

## Recognizing Complements

Every sentence has a subject and a verb. Many sentences have other words that complete the meaning of the verb. These words are called complements.

**4a.** A **complement** is a word or word group that completes the meaning of a verb.

A complement may be a noun, a pronoun, or an adjective.

**S V V C**  
**EXAMPLES** I will call **Tom** tomorrow. [The noun *Tom* completes the meaning of the verb *will call*.]

**V S V C C**  
 Did you give **Laura some** of those old records? [The noun *Laura* and the pronoun *some* complete the meaning of the verb *Did give*.]

**S V C**  
 That song is **upbeat**. [The adjective *upbeat* completes the meaning of the verb *is*.]

**S V C**  
 Uncle Pablo is an **architect**. [The noun *architect* completes the meaning of the verb *is*.]

**EXERCISE A** Draw an arrow from the underlined complement to the verb whose meaning it completes.

**Example 1.** The television's picture became fuzzy and dark. [The adjectives *fuzzy* and *dark* complete the meaning of the verb *became*.]

1. Jim received a postcard from a friend in Colorado. [Which verb does the complement complete the meaning of?]
2. Send me a copy of the photograph.
3. Yes, those strategy games can seem very complex.
4. Paula is my sister, Jim.
5. May I offer you a glass of water?

When you are looking for complements, it helps to know where *not* to look.

- An adverb is never a complement. As you may remember, an adverb is a word that describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Many adverbs end in *-ly*.

**ADVERB** Clara speaks **softly**. [The adverb *softly* describes the verb *speaks* by telling how Clara speaks.]

**COMPLEMENT** Clara speaks **French**. [The complement *French* completes the meaning of the verb *speaks*. It tells what Clara speaks.]

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- A complement is never in a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or a pronoun that is the object of the preposition. Common prepositions include *at, for, from, in, to, of, on, near,* and *under*.

**PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE** Mario is walking **on the sidewalk**. [The prepositional phrase *on the sidewalk* tells *where* Mario is walking.]

**COMPLEMENT** Mario is sweeping the **sidewalk**. [The complement *sidewalk* tells *what* Mario is sweeping.]

**EXERCISE B** Underline the complement in each of the following sentences. Hint: You may first want to cross out adverbs and prepositional phrases in each sentence. Some sentences have more than one complement.

- Examples**
1. The movie gave me a new perspective on city life. [The complements *me* and *perspective* complete the meaning of the verb *gave*. *Life* is in a prepositional phrase, so it cannot be a complement.]
  2. This shirt fits Sandra perfectly. [The complement *Sandra* completes the meaning of the verb *fits*. *Perfectly* is an adverb, so it cannot be a complement.]
6. Then I made lunch for the whole family. [Which word completes the meaning of the verb *made*?]
  7. Be careful with those boxes. [Which word completes the meaning of the verb *Be*?]
  8. Samuel reads his book quietly before class.
  9. The baby certainly looks happy and healthy.
  10. Tom will make a good impression at the competition.
  11. My mother knows something about astronomy.
  12. Please show the blueprints and other plans to Mr. Sanchez.
  13. We admired the stars in the night sky.
  14. Learn these Latin roots and Greek roots by Monday.
  15. Felicia is practicing the guitar in her room.

# Objects of Verbs: Direct Objects, Indirect Objects

## Direct Objects

- 4b.** A **direct object** is a noun, pronoun, or word group that tells who or what receives the action of the verb.

A direct object answers the question *Whom?* or *What?* after the verb.

**EXAMPLES**      **V**      **V**      **DO**  
 Have you painted **anything** recently? [The pronoun *anything* receives the action of the verb *Have painted* and answers the question *Have you painted what?*]

**V**      **DO**  
 My class painted **Smallville Middle School** last year. [The noun *Smallville Middle School* receives the action of the verb *painted* and answers the question *What did my class paint?*]

**V**      **DO**      **DO**  
 I painted my **room** and my **door** during the summer. [The nouns *room* and *door* receive the action of the verb *painted* and answer the question *What did I paint?*]

**EXERCISE A** Underline the direct object or objects in each of the following sentences.

**Example 1.** The city is paving Main Street and Central Avenue again! [The nouns *Main Street* and *Central Avenue* receive the action of the verb *is paving* and answer the question *What is the city paving?*]

1. We decorated the patio with pottery. [Which word receives the action of the verb *decorated*?]
2. Does the red tile match the pottery?
3. They recently built a fountain in the center of the garden.
4. Goldfish eagerly ate insects and bits of food on the surface.
5. Has a photographer taken pictures of the pool and garden?

## Indirect Objects

- 4c.** An **indirect object** is a noun, pronoun, or a word group that sometimes appears in sentences containing direct objects.

An indirect object answers the question *To whom?* or *To what?* or *For whom?* or *For what?* after the verb.

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**V IO IO DO**  
**EXAMPLES** Give **Sam** and **Mr. Wilson** copies of the letter. [The nouns *Sam* and *Mr. Wilson* answer the question *To whom?*]

*Wilson* answer the question *To whom?*]

**V IO DO**  
 Give the **patio** a good cleaning. [The noun *patio* answers the question *To what?*]

**NOTE** An indirect object is never in a prepositional phrase. A noun or pronoun that follows *to* or *for* is the object of the preposition, not an indirect object.

**EXAMPLE** Jane sent a postcard to her family. [*To her family* is a prepositional phrase. *Family* is the object of the preposition *to*, not the indirect object of the verb.]

**EXERCISE B** Draw one line under the indirect object or objects in each of the following sentences.

- Example 1.** Raul asked Teresa and me a question about the assignment. [The noun *Teresa* and the pronoun *me* answer the question *To whom?* after the verb and are the indirect objects.]
- Ruby wrote her aunt and uncle a thank-you note. [Which word or words answer the question *To whom?* after the verb?]
  - Mom knit the baby a blue blanket.
  - Did the judge give Julio and Tina their blue ribbons?
  - Send Grandpa his birthday present on Monday.
  - Reuben handed her a set of chopsticks.

**EXERCISE C** Draw one line under the direct object in each of the following sentences. Draw two lines under the indirect objects.

- Example 1.** My grandmother promised my brother and me her copy of that book. [*Copy* receives the action of the verb and is the direct object. *Brother* and *me* answer the question *To whom?* after the verb and are the indirect objects.]
- No book can match a real garden. [Which word receives the action of the verb *can match*?]
  - My grandmother made me a wreath of flowers and vines.
  - I hung my wreath on my bedroom door at home.
  - Grandmother's garden attracts many visitors.
  - We are building Grandmother's garden a bench.

## Predicate Nominatives

- 4e.** A **predicate nominative** is a word or word group that is in the predicate and that identifies the subject or refers to it.

A predicate nominative can be a noun, a pronoun, or a word group acting as a noun. A predicate nominative appears only in a sentence that has a linking verb and completes the meaning of a linking verb. Some common linking verbs include *is*, *was*, *will be*, *could have been*, and *has been*.

	S	V		PN	
<b>EXAMPLES</b>			This is our only	<b>copy</b>	of the book. [The noun <i>copy</i> identifies the subject <i>This</i> .]
	V		S	PN	
			Wasn't the author	<b>he?</b>	[The pronoun <i>he</i> identifies the subject <i>author</i> .]
		S	V	PN	
			My mother's favorite song is	<b>"Isn't This a Lovely Day?"</b>	[The word group <i>"Isn't This a Lovely Day?"</i> identifies the subject <i>song</i> .]

**TIP** To find the predicate nominative in a question, turn the question into a statement.

<b>QUESTION</b>	Are the insects in this display	moths?
	S	V PN
<b>STATEMENT</b>	The insects in this display are	moths. [The word order of the statement makes it easier to tell that <i>insects</i> is the subject and that <i>moths</i> is the predicate nominative.]

**EXERCISE A** Underline each predicate nominative in the following sentences.

- Examples**
1. Your answer should have been Mark Twain. [The proper noun *Mark Twain* identifies the subject *answer*.]
  2. Is the new coach she? [The pronoun *she* identifies the subject *coach*.]
1. In Ireland, the longest river is the River Shannon. [Which word group identifies the subject?]
  2. A huge model train is my grandfather's hobby. [Which word identifies the subject?]
  3. One of the main reasons for the move was the need for more space.
  4. Isn't that song "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"?
  5. You cannot be everything to everyone.
  6. One of Aaron Copland's most famous musical works is *Appalachian Spring*.
  7. The only one left was he.
  8. This five should have been a two.
  9. These are some of the maps of that time.
  10. Shanghai is an industrial center in China.

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Predicate nominatives may be compound. In other words, a sentence may have more than one predicate nominative.

	<b>S</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>PN</b>	<b>PN</b>
<b>EXAMPLE</b>	Electronics	have become	important <b>tools</b>	and an essential <b>part</b> of modern
			life. [Both <i>tools</i> and <i>part</i> identify the subject <i>Electronics</i> . Together, <i>tools</i> and	<i>part</i> make up the compound predicate nominative.]

**EXERCISE B** Underline each predicate nominative in the following sentences. Some sentences have more than one predicate nominative.

**Examples** 1. My best friends are Jackie Myers and Ella Hernandez. [The proper nouns *Jackie Myers* and *Ella Hernandez* identify the subject *friends*. They make up the compound predicate nominative.]

2. Will the actors in the play be he and Mary? [The pronoun *he* and the proper noun *Mary* identify the subject *actors*. They make up the compound predicate nominative.]

11. The best store at the mall is probably Trivial Trinkets or The Mystery Tour. [Which word groups identify the subject?]
12. Even after thirty years, he was still a detective and consultant. [Which words identify the subject?]
13. Dinner will be the leftovers from last night.
14. The only tools necessary are a half-inch wrench and a flat-head screwdriver.
15. Her main interests are horses, books, and art.
16. Maria Montessori was a doctor and an innovative educator.
17. Aunt Donna is a world traveler but also a devoted Californian.
18. This is a painting by Pablo Picasso.
19. Wasn't his father a surgeon?
20. The chairperson will be Eric Dunn, Amber Johnson, you, or I.

## Predicate Adjectives

**4f.** A **predicate adjective** is an adjective that is in the predicate and that describes the subject.

Like a predicate nominative, a predicate adjective completes the meaning of a linking verb. Some common linking verbs include *is, are, seem, appear, feel, sound,* and *smell*.

**S V PA**

**EXAMPLES** Trees grow **tall** in this climate. [The adjective *tall* completes the meaning of the linking verb *grow* and describes the subject *Trees*. Therefore, *tall* is a predicate adjective.]

**V S PA**

Aren't the vegetables **beautiful** today? [The adjective *beautiful* completes the meaning of the linking verb *Are* and describes the subject *vegetables*. Therefore, *beautiful* is a predicate adjective.]

**PA S V**

How **funny** that story was! [The adjective *funny* completes the meaning of the linking verb *was* and describes the subject *story*. Therefore, *funny* is a predicate adjective.]

**EXERCISE A** Underline each predicate adjective in the following sentences.

**Examples** 1. Be careful! [The subject is understood to be *you*. The adjective *careful* completes the meaning of the linking verb *Be* and describes the subject *you*. Therefore, *careful* is a predicate adjective.]

2. Wasn't the explorer's search for a new land difficult? [The adjective *difficult* completes the meaning of the linking verb *Was* and describes the subject *search*. Therefore, *difficult* is a predicate adjective.]

- Your grasp of French is excellent for your age. [Which word completes the meaning of the linking verb *is* and describes the subject?]
- Their home was not accessible from the highway. [Which word completes the meaning of the linking verb *was* and describes the subject?]
- That stone is very shiny.
- Does something smell sweet to you?
- In a breeze, the wind chimes sound cheerful.
- The castle on stage appeared real in the soft light.
- Stay calm and remain in your seats.
- I have not always been so tall.

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9. How happy we were on that first sunny day of spring!
10. This beach looks good to me.

Predicate adjectives may be compound. In other words, a sentence may have more than one predicate adjective.

**S      V      PA              PA**

**EXAMPLE** The trees were **grand** and **majestic**. [The adjectives *grand* and *majestic* complete the meaning of the linking verb *were* and describe the subject *trees*. Together, *grand* and *majestic* make up the compound predicate adjective.]

**EXERCISE B** Underline the predicate adjective in each of the following sentences. A sentence may have more than one predicate adjective.

**Examples** 1. Is the legend of Icarus Greek or Roman? [The adjectives *Greek* and *Roman* complete the meaning of the linking verb *Is* and describe the subject *legend*. Together, *Greek* and *Roman* make up the compound predicate adjective.]

2. The fruit on the peach tree was ripe and heavy. [The adjectives *ripe* and *heavy* complete the meaning of the linking verb *was* and describe the subject *fruit*. Together, *ripe* and *heavy* make up the compound predicate adjective.]

11. The car was fast but unreliable. [Which words complete the meaning of the linking verb and describe the subject?]
12. Aren't those calculators delicate and expensive? [Which words complete the meaning of the linking verb and describe the subject?]
13. The boxes were practically full.
14. The work was hard but necessary.
15. Does their accent sound Spanish or Portuguese to you?
16. Our dog is gentle and very friendly.
17. Your request sounds reasonable and interesting.
18. The students were happy about the field trip.
19. Our burros had been steady and swift on the canyon trail.
20. How quick and easy this math problem was!