since *colorful* tells something about *autumn*, place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.)
- e. "It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject." (Since *colorful* is describing *autumn*, place a capital letter *A* to the right of the letter *P*.)
- f. "Is is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate." (Since *is* joins the subject to the predicate, place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)

When you diagram a sentence that has a predicate adjective, the linking verb rests on the baseline between the subject and the predicate. Keep in mind that a predicate nominative and predicate adjective are diagrammed in the same way, with a diagonal line slanting back toward the subject and resting on the baseline.



In the following diagram, notice that *autumn* is the subject and is written on the baseline on the left side of the vertical dividing line that crosses the baseline. The linking verb *is* is written on the right side of the dividing line, while the predicate adjective *colorful* is written on the far right side of the baseline separated from *is* by a diagonal line that does not cross the baseline.



S            lv            PA  
Late autumn can be drab.  
|adj|  
↑

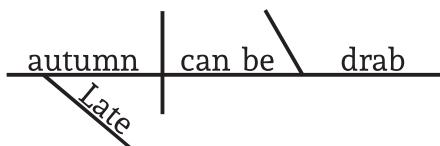
- a. First, read the sentence aloud. “Late autumn can be drab.”
- b. “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- c. “This sentence is about *autumn*. So, *autumn* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Since *autumn* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- d. “This sentence tells us that autumn *can be drab*.” (Double underline only the helping verb and the linking verb.) “So, *drab* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *autumn*.” (Since *drab* tells us something about *autumn*, place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.)
- e. “It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject.” (Since *drab* is describing *autumn*, place a capital letter *A* to the right of the letter *P*.)
- f. “*Can be* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate.” (Since *can be* joins the subject to the predicate, place the lowercase letters *lv* above both the helping verb and the linking verb.)
- g. “*Late* tells us *what kind* of autumn.” (Since *late* is an adjective, draw the modifying line to the word it modifies.)

**From the Sideline:**

Just a reminder that by this point, students should be very familiar with how to mark adjectives and adverbs as they analyze sentences, so the instructions have been abbreviated.

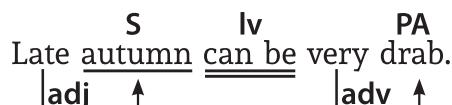
h. “So, *late* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective.” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)

When you diagram a sentence with a verb phrase and a predicate adjective, the helping verbs and linking verbs that make up the verb phrase are placed together because together they link the subject to the predicate. For example, the words *can be* are placed on the baseline between the vertical dividing line and the diagonal line.

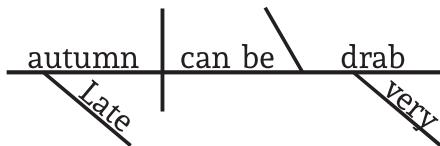


<sup>c</sup>Review the definition of an adverb to help the students see the broader definition of an adverb.

When a sentence has an adverb modifying a predicate adjective, the adverbial modifying line will be drawn to the adjective. Keep in mind that the adverb is telling *how much* the adjective is qualifying. In the example “Late autumn can be *very* drab,” *very* tells *how drab* the late autumn is being.<sup>c</sup>



When diagramming a sentence that has an adverb that modifies a predicate adjective, the adverb is placed on a modifying diagonal line under the adjective. For example, in the sentence “Late autumn can be *very* drab,” the adverb *very* is placed under the predicate adjective *drab*.



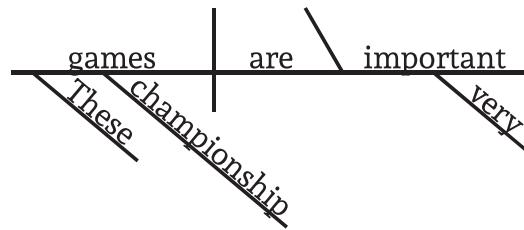
# Sentence Bank

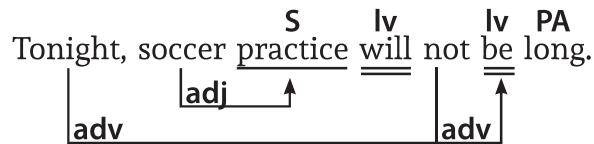
Model the sentence analysis on the board while students recite aloud from memory the lines in quotation marks. Then diagram the sentence on the board together.

These championship games are very important.

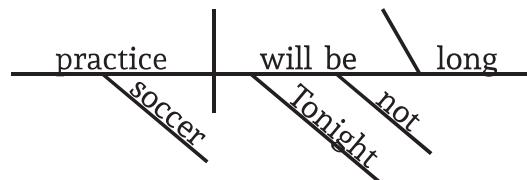
S      lv      PA  
 adj      adj      ↑           adv      ↑

- (First, read the sentence aloud.) “These championship games are very important.”
- “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- “This sentence is about *games*.” (Underline the subject.) “So, *games* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Place a capital letter S above the subject.)
- “This sentence tells us that games *are important*.” (Double underline only the linking verb.) “So, *important* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *games*.” (Place a capital letter P above the adjective.) “It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject.” (Place a capital letter A to the right of the P.) “*Are* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate.” (Place the lowercase letters lv above the linking verb.)
- “*Very* tells us *how* important.” (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) “So, *very* is an adverbial element because it modifies an adjective. It is an adverb.” (Write *adv* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- “*Championship* tells us *what kind* of games.” (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) “So, *championship* 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.)
- “*These* tells us *which* games.” (Draw the modifying line and connect it to the other adjectival modifying line.) “So, *these* 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.)



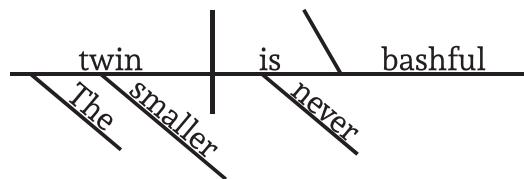


- (First, read the sentence aloud.) “Tonight, soccer practice will not be long.”
- “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- “This sentence is about *practice*.” (Underline the subject.) “So, *practice* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)
- “This sentence tells us that practice *will be long*.” (Double underline only the linking verbs.) “So, *long* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *practice*.” (Place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.) “It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject.” (Place a capital letter *A* to the right of the *P*.) “*Will be* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate.” (Place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)
- “*Not* tells us *how* the practice will be.” (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) “So, *not* 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.)
- “*Soccer* tells us *what kind* of practice.” (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) “So, *soccer* 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.)
- “*Tonight* tells us *when* the practice will be.” (Draw the modifying line and connect it to the other adverbial modifying line.) “So, *tonight* 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.)



S      lv      PA  
 The smaller twin is never bashful.  
 |adj    |adj    ↑    ||adv|

- a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) “The smaller twin is never bashful.”
- b. “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- c. “This sentence is about *twin*.” (Underline the subject.) “So, *twin* 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 *twin* is *bashful*.” (Double underline only the linking verb.) “So, *bashful* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *twin*.” (Place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.) “It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject.” (Place a capital letter *A* to the right of the *P*.) “*Is* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate.” (Place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)
- e. “*Never* tells us *how* the twin is being *bashful*.” (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) “So, *never* 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.)
- f. “*Smaller* tells us *what kind* of twin.” (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) “So, *smaller* 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.)
- g. “*The* tells us *which* twin.” (Draw the modifying line and connect it to the other adjectival modifying line.) “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.)



Usually, the old woman is so sad.

S	lv	PA
adj	adj	adv
adv		

- a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) “Usually, the old woman is so sad.”
- b. “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- c. “This sentence is about *woman*.” (Underline the subject.) “So, *woman* 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 *woman* is *sad*.” (Double underline only the linking verb.) “So, *sad* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *woman*.” (Place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.) “It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject.” (Place a capital letter *A* to the right of the *P*.) “*Is* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate.” (Place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)
- e. “*So* tells us *how* sad.” (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) “*So, so* is an adverbial element because it modifies an adjective. It is an adverb.” (Write *adv* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- f. “*Old* tells us *what kind* of woman.” (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) “*So, old* 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.)
- g. “*The* tells us *which* woman.” (Draw the modifying line and connect it to the other adjectival modifying line.) “*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.)
- h. “*Usually* tells us *when* the woman is sad.” (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) “*So, usually* 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.)

