Understanding the Parts of a Sentence

English Parts of a Sentence

Subject | Predicate | Direct Object | Indirect Object
Object of the Preposition | Transitive Verbs and
Intransitive Verbs
Linking Verbs | Complements | Exercises

The DIRECT OBJECT

A direct object is a **person** or **thing** that is affected by the action of the **verb**. You could say that the direct object "**receives the action** of the verb."

"He broke the window."

What was affected by the action? The window was.

So "the window" is the direct object.



"The ball hit her."



What did the ball hit? It hit her.

So "her" is the direct object.

"He is making a pancake."



What is he making? A pancake.

So "a pancake" is the direct object.

"Lucky noticed the bone."



What did Lucky notice? The bone.

So "the bone" is the direct object.

"The boy loves his father."



Whom does the boy love? His father.

So "his father" is the direct object.

"She said the right answer."



What did she say? The right answer.

So "the right answer" is the direct object.

"She gave a gift."



What did she give? A gift.

So "a gift" is the direct object.

"He got a gift."



What did he get? A gift.

So "a gift" is the direct object.

Additional examples (the direct object is in bold):

Tim fixed **the computer** yesterday.

I hated **that movie** so much.

We built **a castle** on the beach.

You bought the same hat last week.

Joan is doing her homework right now.

I've made **a promise**.

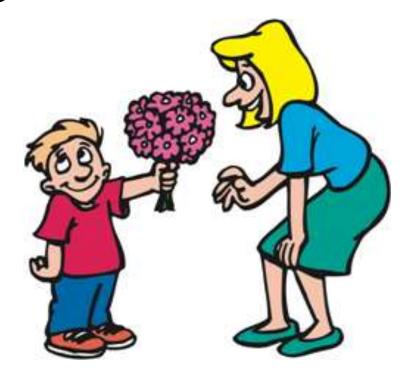
The INDIRECT OBJECT

An indirect object is a person or thing that the action is done to or for.

The indirect object usually comes just before the direct object.

You could also say that the indirect object is the **receiver** of the direct object.

"He gave his mother flowers."



To whom did he give the flowers? To his mother.

So "his mother" is the indirect object.

"He baked his family some cookies."



For whom did he bake some cookies? For his family.

So "his family" is the indirect object.

"Jack is telling them the news."



To whom is he telling the news? To them.

So "them" is the indirect object.

"Barney is writing Fred a letter."



To whom is Barney writing a letter? To Fred.

So "Fred" is the indirect object.

"She wrote me a message."



To whom did she write a message? To me.

So "me" is the indirect object.

"I made you this kit."



For whom did I made this kit? For you.

So "you" is the indirect object.

"Susan is writing herself a note."



To whom is Susan writing a note? To herself.

So "herself" is the indirect object.

"He bought his friend a present."



For whom did he buy a present? For his friend.

So "his friend" is the indirect object.

Additional examples (the indirect object is in bold):

Tim made Joan a sandwich for lunch.

I told you what to do.

We built **him** a castle on the beach.

You bought her the same hat last week.

Joan is writing **me** a letter right now.

I've made **Shannon** a promise.

Is it a direct object OR an indirect object?

How can you tell a direct object from an indirect object?

Here are some tips to help you:

- 1) A direct object **receives the action** of the verb. In other words, it is directly affected by it.
- 2) An indirect object is the receiver of the <u>direct</u> object, and it usually comes just before it.

"He gave his mother flowers."

The verb is "gave."

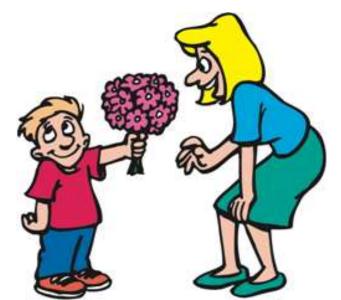
What is directly affected by this action? The flowers. *They are given!*

So "flowers" is the direct object.

Who receives the flowers? *His mother.*

So "his mother" is the indirect object.

You can see that the **indirect object** ("his mother") is located just before the **direct object** ("flowers").



"He baked his family some cookies."

The verb is "baked."

What is directly affected by this action? The cookies. *They were baked!*

So "some cookies" is the direct object.

Who will receive the cookies? *His family.*

So "his family" is the indirect object.

You can see that the **indirect object** ("his family") is located just before the **direct object** ("some cookies").



"Jack is telling them the news."

The verb is "is telling."

What is directly affected by this action? The news. *It is being told!*

So "the news" is the direct object.

Who is receiving the news? *They are.*

So "them" is the **indirect object.**

You can see that the **indirect object** ("them") is located just before the **direct object** ("the news").



"Barney is writing Fred a letter."

The verb is "is writing."

What is directly affected by this action? The letter. *It is being written!*

So "the letter" is the direct object.

Who is receiving the letter? Fred is.

So "Fred" is the indirect object.



You can see that the **indirect object** ("Fred") is located just before the **direct object** ("the letter").

"She wrote me a message."

The verb is "wrote."

What is directly affected by this action? The message. *It was written!*

So "a message" is the direct object.

Who receives the message? I do.

So "me" is the indirect object.

You can see that the **indirect object** ("me") is located just before the **direct object** ("a message").



"I made you this kit."

The verb is "made."

What is directly affected by this action? The kit. *It was made!*

So "this kit" is the direct object.

Who receives the kit? You are.

So "you" is the indirect object.

You can see that the **indirect object** ("you") is located just before the **direct object** ("this kit").



"Susan is writing herself a note."

The verb is "is writing."

What is directly affected by this action? The note. *It is being written!*

So "a note" is the direct object.

Who receives the note? She does.

So "herself" is the **indirect object.**

You can see that the **indirect object** ("herself") is located just before the **direct object** ("a note").



"He bought his friend a present."

The verb is "bought."

What is directly affected by this action? The present. *It was bought!*

So "a present" is the direct object.



So "his friend" is the indirect object.

You can see that the **indirect object** ("his friend") is located just before the **direct object** ("a present").



The OBJECT OF THE PREPOSITION

The object of the preposition is a noun or a pronoun that completes its meaning.

"The cat is looking at the fish."



Example 1:

She is thinking about.

This sentence is INCOMPLETE. We don't know what she is thinking about.

Here is the complete version:

She is thinking about your idea.

This sentence is COMPLETE. "Idea" is the object of the preposition "about."

Example 2:

Be careful with.

This sentence is INCOMPLETE. We don't know what we should be careful with.

Here is the complete version:

Be careful <u>with</u> the hot **water**.

This sentence is COMPLETE. "Water" is the object of the preposition "with."

Example 3:

Emma gave the book to.

This sentence is INCOMPLETE. We don't know whom she gave the book to.

Here is the complete version:

Emma gave the book <u>to</u> Ronnie.

This sentence is COMPLETE. "Ronnie" is the object of the preposition "to."

Example 4:

Ronnie is doing it for.

This sentence is INCOMPLETE. We don't whom is Ronnie doing it for.

Here is the complete version:

Ronnie is doing it for Emma.

This sentence is COMPLETE. "Emma" is the object of the preposition "for."

Do not confuse the indirect object with the object of the preposition

Have a look at the following examples:

Emma gave Ronnie the book.

Emma gave the book to Ronnie.

In the FIRST sentence Ronnie is the **indirect object**.

In the SECOND sentence Ronnie is the **object of the preposition**.

And by the way, these two sentences basically have the same meaning.

HOW can you TELL if a word is an <u>indirect object</u> or the <u>object of the preposition</u>?

If it comes just AFTER a preposition – then it's the **object of the preposition.**

If it does NOT come just after a preposition – then it's an **indirect object.**

Also, the **indirect object** is usually <u>followed by the direct object</u>. The **object of the preposition** does not.

Now that you know about direct and indirect objects, and objects of the preposition it is time to practice! Follow the links below and take the quiz. Send screenshots of your scores of at least 70% to your respective TL's email.

Direct and Indirect Objects:

http://www.softschools.com/quizzes/grammar/indirec t_objects/quiz548.html

http://www.quia.com/quiz/639643.html?AP_rand=92 0739898

THE END!



Resource used for this material: Really-Learn-English.com. 2010-2014