

What Kind of Phrase? Prepositional Phrases Again

Reading and Discussion

When we use a preposition, we often have to use a **prepositional phrase**. This is a group of two or more words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. This noun or pronoun is called the **object** of the preposition.

Every preposition must have an object. A prepositional phrase is like a word train. The preposition is the engine, the object of the preposition is the caboose, and all the words in between are passenger cars. Some word trains have only the engine and the caboose.

Prepositional phrases are often used like **adjectives** and **adverbs**. They describe things.

When prepositional phrases are used as adjectives, they describe or modify a noun. These phrases are called **adjective phrases**. For example:

- The book in the green cover is mine.

In the green cover is an adjective phrase. It describes or modifies the noun **book**.

Prepositional phrases may also be used as **adverbs** to modify a verb. These are called **adverb phrases**. For example:

- Marcus left before the storm.

Before the storm is an adverb phrase. It describes or modifies the verb **left**.

Sometimes, words used as prepositions in one sentence can be used as adverbs or conjunctions in another. If the word modifies a **verb**, it is an **adverb**. If it begins a **prepositional phrase**, the phrase is an **adverb phrase**. Look at the word's function in the sentence as a clue to its use. Adverb or adverb phrase? Let's look at some examples.

- Marcus walked **inside**.

Is **inside** an adverb or a preposition? It is used to modify the verb **walked** so it is an **adverb**. Walked where? Walked **inside**. Why is it not a preposition? Remember the rule: every preposition **must have** an object. Does **inside** have an **object**? No.

- Marcus walked **inside** the building.

Is **inside** a preposition in this sentence? Yes. It has an object - **building**.

Name _____

Date _____

Activities

Activity A: In the following sentences, the prepositional phrase has already been underlined. Read each sentence and answer this question -adjective or adverb phrase? If the underlined phrase is an adjective phrase, put an **AJ** on the blank line. If the underlined phrase is an adverb phrase, put an **AV** on the blank line.

1. _____ Claire left the skates outside the door.
2. _____ My brother's science book with the yellow cover is missing.
3. _____ The clock fell off the wall during an earthquake.
4. _____ We had a picnic near the shore last week.
5. _____ The sandwiches in the refrigerator are Sam's.
6. _____ Charles likes movies about sports.

Activity B: Adverb or adverb phrase? In each sentence below, a word has been underlined. If the word is an adverb, write **A** on the blank line. If the word begins an adverb phrase, write **AP** on the blank line.

1. _____ The cat jumped down.
2. _____ The cat jumped down the hole.
3. _____ St. Louis River is near my home.
4. _____ St. Louis River is near.
5. _____ Jean ran toward the swings.
6. _____ Clark ran underneath.
7. _____ Ryan rode up the elevator.

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Key

Activity A

1. AV Claire left the skates outside the door.
2. AJ My brother's science book with the yellow cover is missing.
3. AV The clock fell off the wall during an earthquake.
4. AV We had a picnic near the shore last week.
5. AJ The sandwiches in the refrigerator are Sam's.
6. AJ Charles likes movies about sports.

Activity B

1. A The cat jumped down.
2. AP The cat jumped down the hole.
3. AP St. Louis River is near my home.
4. A St. Louis River is near.
5. AP Jean ran toward the swings.
6. A Clark ran underneath.
7. AP Ryan rode up the elevator.