

# Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

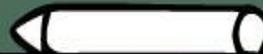
A Visual Peer Workshopping Approach  
With Active Learning Exercises for  
Colorcoding and Layering Sentences

Example:

I went to the store at the mall.

At the mall, I went to the store.

Meets  
Common  
Core  
Standards



# What are Prepositions?

- Word(s) relating nouns/pronouns to other words in sentences.
- Helper(s) that give amounts, causes, directions, place, and/or time.

## Example:

We went camping **in** the woods.

Basic/Simple  
Sentence



**Prepositions**



# Prepositions are Everywhere!

First **ahead!** Then far **behind!**

They just refuse **to** be confined.

They're **near** and **far**, **there** and **here**.

Like monkeys **on** a chandelier.

**Over**, **under**, **across**, and **through**,

**Inside**, **outside**, **between** the two,

**Within**, **without**, **among**, **around**,

It's hard **to** pin a preposition **down**.



*English Fresh Squeezed!* By Carol Diggory Shields

# Some Common Prepositions

About	Below	From	Through
Above	Beneath	In	Toward
Across	Beside	Into	Under
After	Between	Like	Up
Among	By	Of	With
Around	Down	Off	Without
At	During	On	
Before	Except	Over	
Behind	For	Since	

# The Preposition Chair Activity

1. Stand \_\_\_\_\_ your chair.  
What is the preposition in the sentence?
2. Stand \_\_\_\_\_ your chair.  
What is the preposition in the sentence?
3. Continue movements using as many prepositions as possible to show placement.
4. End with: Sit \_\_\_\_\_ your chair!



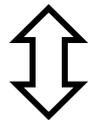
# What is a Prepositional Phrase?

**Preposition** + **Word(s)** following it

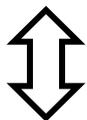
- gives details about nouns or pronouns
- stretches sentences
- may be more than one phrase in sentences
- can be removed leaving basic sentences intact

Examples:

We went camping in the woods to enjoy nature.



Basic Sentences



Prepositional  
Phrases



Tom helped Ellen at the party on Saturday.

# Activity:

Directions: In the sentences below, circle prepositions and underline prepositional phrases:

1. It rained as I carried packages.
2. Under the table I spotted a mouse.
3. In the car, my brother sleeps on the seat.
4. A dog is a great pet for families to adopt.
5. At the store, he purchased candy to eat.

# How do I use commas with prepositional phrases?

**Prepositional phrases** used at the beginnings of sentences have commas:

When added to the front of the basic sentence:

At the mall, I met friends.

Preposition + Words

Basic Sentence

= Prepositional Phrase

If **prepositional phrases** move to ends of basic sentences, then commas disappear:

I met friends at the mall.

Basic Sentence

Preposition + Words

= Prepositional Phrase

## Writing Tip:

If a sentence begins with: **A, An, The, Noun,** or **Pronoun,** no **prepositional phrase** or commas will exist. Highlight the first word of each sentence and apply the rule.

# Activity: Comma Rules with Prepositions

If sentences begin with: **A, An, The, Noun,** or **Pronoun,** no **prepositions** or **prepositional phrases** exist, and no comma is used.

## Directions:

Correct the second sentence on each line. (Notice the comma added with a prepositional phrase will be placed near the: **A, An, The, Noun,** or **Pronoun.**)

1. **I** ran home. On the way I rested.
2. **At the door,** I saw Mr. Smith. He was a nice man.
3. **Mom** stayed home. When I ate lunch Mr. Smith joined me.
4. **Dad** was late from work. He stopped at the store.
5. **After an hour,** Mom left. I was surprised.
6. **Before dark,** Dad was home. At last we were ready for bed.

Finally, in sentences 1-6, reverse any prepositional phrases to the ends of basic sentences and remove commas.

# Try Layering Sentences with **Prepositions** and **Prepositional Phrases**:

1. Write a basic sentence: **The lights were bright.**

2. Add 1 prepositional phrase to the end:

**The lights were bright in the room.**

(No comma if added to the end)

3. Add another prepositional phrase to the end:

**The lights were bright in the room on Monday.**

(No comma if added to the end)

4. Move one prepositional phrase to beginning:

**On Monday, the lights were bright in the room.**  
(Comma if added to front)

# Let's Practice! Add Prepositions:

The letter \_\_\_\_\_ the table was gone!

Donald ate three scoops \_\_\_\_\_ ice cream.

The boxes \_\_\_\_\_ the backdoor \_\_\_\_\_ the porch step were empty.

\_\_\_\_\_ any notice, she was gone \_\_\_\_\_ another state.

Can we drive \_\_\_\_\_ the park \_\_\_\_\_ Main Street?

## Writing Tip:

Remove all prepositional phrases and basic sentences remain.

# Prepositional Walk

Use a map of your campus. Take a prepositional walk around the campus. Draw your route on your map. Next, write sentences that explain your route. Use each preposition only once. Circle the preposition(s) in each sentence.

1. I walked \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Next, I went \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_.
9. \_\_\_\_\_.
10. \_\_\_\_\_.

# Peer Workshopping

- Use your essay or a peer's essay.
- Circle or highlight preposition(s) in sentences.
- Are commas used with prepositions that begin sentences? Reminder: **A, An, The, Noun, Pronoun** = no comma at front of sentences. Starting sentences with a **preposition** = comma at front
- Are commas removed from basic sentences with prepositional phrases at ends?
- Make sure meanings of sentences are clear.
- Correct any misused prepositions.