

a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase on which a verb performs an action

Definition of Object

In grammar, an object is a noun, [pronoun](#), or noun [phrase](#) on which a verb performs an action. It falls at the end of a [sentence](#), and is governed by a verb or a preposition. For example, in the excerpt, “My aunt opened her purse and gave the man a quarter ... It was Valentine’s Day and she had baked me a whole box of heart-shaped biscuits” (*The Amnesia*, by Sam Taylor), “man” and “me” are indirect objects governed by their respective verbs “gave” and “baked.”

Types of Object

There are three types of object:

[Direct Object](#)

A direct object in a sentence is directly acted upon by a [subject](#) such as, “All the actors have played their parts.”

Indirect Object

An indirect object in a sentence is the recipient of the action performed by the subject such as, “Pauline has passed her mother a parcel.”

Object of Preposition

The object of preposition is a noun or pronoun managed by a prepositions such as, “The cat gets in their house when they are sleeping.”

Examples of Objects in Literature

Example #1: *Charlotte’s Web* (by E.B. White)

“She closed the carton carefully. First she kissed her father, then she kissed her mother. Then she opened the lid again, lifted the pig out, and held it against her cheek.”

In this example, “carton” and “lid” are direct objects. “Her father,” and “her mother” are indirect objects because they are the recipients of actions in these sentences.

Example #2: *A Tale of Two Cities* (by Charles Dickens)

“All these things, and a thousand like them, came to pass in and close upon the dear old year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five. Environed by them, while the Woodman and the Farmer worked unheeded, those two of the large jaws, and those other two of the plain and the fair faces, trod with stir enough, and carried their divine rights with a high hand ... With drooping heads and tremulous tails, they mashed their way through the thick mud, floundering and stumbling between whiles, as if they were falling to pieces at the larger joints.”

In this passage, there are three underlined objects: “them,” “with high hand,” and “through the thick mud.” The first one is an indirect object, while the second and third are objects of prepositions.

Example #3: *Pride and Prejudice* (by Jane Austen)

“Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it, that he agreed with Mr. Morris immediately; that he is to take possession before Michaelmas, and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week.. “I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of

In this excerpt, the first “a young man” is an object of preposition; “house” and “themselves” are direct objects.

Example #4: *A Modest Proposal* (by Jonathan Swift)

“I think it is agreed by all parties, that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers ... As I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.”

In this instance, there are just two objects. Both “all parties” and “principal gentleman” are direct objects, on which an action is performed.

Function of Object

The role of an object is very important in writing as well as speaking. It is a person, a place, or thing, on which the verb performs an action. It completes the meaning of a sentence. Without an object, a sentence does not make sense, in terms of the action it shows. The objective is sometimes a direct object, an indirect object, or an object of preposition. In terms of semantic functions, it shifts the meaning of verb forward to itself, rather than backward to the subject. This makes reading flow well, as most sentences with objects and direct objects are written in active voice.