

PARSING

How to **really know** what the author was saying.
(or 'Why does my teacher want me to cry?')

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for University of the People

PARSING

A small word on Parsing.

I won't lie. Parsing is hard. Period. There is no "easy method" or "trick" I can show you. It is hard work.

It has made students cry.

It is also one of the most valuable tools you can pick up for your tool box.

Yes, I chose the Horror week to show you parsing for a reason...

1. Just what do you mean by 'Parsing'?
2. How do I start parsing?
3. Okay, but why Poetry?!
4. Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)
5. No, really. How can something this hard be possible?!
6. Are you **SURE** you aren't just trying to make me cry? (Sample 2)
7. Finally! A sample that isn't poetry!
8. One for the road.

PARSING

What is Parsing?

This was a method I didn't learn until I was well into my studies. It is a bit hard to pick up, but, with practice, it can be learned.

Parsing is breaking down the sentences an author uses so that you know what he or she means. You will break the work down into basic blocks (Subject, Object, Verb) and then connect them to the deeper meaning.

In theory, this is quite easy.

1. Just what do you mean by 'Parsing'?
2. How do I start parsing?
3. Okay, but why Poetry?!
4. Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)
5. No, really. How can something this hard be possible?!
6. Are you **SURE** you aren't just trying to make me cry? (Sample 2)
7. One for the road.

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Starting is easy. Let's take this small sentence: 'Jim threw the ball.'

What is the Subject of this sentence?

What is the Object?

What is the Verb?

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Starting is easy. Let's take this small sentence: 'Jim threw the ball.'

What is the Subject of this sentence? Jim is the Subject. JIM is doing something to something.

What is the Object?

What is the Verb?

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Starting is easy. Let's take this small sentence: 'Jim threw the ball.'

What is the Subject of this sentence? Jim is the Subject. JIM is doing something to something.

What is the Object? The Ball is the Object. It is having something done to it.

What is the Verb?

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Starting is easy. Let's take this small sentence: 'Jim threw the ball.'

What is the Subject of this sentence? Jim is the Subject. JIM is doing something to something.

What is the Object? The Ball is the Object. It is having something done to it.

What is the Verb? Threw is the Verb. This is what is being done by the Subject (JIM) to the Object (the BALL).

Easy, right? Let's try one more!

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Let's make a new sentence: 'Pasha pet the cat.'

What is the Subject of this sentence?

What is the Object?

What is the Verb?

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Let's make a new sentence: 'Pasha pet the cat.'

What is the Subject of this sentence? Pasha is the Subject.

What is the Object?

What is the Verb?

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Let's make a new sentence: 'Pasha pet the cat.'

What is the Subject of this sentence? Pasha is the Subject.

What is the Object? The Cat is the Object.

What is the Verb?

PARSING

How do I start Parsing?

Let's make a new sentence: 'Pasha pet the cat.'

What is the Subject of this sentence? Pasha is the Subject.

What is the Object? The Cat is the Object.

What is the Verb? Pet is the Verb.

The Subject (PASHA) did something/Verb (PET) to the Object (the CAT).

Did you get it? Great! Now, let's try another! (If you didn't understand this one, just replay the slides or ask me for help!)

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Okay, but why Poetry?!

A small *Spoiler* here! The rest of the Parsing exercises shall be done using Poetry! Why Poetry? Because if you can parse Poetry, you can parse anything.

If you can parse Poetry that means you really have a strong command of that language.

If you can parse Poetry, then you can find an argument thread in anything you see or hear.

If you can parse Poetry, then you will build that mind muscle so it can handle 'other' readings a lot more easy.

If you can parse Poetry, then you will be better at reading, thinking and comprehension than most of the people you meet.



PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

The sample, as taken from Alexander Pope:

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).



PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

Okay, so...

What was the Subject?

The Object?

The Verb?

Not as easy anymore, right?



PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

Let's see those lines from the poem again. See if you can pick out THE Subject; THE Object; and THE Verb.

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

I've done this a lot in the classroom.

To the Right, you shall find the common responses
for the Subject from my students. Is your idea on the list?

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

- Green
- Song
- Beauty
- Breast
- Fame
- Eden

Subjects?

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

Was your guess on the list? If not, that is okay. The answer isn't on the list (or is it?). I'll tell you what the answer is after we guess the Verb and the Object.

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

Subjects?

- Green
- Song
- Beauty
- Breast
- Fame
- Eden

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

What do you think the Object is? I'll tell you what some of my other students thought.

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

Subjects?

- Green
- ~~Song~~
- ~~Beauty~~
- Breast
- ~~Fame~~
- Eden

Objects?

- Green
- Beauty
- Eden
- Flame
- Song

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

Did you guess something on the list? Is it right? Are any of them right? The answer is...

No. **Not one of my students have ever successfully parsed this first exercise.** Some may have gotten the Subject and Verb, but none had the Object the first try. (We usually do this out loud in class as a group effort.) **Don't feel bad!**

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

Subjects?

- ~~Green~~
- ~~Song~~
- ~~Beauty~~
- Breast
- ~~Fame~~
- Eden

Objects?

- ~~Green~~
- Beauty
- ~~Eden~~
- ~~Flame~~
- Song

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

Let's try to find the Verb. Again, what my students thought are in the suggestions to the right. Remember, there are many 'small' verbs, but only **ONE true** Verb of the lines. Can you guess what it is?

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

Subjects?

- ~~Green~~
- ~~Song~~
- ~~Beauty~~
- Breast
- ~~Fame~~
- Eden

Objects?

- ~~Green~~
- Beauty
- ~~Eden~~
- ~~Flame~~
- Song

Verbs?

- Vanish'd
- Inspir'd
- Fame
- Flame
- Beauty
- Green

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Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

The answer to THE Verb is actually on the list! Is one of your guesses on it? IF so—great job! Is it crossed out? That's okay! **This is HARD.** Very Hard. Really Really Hard to learn at first, **but you CAN do it!**

Ready for the answers?!

The Groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like them in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(Windsor Forest, 1713).

Subjects?

- ~~Green~~
- ~~Song~~
- ~~Beauty~~
- Breast
- ~~Fame~~
- Eden

Objects?

- ~~Green~~
- ~~Beauty~~
- ~~Eden~~
- ~~Flame~~
- ~~Song~~

Verbs?

- Vanish'd
- Inspir'd
- ~~Fame~~
- Flame
- Beauty
- ~~Green~~

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

The Answers!

The **Subject** is: Windsor Forest (aka 'THESE') both are acceptable as they are BOTH meaning the same Subject.

The **Verb** is: Inspir'd.

The **Object** is: The Groves of Eden (aka 'THEM') both are also acceptable because they are BOTH meaning the same Object.

The **Groves of Eden**, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:

These, were my Breast **inspir'd** with equal Flame,
Like **them** in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(**Windsor Forest**, 1713).

Subjects?

- —Green
- —Song
- —Beauty
- —Breast
- —Fame
- —Eden

Objects?

- —Green
- —Beauty
- —Eden
- —Flame
- —Song

Verbs?

- —Vanish'd
- **Inspir'd**
- —Fame
- —Flame
- —Beauty
- —Green

PARSING

Are you just trying to make me cry? (Sample 1)

The Answers!

The **Subject** is: Windsor Forest (aka 'THESE') both are acceptable as they are BOTH meaning the same Subject.

The **Verb** is: Inspir'd.

The **Object** is: The Groves of Eden (aka 'THEM') both are also acceptable because they are BOTH meaning the same Object.

The **Groves of Eden**, vanish'd now so long,
Live in Description, and look green in Song:
These, were my Breast inspir'd with equal Flame,
Like **them** in Beauty, should be like in Fame.
(**Windsor Forest**, 1713).

When we look at the answer this way,
everything starts to make sense:

Windsor Forest Inspired the Groves of Eden.

In other words: Someone who was
looking at Windsor Forest used it as
inspiration to create the fictional Eden.

Yes, it was tricky to have the Subject
found mostly in the Title of the Poem!



PARSING

No, really. How can something this hard be possible?!

Did you get the answers the first try? No? Don't worry. Most people don't.

This is hard work, but it isn't impossible work.

When we look at a piece, try not to get distracted by the trees, instead look at the forest (no pun intended). What does the piece mean in its entirety?

Focus on trying your best to analyze the writing. You might not get it the first time or even the first 10 times, but—eventually—it will start popping into place for you.

Remember: Parsing Poetry Is Hard! When you use this tool for paragraphs, sentences or people talking to you, you will have a FAR EASIER TIME than you have now. We train HARD so we can do our BEST.

PARSING

Are you SURE you aren't just trying to make me cry? (Sample 2)

This time we will go for part of Alexander Pope's Rape of the Lock. You will need to know that the Lock in question is a Lock of Hair (**HINT!**):

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky melancholy Spright,
As ever sully'd the fair face of Light,
Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,
Repair'd to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.
(Rape of the Lock, 1714)

What is the

- **Subject?**
- **Object?**
- **Verb?**

PARSING

Are you SURE you aren't just trying to make me cry? (Sample 2)

Think this over. What do you think the Subject is? What's the Verb? What's the Object? I'll give you a hint. I have highlighted the words you need to focus on in Red.

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky melancholy Spright,
As ever sully'd the fair face of Light,
Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,
Repair'd to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.
(Rape of the Lock, 1714)

What is the

- **Subject?**
- **Object?**
- **Verb?**

PARSING

Are you SURE you aren't just trying to make me cry? (Sample 2)

What do we have left? **Umbriel** (a Spright) **repair'd to search** (went to search) for **the Lock** (of hair). Once again, the Title has something to do with it. This time the title had the Object; however, this is just a coincidence! Do not think every title means something.

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky melancholy Spright,
As ever sully'd the fair face of Light,
Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,
Repair'd to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.
(Rape of **the Lock**, 1714)

What is the

- **Subject: Umbriel**
- **Object: The Lock**
- **Verb: Repair'd to Search**

PARSING

One for the Road

This is all hard work and you are doing just fine. Remember, **MOST people won't even TRY** to do what you are doing! **You** have **already beat all of those people!** This last set of lines is also from Alexander Pope. I will not give you the answers here. I want you to think. Chew on it. Overcome it.

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the genius, and to mend the heart;
To make mankind, in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:
For this the Tragic Muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream thro' ev'ry age;
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.
(Prologue to Mr. Addison's Tragedy of Cato, 1713)

What is the

- **Subject:**
- **Object:**
- **Verb:**