

LESSON 12: TRANSITIVE ACTIVE VERBS & DIRECT OBJECTS

Intransitive Complete Verbs

Up until now, all of the sentences that you have diagrammed have had the same kind of verb.

Mark ran. Billy smiled. Mrs. O'Brien laughed.

The technical name for these kinds of verbs is *intransitive complete*. *In-* is a Latin prefix that means *not*, (Examples: *inactive*, *incomplete*, *intolerant*, *inanimate*) and *trans* refers to whether the verb *transfers* its action. It's Latin for *across*.

Intransitive complete verbs are action verbs that don't transfer their action to anything. They are complete without having to transfer their action. You are now a pro at diagramming these!

Transitive Active Verbs

It's time to learn about *transitive active* verbs. These are action verbs that *transfer* action to someone or something called a direct object.

When you look at these examples, notice how the verb transfers its action to **someone** or **something**.

Joe ran a **marathon**. Julie baked **cookies**. David kicked **Michelle**.

The someone or something that receives the action in transitive active verbs is called the *direct object*.

Transitive active verbs transfer their action to a receiver.

The receiver of the action is called the **direct object**.

Direct objects are nouns and pronouns that receive the action of transitive active verbs.

This is another noun job! Now, you've learned that nouns and pronouns can be subjects, objects of the preposition, and direct objects.

There are two questions that will help you find direct objects.

The direct object questions are *What?* and *Whom?*

What/Whom did (the) subject verb ?

What did Joe run?

What did Julie bake?

Whom did David kick?

The answers to this question will be the direct objects.

If a sentence has no answer to this question, the verb is not transitive active and it has no direct object.

<i>Billy kicked the ball.</i>		
<i>What</i> did Billy kick?	Billy kicked the BALL.	BALL = direct object

<i>The boy called the girl.</i>		
<i>Whom</i> did the boy call?	The boy called the GIRL.	GIRL = direct object

<i>The girl ran away.</i>		
<i>What</i> did the girl run?	Wait! She didn't run anything or anyone!	No direct object.
<i>Whom</i> did the girl run?	<i>Away</i> is an adverb telling us <i>where</i> she ran.	In this sentence, <i>ran</i> is an intransitive complete verb.

Notice that *away* in the sentence above comes immediately after the verb. This is also where many direct objects come.

Don't be a robot!

Use your mind to determine whether *away* is an adverb (Does it tell us *where*, *when*, *why*, or *how*?) or a direct object (Does it tell us *what* or *whom*?).

Always THINK when you are diagramming and be sure you have a reason WHY you diagram the words where you diagram them. Don't rely on a pattern.

Direct Objects & Prepositional Phrases

You know that subjects will never be in prepositional phrases, so it might not come as a surprise to learn that direct objects will also never be in prepositional phrases.

Direct objects will never be in prepositional phrases.

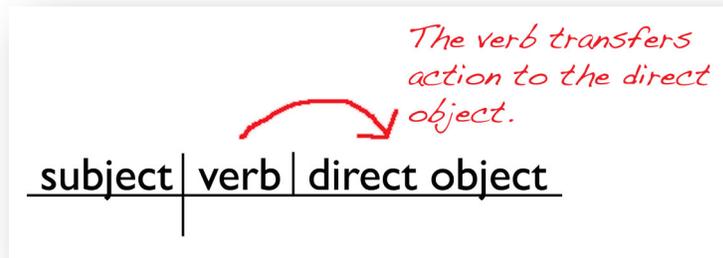
If you identify and cross out the prepositional phrases in sentences, you'll be able to find the subject and direct object (if there is one) more easily.

<i>The bird in the garden pecked the tree with its beak.</i>		
<i>The bird in the garden pecked the tree with its beak.</i>		
<i>What</i> did the bird peck?	The bird pecked the TREE.	TREE = direct object

Diagramming Transitive Active Verbs & Direct Objects

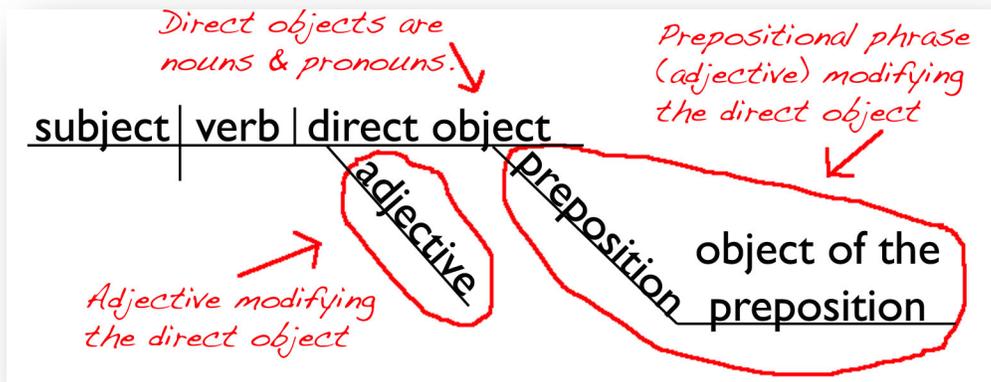
Diagram direct objects on the same line as the subject and the verb.

Extend the line past the verb and place a vertical line between the verb and the direct object.



Direct objects are nouns and pronouns. Do you know what that means?

That means that they can be modified by adjectives or adjectival prepositional phrases.



Lesson 12 Sentence Diagramming Exercises

1. I like cookies!

Key	
	sentence - statement
I	
	verb (transitive active)
	direct object (noun) (answers <i>What do you like?</i>)

2. The kids in my classroom signed a birthday card for Kristin.

Key	
<i>The kids in my classroom signed a birthday card for Kristin.</i>	sentence - statement
	subject (noun)
<i>signed</i>	
	direct object (noun) (answers <i>What did the kids sign?</i>)
<i>The</i>	
<i>in my classroom</i>	
<i>in</i>	
<i>classroom</i>	
<i>my</i>	
<i>a, birthday</i>	
<i>for Kristin</i>	
<i>for</i>	
<i>Kristin</i>	

3. The brown cat scratched the oak tree.

Key	
<i>The brown cat scratched the oak tree.</i>	
	subject (noun)
	verb (transitive active)
	direct object (noun) (answers <i>What did the cat scratch?</i>)
<i>The, brown</i>	
<i>the, oak</i>	

4. The kids on the soccer team won the game.

Key	
<i>The kids on the soccer team won the game.</i>	sentence – statement
	subject (noun)
	verb (transitive active)
<i>game</i>	
<i>The</i>	
<i>on the soccer team</i>	
<i>on</i>	
<i>team</i>	
<i>the, soccer</i>	
<i>the</i>	

5. We happily watched the movie.

Key	
<i>We happily watched the movie.</i>	
<i>We</i>	
<i>watched</i>	
<i>movie</i>	
<i>happily</i>	
<i>the</i>	

Extra Practice: Diagramming Transitive Active Verbs

Directions: Diagram the following sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

1. My very energetic mother just cooked nine pancakes and seven sausages.
2. I will buy the dress with six red buttons.
3. Ugh, I must clean the bathroom.
4. Mary had a little lamb.
5. That little bird in the tree sang a song for me.
6. Awesome! We won the gold medal.
7. Five energetic dancers won the dance competition.
8. He never accurately answers the questions.