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## **CHAPTER 6**

# **PREPOSITIONS**

Prepositions answer the question "which one?", "what kind?", "how much?", or "how many?" about a noun. A preposition is a helper word for nouns, explaining which noun is being written about in a sentence.

Common prepositions include:

- on
- in
- from
- to
- at

For example, in these sentences, the prepositions are *emphasized*:

Each Linux user is mapped *to* an SELinux user *by* an SELinux policy.

After configuring the guest NUMA node topology, specify the huge page size and the guest NUMA nodeset *in* the <memoryBacking> element *in* the guest XML.

A prepositional phrase contains the object that relates to the noun being helped by the preposition. In the following examples, the prepositional phrases are in brackets ( [ and ] ):

Each Linux user is mapped [to an SELinux user] [by an SELinux policy].

After configuring the guest NUMA node topology, specify the huge page size and the guest NUMA nodeset [*in* the <memoryBacking> element] [*in* the guest XML].

## Identifying Prepositional Phrases

To find a prepositional phrase, locate the preposition and then ask "what?". For example:

Each Linux user is mapped *to* what?

Each Linux user is mapped *to* an SELinux user *by* what?

Each Linux user is mapped *to* an SELinux user *by* an SELinux policy.

# Choosing the Correct Preposition

In English, each preposition has a specific meaning. Using the wrong preposition confuses a reader, or even changes the meaning of a sentence. Choosing the right one to lead your prepositional phrase is important.

## on

Literally, "on top of", as when a cat sits on a mat. In tech writing, "on" is used to express an action performed at a computer you have logged in to, and some GUI actions. For example:

Click the icon on the desktop.

Run the setup script on the workstation virtual machine.

## in

Literally, "inside", as when a cat sits inside of a box, or when a number is found in a mathematical set. In tech writing, "in" is used to express an action performed to a non-binary file, or to show membership to a group or system or network or framework. For example:

Click the icon in the upper-right corner of the desktop.

Log in to the workstation virtual machine.

The user managing the foo service must be in the wheel group.

## to

Literally, "toward", as when a cat walks to its food. The word "to" implies that you are moving in the direction of something not yet reached. For example:

Drag the file to the trash icon.

Upload the file to the server.

## from

Literally, "away", as when a cat comes indoors from the garden. The word "from" implies that you have been in one place, and are now leaving that place behind. For example:

If you do not want to delete the file, move the file icon from the trash.

Download the file from the server so you can edit it.

## Exercise

Identify the prepositions and prepositional phrases, if they exist, in each sentence:

1. The configuration file is installed in the **/etc** directory.
2. Set the required parameters in the fields under the **Performance options** panel.
3. The **foo** command instructs the kernel to pipe the core dump to the **abrt-hook-ccpp** program.
4. In Red Hat Enterprise Linux 7, the **systemctl** utility replaces a number of power management commands used in previous versions of the Red Hat Enterprise Linux system.
5. Log in to the workstation virtual machine.