Chapter 7

Predicate Review[A]

Have you ever been at the sea? The rolling waves and the sea breeze capture your attention as you stand on the beach and watch the tide. If an artist wants to capture that experience, he mixes many colors to paint a coastal scene. He thinks of shapes and texture. He arranges the details of his painting just so. He uses his emotions and experiences because he wants not only to capture the natural beauty but also to express his own ideas. Paints on a canvas are the tools of his expression.

A writer also uses tools—words. Like a painter, a skilled author carefully chooses just the right ones and positions them just so. She composes,■ not with paints, but with language. She puts together words in order to describe, analyze, or compare things, to define concepts, to argue a point, and to express emotions. She chooses words and constructs them into single sentences, combining the sentences into longer works. Most basically, a skilled author understands this grammatical principle: In order to communicate a complete thought, a sentence must have a subject and a predicate. The predicate makes known something about the subject. In fact, a sentence is incomplete without both the subject and the predicate. Predicates are so important to the composition, or construction, of sentences that this chapter reviews all three types: predicate verb, predicate nominative, and predicate adjective. These predicates enable a writer to express exactly what she means about subjects.

To the Source:

■ **compose**

The word *compose* comes from the Latin *com-,* which means "together," and *pone-re,* which means "to put." To compose is to put together.

Ideas to Understand

The writer Bayard Taylor chooses to "paint" an ocean scene with words in his poem "Wind and Sea." One of the ideas he expresses is that

123

the things named *sea* and *wind* have humanlike characteristics. He is using a poetic figure of speech called **personification**, giving human qualities to nonhuman things. He even makes the common nouns *sea* and *wind* into proper nouns by capitalizing the first letters, as if the words are the names of persons. Then, Taylor uses all three kinds of predicates to tell his reader something about the subject *Sea* and the subject *Wind*:

jovial: joyful

> The Sea is a jovial comrade,
> He laughs wherever he goes,
> His merriment shines in dimpling lines

hale: robust, hearty, and well
repose: rest

> That wrinkles his hale repose;
> He lays himself down at the feet of the Sun,
> And laughs all over with glee,

billows: waves

> The broad-backed billows fall faint on the shore,
> In mirth of the mighty Sea!
>
> But the Wind is sad and restless,
> And cursed with an inward pain;

hark: listen

> You may hark as you will, by valley or hill,
> But you hear him still complain.[1]

In the first line, "The Sea is a jovial comrade," *Sea* is the subject and *comrade* is the **predicate nominative** because it renames the subject. In other words, the poet is saying that the sea is a happy companion. Taylor continues with "His merriment shines in dimpling lines," using the ***predicate verb*** *shines* to tell what the subject, *merriment*, meaning joy, is doing. In the first line of the second stanza, "But the Wind is sad and restless," *Wind* is the subject and *sad and restless* is the **predicate adjective** describing a quality of Wind. Did you notice that this predicate adjective is a compound? It contains two adjectives joined with the conjunction *and*.

1. Bayard Taylor, "Wind and Sea," in *Recitations for Assembly and Classroom*, ed. Anna T. Lee O'Neill (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 69. Available at: https://books.google.com/books?id=XVMCAAAAYAAJ.

While the predicate verb *shines* is an intransitive verb that shows action, the predicate nominative *comrade* and the compound predicate adjective *sad and restless* depend on the linking verb *is*. The function of a linking verb is to join the subject with a predicate nominative or a predicate adjective, which are also called subject complements. The most common linking verbs are the Be Verbs: *am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been.* These verbs express being rather than action.

❚❚ Pause for Punctuation

When writing dates, commas are used to separate the day and the year.

◇ **Within a sentence:** Place a comma before and after the year.
Example: Washington crossed the Delaware on December 25, 1776, on a very cold night.

◇ **Within a list:** Place a comma after the day.

  ◆ **Date, year:** December 25, 1776

  ◆ **Date (abbreviated), year:** Dec. 25, 1776

Terms to Remember

Reviewing your terms through song will help you remember these important tools of grammar.

◇ Four Classes of Verbs (1–10)

◇ Direct Object (1–9)

◇ 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[B]

Remember that subjects are always underlined once, and verbs are always underlined twice. A predicate nominative or a predicate adjective is not a verb, even though it is part of the predicate; therefore, it is *not* double underlined.

[B]Because there are three sentences scripted here to help you guide the analysis and model the markings, it's especially important to keep the analysis light and energetic so that students don't lose focus. When you finish the analysis, lead the students in diagramming the sentences.

Chapter 7: Predicate Review

125

```
              S        PV
    Washington crossed  the (Delaware)
                          |adj    ↑do
```

a. First, read the sentence aloud. "Washington crossed the Delaware."

b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."

c. "This sentence is about *Washington*. So, *Washington* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about." (Since *Washington* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)

d. "This sentence tells us that Washington *crossed*." (Double underline the predicate.) "So, *crossed* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Washington*." (Since *crossed* tells us something about Washington, place a capital letter *P* above the predicate.)

e. "It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs." (Since *crossed* shows action, place a capital letter *V* to the right of the letter *P*.)

f. "*Delaware* tells us *what* Washington crossed." (Since *Delaware* tells what Washington crossed, draw a circle around it.)

g. "So, *Delaware* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of an action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* Washington crossed." (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)

h. "*The* tells us *which* Delaware." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective 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.)

```
     lv       S                        PN
    Was  Washington the commander in chief?
                       |adj            ↑
```

a. First, read the sentence aloud. "Was Washington the commander in chief?"

Chapter 7: Predicate Review

b. "This is a sentence, and it is interrogative."

c. "This sentence is about *Washington*. So, *Washington* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about." (Since *Washington* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)

d. "This sentence tells us that Washington *was commander in chief*." (Double underline only the linking verb.) "So, *commander in chief* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Washington*." (Since *commander in chief* tells us something about Washington, place a capital letter *P* above the noun.)

e. "It is a predicate nominative because it renames the subject." (Since *commander in chief* is the same as or renames the subject, place a capital letter *N* to the right of the *P*.)

f. "*Was* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate." (Since *was* joins the subject to the predicate, place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)

g. "*The* tells us *which* commander in chief." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective 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.)

<p style="text-align:center">S   lv   PA
Washington was honorable.</p>

a. First, read the sentence aloud. "Washington was honorable."

b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."

c. "This sentence is about *Washington*. So, *Washington* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about." (Since *Washington* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above the subject.)

d. "This sentence tells us that Washington *was honorable*." (Double underline only the linking verb.) "So, *honorable* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Washington*." (Since *honorable* tells something about Washington, place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.)

Chapter 7: Predicate Review   **127**

e. "*Honorable* is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject." (Since *honorable* is describing Washington, place a capital letter *A* to the right of the letter *P*.)

f. "*Was* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate." (Since *was* joins the subject to the predicate, place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)

Note how the following diagrams of each of these sentences are similar:

◇ The subject rests on the left side of the baseline.

◇ The principal elements rest on the baseline with a line separating the subjects and the predicates.

◇ The verb (whether action verb or linking verb) rests to the right of the separating line.

◇ The modifier slants off the baseline under the word it modifies.

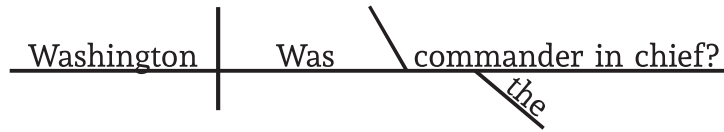◇ The direct object, the predicate nominative, and the predicate adjective all rest to the right of the verb.

Look carefully at how the diagrams are different:

◇ In diagram 1, a vertical line separates the action verb from the direct object, but in diagrams 2 and 3, which include subject complements, the line is slanted toward the left.
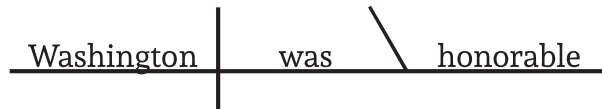
Diagram 1: Subject Predicate Verb direct object

Washington | crossed | Delaware
the
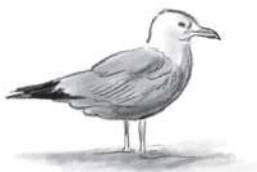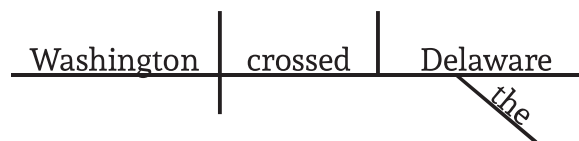
Diagram 2: Subject linking verb Predicate Nominative

Washington | Was \ commander in chief?
the

Diagram 3: Subject linking verb Predicate Adjective

Washington | was \ honorable

> **From the Sideline:** Some grammarians do not include punctuation in diagrams, but we have found that including a question mark in the diagram when the students are first learning how to diagram interrogative sentences helps them visualize the question better. The first word in the sentence is capitalized in the diagram, and the question mark is included after the last word in the sentence.
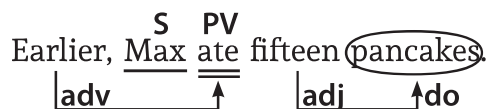
Keep these basic diagrams for the three different predicates in mind. As you learn to diagram more complicated sentences, you'll see that they all start with one of these basic structures.
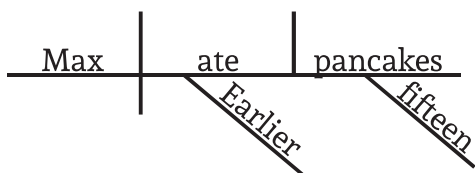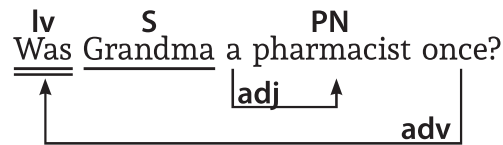
Sentence Bank

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.
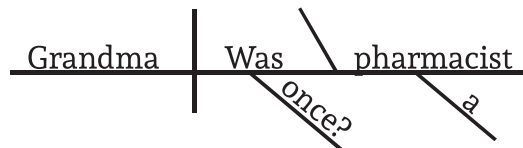
$$\text{Earlier, } \underset{\text{adv}}{\underline{\text{Max}}}^{\text{S}} \overset{\text{PV}}{\underline{\underline{\text{ate}}}} \text{ fifteen } \overset{\text{do}}{\text{(pancakes)}}.$$

Earlier, Max ate fifteen pancakes.
 adv — S PV — adj — do

a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) "Earlier, Max ate fifteen pancakes."

b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."

c. "This sentence is about *Max*." (Underline the subject.) "So, *Max* 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 Max *ate*." (Double underline the predicate.) "So, *ate* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Max*." (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. "*Pancakes* tells us *what* Max ate." (Draw a circle around the word.) "So, *pancakes* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of the action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* Max ate." (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)

f. "*Fifteen* tells us *how many* pancakes." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) "So, *fifteen* 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. "*Earlier* tells us *when* Max ate." (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) "So, *earlier* 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.)
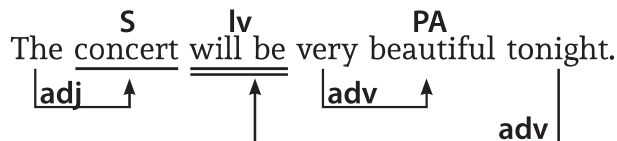
Max | ate | pancakes
         Earlier   fifteen

$$\overset{\text{lv}}{\underline{\underline{\text{Was}}}} \;\; \overset{\text{S}}{\underline{\text{Grandma}}} \;\; \text{a} \; \overset{\text{PN}}{\text{pharmacist}} \; \text{once?}$$

adj

adv

a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) "Was Grandma a pharmacist once?"

b. "This is a sentence, and it is interrogative."

c. "This sentence is about *Grandma*." (Underline the subject.) "So, *Grandma* 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 Grandma *was pharmacist*." (Double underline only the linking verb.) "So, *pharmacist* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *Grandma*." (Place a capital letter *P* above the noun.) "It is a predicate nominative because it renames the subject." (Place a capital letter *N* to the right of the *P*.) "*Was* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate." (Place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)

e. "*Once* tells us *when* Grandma was." (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) "So, *once* 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. "*A* tells us *how many* pharmacists." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) "So, *a* 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.)

Grandma | Was \ pharmacist
once?   a

$$\overset{\text{S}}{\text{The }\underline{\text{concert}}}\;\overset{\text{lv}}{\underline{\underline{\text{will be}}}}\;\text{very }\overset{\text{PA}}{\text{beautiful}}\text{ tonight.}$$

The concert will be very beautiful tonight.

a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) "The concert will be very beautiful tonight."

b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."

c. "This sentence is about *concert*." (Underline the subject.) "So, *concert* 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 concert *will be beautiful*." (Double underline the linking verbs.) "So, *beautiful* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *concert*." (Place a capital letter *P* above the adjective.) "It is a predicate adjective because it tells a quality of the subject." (Place the 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.)

e. "*Tonight* tells us *when* the concert will be." (Draw the modifying line from the adverb to the word it modifies.) "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.)

f. "*Very* tells us *how* beautiful the concert will be." (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.)

g. "*The* tells us *which* concert." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective 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.)

concert | will be \ beautiful
  The   tonight   very
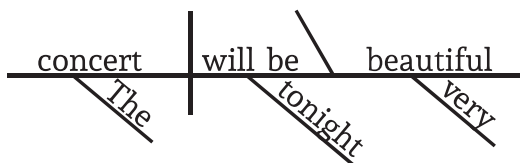
S   lv   PN
The two <u>workers</u> <u>were</u> fine well-diggers.
| adj | adj ↑ | adj   ↑

a. (First, read the sentence aloud.) "The two workers were fine well-diggers."

b. "This is a sentence, and it is declarative."

c. "This sentence is about *workers*." (Underline the subject.) "So, *workers* 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 workers *were well-diggers*." (Double underline only the linking verb.) "So, *well-diggers* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *workers*." (Place a capital letter *P* above the noun.) "It is a predicate nominative because it renames the subject." (Place a capital letter *N* to the right of the *P*.) "*Were* is the linking verb because it joins the subject to the predicate." (Place the lowercase letters *lv* above the linking verb.)

e. "*Fine* tells us *what kind* of well-diggers." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) "So, *fine* 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.)

f. "*Two* tells us *how many* workers." (Draw the modifying line from the adjective to the word it modifies.) "So, *two* 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* workers." (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.)

workers | were \ well-diggers
The *two*   *fine*