

Prepositional Phrases

Reading and Discussion

Prepositions are used to show how nouns and pronouns relate to other words in a sentence. They act as a word bridge. For example:

- Susan found the dollhouse **in** the attic.

The word **in** is a preposition. It tells us **where** Susan found the dollhouse. Prepositions can tell us four things:

1. **location**
2. **direction**
3. **time**
4. **relationship**

In the sentence about Susan, the preposition **in** tells us the location.

When we use a preposition, we often use it in a **prepositional phrase**. This is a group of words that begins with a preposition, and ends with a noun or pronoun. The noun or pronoun at the end of the phrase is called the **object of the preposition**. Every preposition has an object, which is often the word right next to it. For example:

- Tom and John like to go biking **with** Clark.

The word **with** is the preposition. **Clark** is the object of the preposition. Sometimes the object of the preposition is separated from the preposition by a few other words.

- We found the kittens **under** the covered bridge.

The word **under** is the preposition, and **bridge** is the object of the preposition. When a prepositional phrase ends with a pronoun, remember to use the object form of the pronoun. The object pronouns are: **me, you, him, her, it, us, you, them**.

- Why don't we ride our bikes **with** them?

In this sentence, **with** is the preposition, and **them** is the object of the preposition.

Prepositional phrases may be used as **adjectives**. These are called **adjective phrases**.

- The lunchroom **at my school** has many tables.

The phrase **at my school** is a prepositional phrase that modifies the noun **lunchroom**.

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- The cake **in the green box** was left at home.

The phrase **in the green box** is a prepositional phrase that modifies the noun **cake**.
Prepositional phrases may also be used as adverbs. These are called **adverb phrases**.

- Janice found her book **under the table**.

The phrase **under the table** is a prepositional phrase that modifies the verb **found**.
Where did she find the book? Under the table.

- We walked **through the storm** to get to Grandma's.

The phrase **through the storm** is a prepositional phrase that modifies the verb **walked**.
Where did we walk? Through the storm.

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Activities

Activity A: Let's Review

1. A _____ is a group of two or more words that begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun.
2. The noun or pronoun at the end of a prepositional phrase is called the _____ of the preposition.
3. Does every preposition have an object? _____
4. Are objects always right next to the preposition? _____
5. Prepositional phrases that modify a noun are called _____
6. Prepositional phrases that modify a verb are called _____
7. Prepositional phrases that end with a pronoun should end with a _____ pronoun.
8. How many words make up a prepositional phrase? _____

Activity B: Underline the prepositional phrases in the following sentences. If you aren't sure which word is a preposition, find a list of common prepositions to use as a guide.

1. Susan sailed the canoe past the willows.
2. We rode in the big yellow camp bus.
3. Hiking through the woods is our favorite activity.
4. Mark swims in the lake.
5. One day, Sam dove over the raft.
6. The boys camp down by the shore.
7. Yesterday we all went toward the caves.
8. During a thunderstorm, the caves kept us dry and warm.
9. John found out it's hard to row against the current.
10. I stayed at camp through the summer.

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Activity C: Let's Create.

1. Write a sentence using an **adjective phrase**. Make sure your phrase modifies or describes a noun.

2. Write a sentence using an **adverb phrase**. Make sure your phrase modifies or describes a verb.

3. Write a sentence using any prepositional phrase of your choice.

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Answer Key

Activity A

1. A prepositional phrase is a group of two or more words that begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun
2. The noun or pronoun at the end of a prepositional phrase is called the object of the preposition.
3. Does every preposition have an object? Yes
4. Are objects always right next to the preposition? No
5. Prepositional phrases that modify a noun are called Adjective phrases
6. Prepositional phrases that modify a verb are called Adverb phrases
7. Prepositional phrases that end with a pronoun should end with an object pronoun.
8. How many words make up a prepositional phrase? A group of two or more words.

Activity B

1. Susan sailed the canoe past the willows.
2. We rode in the big yellow camp bus.
3. Hiking through the woods is our favorite activity.
4. Mark swims in the lake.
5. One day, Sam dove over the raft.
6. The boys camp down by the shore.
7. Yesterday we all went toward the caves.
8. During a thunderstorm, the caves kept us dry and warm.
9. John found out it's hard to row against the current.
10. I stayed at camp through the summer.

Activity C

1. Answers will vary.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary.