



Sentence Parts

What are the Parts of the Sentence?

Within a sentence, there are three main parts that make up a sentence: the subject, the verb, and the complement.

1. **Subject.** The subject is either a noun or pronoun and answers the question "Who?" or "What?" before the verb. The subject performs action, receives action, or is in the state of being.

Ex: Jamie plays soccer.

2. **Verb.** The verb indicates whether the subject performs action, receives action or is in a state of being. The verb may include helping words called auxiliaries.

Ex: The bus **stopped** for us.

(subject *performs action.*)

Ex: Diane **was paid** for her car.

(subject *receives action.*)

Ex: The grocery list **is** on the table.

(subject is in the *state of being.*)

Note: Any form of the verb *be* indicates the state of being when used alone (*is, am are, was, were*).

Note: The verb usually comes after the subject, but in some cases it precedes the subject. This occurs when a question is asked or when a sentence begins with *there* or *where*.

3. **Complement.** Many sentences also contain a complement, which completes the meaning of the sentence and answers the questions "What?" or "Whom?" after the verb.

Ex: The fire has destroyed the **house**.
(what?)

Ex: The new vice president is **Michael Gates**.
(whom?)

There are Three Types of Complements: the Direct Object, the Predicate Nominative, and the Predicate Adjective.

- A **direct object** is a noun or pronoun that completes the meaning of the sentence and answers "Whom?" or "What?" after the verb. It receives the action of the verb; it never refers back to the subject. It can only occur when the verb indicates action.

Ex: Jeremy hit the **ball**.
(what?)

- A **predicate nominative** is a noun or pronoun that completes the meaning of a sentence and answers "Whom?" or "What?" after the verb. It refers back to and renames the subject; it does not receive the action of the verb. It can only occur when the verb indicates state of being.

Ex: Jeremy is my **teacher**.
(who?) (what?)

- A **predicate adjective** completes the meaning of a sentence and answers "What?" after the verb. It refers back to and describes the subject; it does not receive the action of the verb. It can only occur when the verb indicates state of being.

Ex: Jeremy is **smart**.
(what?)

Remember: Within a sentence, there are three main parts that make up a sentence: the subject, the verb, and the complement.