

Lesson 177

Parts of the Sentence - Prepositional Phrases

A **preposition** is a word that begins a **prepositional phrase** and shows the relationship between its object and another word in the sentence. A **preposition** must always have an object. A **prepositional phrase** starts with a **preposition**, ends with an **object**, and may have **modifiers** between the preposition and the object of the preposition.

Here is a list of common words that can be used as prepositions: *about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, but (when it means except), by, concerning, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, out, outside, over, past, since, through, to, toward, under, until, up, upon, with, within, and without.*

These words can be used as other parts of speech, depending on how the word is used in a particular sentence. Many of the common words used as prepositions can be used as **adverbs**. Words are prepositions if they have an object to complete them.

To decide if the word in question is a preposition, say the **preposition** followed by *whom* or *what*. If a **noun** or a **pronoun** answers the question, the word is a **preposition**. If there is no noun or pronoun to complete the phrase, the word is not a **preposition**.

Example: The boy stood *up* and ran *down* the street. *Up* what? There is no *object*; therefore *up* is not a preposition. *Down* what? *Street* answers the question; therefore, *down* is a preposition. **Down the street** is the prepositional phrase starting with the preposition *down* and ending with the object *street* with a modifier *the* in between.

A **prepositional phrase** may be used as an **adjective** telling *which* or *what kind* and modifying a **noun** or **pronoun**. An **adjective prepositional phrase** will come right after the noun or pronoun that it modifies. If there are two **adjective prepositional phrases** together, one will follow the other. Only **adjective prepositional phrases** modify the **object** of the **preposition** in another prepositional phrase.

Instructions: Pick out the **adjective prepositional phrases** in these sentences and tell what they modify.

1. The book on the table in the English classroom is Barbara's book.

2. The girl in the neighboring house plays the flute every night.

3. Large blocks of the hardest granite formed the walls of the new building.

4. The roads of ancient Rome connected the cities of the empire.

5. I know that man in the gray suit and the suede shoes.