

DIAGRAMMING GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIPS

by E. J. Franco, Ph.D.

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TO THE TEACHER:

Sentence diagramming is not an end in itself, but it does lead to definite, worthwhile goals. These goals are clear thinking which, in turn, leads to clear writing, and its attendant requirement -- logical reasoning.

Clear thinking is realized through the practice of seeing the relationship among the parts to the whole. Being able to see relationships fosters the ability to analyze and synthesize. This ability then leads to clear writing, and clear writing results from clear thinking.

The ability to write clear uncluttered sentences is a noble endeavor, and one that is much needed in society, even though it is more honored in the breach than in the observance. Clear writing is not a gift, rather it is a skill that requires study and practice. And as with any skill, it can be mastered through a logical step-by-step approach.

Since the ability to write clearly is based on logical thought patterns, much may be gained by learning to reason logically through the use of diagramming because the diagram is a graphic representation of the various parts of a sentence that are required to express a complete, coherent thought. Thoughts when transmitted from one mind to another, if they are to make sense, must be understandable, and in order to be understandable, they must follow a logical thought process. This thought process can, in the main, only be transmitted through the written or spoken word.

Sentence diagramming is not a busy-work activity, rather it is a process that requires analytical thinking, ability to see relationships, and logical reasoning. Individuals may, in the course of a lifetime, stumble upon the writing process; but generally, it comes best through practice, and sentence diagramming is one of the practice exercises.

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IN ORDER TO MAKE SENTENCE DIAGRAMMING A WORTHWHILE ENDEAVOR, THE STUDENT SHOULD DO EXERCISES SIMILAR TO THE FOLLOWING:

VERBS

A VERB is a word that expresses action or a state of being.

Underline the verb or verbs in each of the following sentences.

1. Fish swim.
2. Mary is pretty.
3. John hit the ball.

It is a good policy to have the student look for the VERB first and then ask WHO or WHAT to find the subject.

SUBJECTS

The SUBJECT of a sentence answers the WHO or WHAT question.

EXAMPLE: John hit the ball.

The proper noun JOHN answers the question, WHO HIT THE BALL. John is the subject.

Underline the subject in each of the following sentences. REMEMBER, find the VERB first and then ask WHO or WHAT did the acting or state of being.

1. Joe ran.
2. The boy left.
3. John is a good player.
4. He ran for the door.

(NOTE: A noun or a pronoun is usually the subject of the verb.)

DIRECT OBJECTS

To find the DIRECT OBJECT of the VERB, it helps to have the students ask the WHOM or WHAT question.

EXAMPLE: John hit the ball.

The noun BALL answers the question WHAT was hit. Ball is the DIRECT OBJECT. It received the action of the verb.

Underline the direct object in each of the following sentences:

1. Phil rakes leaves.
2. He bought a watch.
3. She reads books.
4. Dogs bury bones.

At this time students should be given sentences such as the following and asked to label the subject, the verb, and the direct object.

1. John drove the car.
2. Mary dressed the doll.
3. Mother baked a cake.
4. Sally made a dress.

After the students become proficient in finding the verb, the subject, and the direct object, they should then be introduced to modifiers.

MODIFIERS

Students, for the purpose of diagramming, should know that **a modifier is a word or group of words that describes or limits the meaning of another word or of other words.** Hence, a review of ADJECTIVES and ADVERBS will aid in the skill of diagramming.

Find the ADJECTIVE and tell what noun each modifies. (Make the exercise easy by indicating the number of adjectives in each sentence.)

1. The little boy jumped the high fence. (4)
2. Little children are playing in the sand. (2)
3. Two Alaskan hunters were cornered by a pack of hungry gray wolves. (5)
4. The three boys stole the hot apple pie that was on the kitchen table. (7)

Find the words that are ADVERBS. (Make the exercise easy by indicating the number of adverbs in each sentence.)

1. It was unusually hot. (1)
2. The cow must be taken immediately to the barn.(1)
3. The boy worked unceasingly to keep the cow continually moving. (2)
4. He often runs quickly to the gate. (2)

CLAUSES

I. INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

An independent clause is a group of related words that has a subject and a verb (predicate) and states a complete idea.

EXAMPLE: John wants a car.

Wants is the verb.
John is the subject.

The clause John wants a car could stand alone as a sentence because it expresses a complete thought. (An independent clause may be thought of as a simple sentence.)

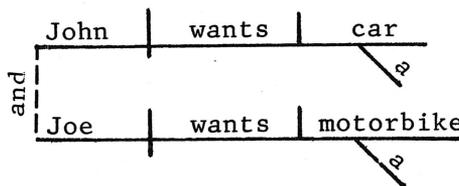
A compound sentence is made up of two or more independent clauses.

EXAMPLE: John wants a car, and Joe wants a motorbike.

Wants is the verb of the first clause.
John is the subject of the first clause.
Wants is the verb of the second clause.
Joe is the subject of the second clause.

(Each clause is a simple sentence.)

DIAGRAMMED:



II. DEPENDENT CLAUSES

A dependent clause is one that depends on the rest of the sentence for its meaning. A dependent clause is also **known** as a subordinate clause because, in a **complex** sentence, it is not as important as the independent, or main clause.

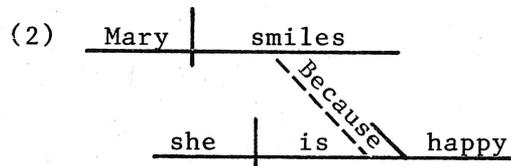
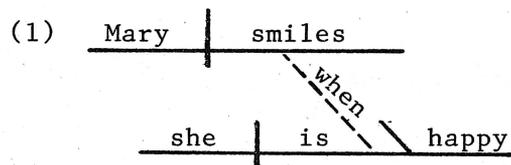
- EXAMPLES: (1) Mary smiles when she is happy.
(2) Because she is happy Mary smiles.

The subordinate clause in sentence (1) when she is happy has a verb (is) and a subject (she) but does not make sense by itself.

The subordinate clause in sentence (2) Because she is happy has a verb (is) and a subject (she) but does not make sense by itself.

Both dependent (subordinate) clauses depend upon the rest of their sentences for complete meaning.

DIAGRAMMED:



III. VERBAL PHRASES

A verbal phrase is a group of related words that contains a participle, a gerund, or an infinitive. Verbal phrases may serve as a single part of speech acting as either a noun, a pronoun, an adjective, or an adverb. Understanding that participle phrases function as verbal adjectives will help students avoid dangling participles.

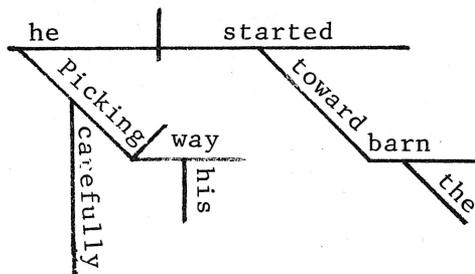
A. A **participial phrase** is a group of related words that contains a participle. A **participle** is a verbal used as an adjective. The **present participle** ends in ing (walking, swimming, laughing). The **past participle** ends in d, ed, t, n, en, or changes the vowel (dived, walked, lost, seen, chosen, rung). A participle cannot make an assertion even though it is derived from a verb and can take an object and be modified by an adverb (walking the street, easily broken).

EXAMPLE: **Participle used as an adjective.**

Picking his way carefully, he started toward the barn.

Picking his way carefully is a participle phrase modifying the pronoun he. The phrase functions as an adjective.

DIAGRAMMED:



In the phrase the participle Picking requires an object. The object of Picking is way. Carefully is an adverb modifying the participle Picking. His modifies the noun way.

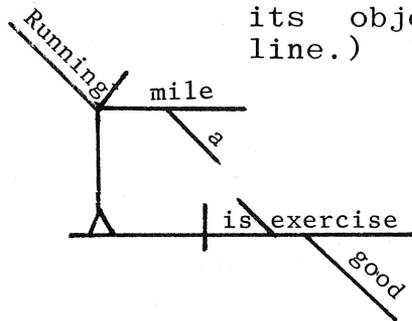
B. Participle phrase used as a noun - gerund phrase.
The gerund phrases are underlined.

EXAMPLE: A gerund phrase used as the subject
of a sentence.

(1) Running a mile is good exercise.
(Subject)

Running a mile is the subject of the sentence. Is is the verb, and good exercise is the predicate nominative because it completes the meaning of the participle Running.

DIAGRAMMED: (Note: A gerund is separated from its object by a vertical line.)

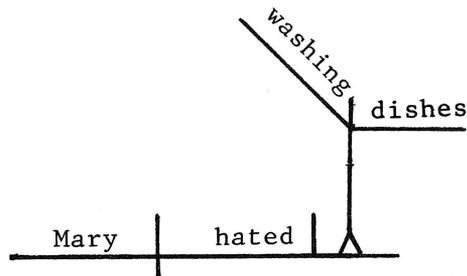


EXAMPLE: A gerund phrase used as the direct
object of a sentence.

(2) Mary hated washing dishes.
(direct object)

Mary is the subject of the verb hated, and washing dishes is the direct object of the verb hated.

DIAGRAMMED:



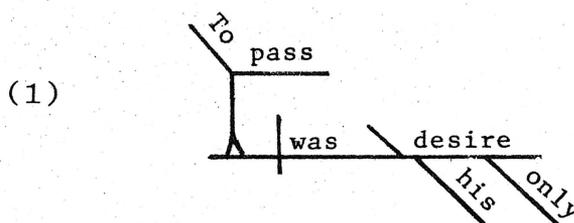
- C. An **infinitive phrase** is a group of related words that contains an infinitive (to + verb). The infinitive phrases are underlined. An infinitive phrase used as a noun is diagrammed much the same as a gerund phrase.

EXAMPLE: **An infinitive phrase used as a noun.**

- (1) To pass was his only desire.
(Subject)

To pass is the subject of the verb was.

DIAGRAMMED:

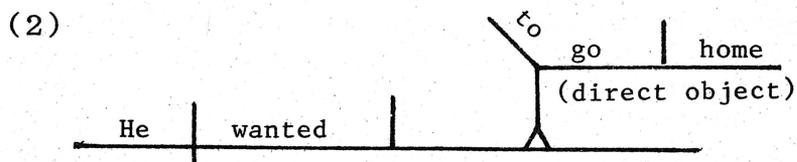


EXAMPLE: **An infinitive phrase used as a noun (direct object).**

- (2) He wanted to go home.
(direct object)

He is the subject of the verb wanted, and to go home is the direct object of the verb wanted.

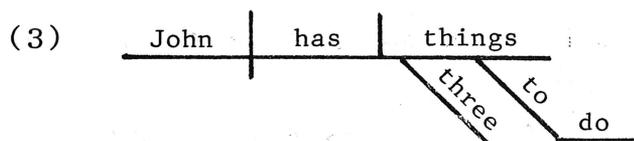
DIAGRAMMED:



EXAMPLE: An infinitive phrase used as an adjective.

(3) John has three things to do.

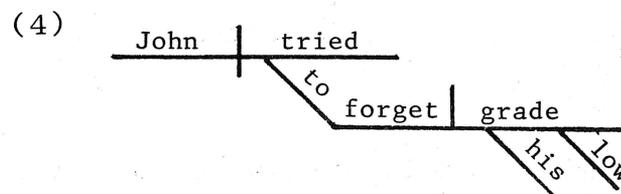
DIAGRAMMED:



EXAMPLE: An infinitive phrase used as an adverb

(4) John tried to forget his low grade.

DIAGRAMMED:



Further instructions may be required for the eight parts of speech, such as nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections which are discussed in all adopted grammar texts. It is advisable for the students to be well versed in this facet of grammar prior to attempting sentence diagramming.

DIAGRAMMING GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIPS
PRE-TEST

DIRECTIONS: Classify each word in the following sentences according to its part of speech.

N = Noun	V = Verb	PREP = Preposition
ADJ = Adjective	ADV = Adverb	CONJ = Conjunction
PRO = Pronoun	INTR = Interjection	ART/ADJ = Article *

* Also classified as as adjective

1. John ran to the fence.
2. Mary quickly put the eggs on his plate.
3. He wanted his breakfast.
4. The point is well taken.
5. Johnny dived into the pool, and Mary followed him.
6. "Oh," said Mary, "I did not know that it was so deep."
7. Many people came to his party but few stayed.
8. The girl in the blue dress dances very well.
9. The teacher ran from the classroom.
10. He ran the hundred-yard dash in ten seconds.

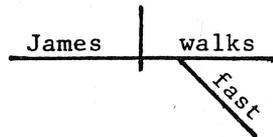
ANSWER SHEET - PRE-TEST

1. N PREP N
1. John ran to the fence.
 V ART/ADJ
- N ADV ART/ADJ PREP N
2. Mary quickly put the eggs on his plate.
 V N PRO
- PRO PRO
3. He wanted his breakfast.
 V N
- ART/ADJ V V
4. The point is well taken.
 N ADV
- N PREP N N PRO
5. Johnny dived into the pool, and Mary followed him.
 V ART/ADJ CONJ V
- INTR N V V PRO ADV
6. "Oh," said Mary, "I did not know that it was so deep."
 V PRO ADV CONJ V ADJ
- ADJ V PRO/ADJ CONJ V
7. Many people came to his party but few stayed.
 N PREP N N
- ART/ADJ PREP ADJ V ADV
8. The girl in the blue dress dances very well.
 N ART/ADJ N ADV
- ART/ADJ V ART/ADJ
9. The teacher ran from the classroom.
 N PREP N
- PRO ART/ADJ ADJ PREP N
10. He ran the hundred-yard dash in ten seconds.
 V ADJ N ADJ

ANSWER SHEET - DIAGRAMMING I

Simple sentences with modifiers.

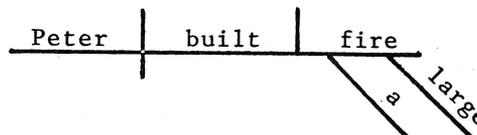
1. James walks fast.
SN V ADV



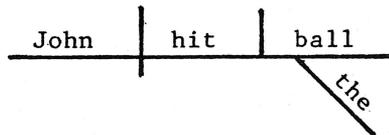
2. The pretty girl studies hard.
ART-ADJ SN ADV
ADJ V



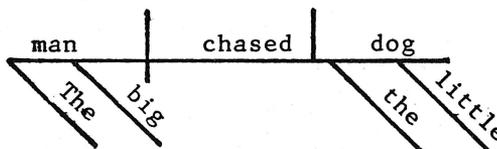
3. Peter built a large fire.
SN V ART-ADJ D-O-N
ADJ



4. John hit the ball.
SN V ART-ADJ D-O-N



5. The big man chased the little dog.
ART-ADJ SN V ART-ADJ D-O-N
ADJ ADJ



POST TEST - DIAGRAMMING II

Simple sentences with modifiers, compound subjects and compound verbs, single subjects and compound verbs, compound subjects with single verbs and diagramming infinitives.

DIRECTIONS: For each sentence below, label the part of speech and function of all words and diagram the sentence.

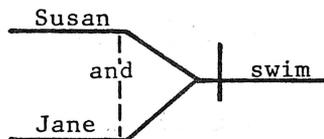
EXAMPLE: Susan and Jane swim.

LABELS:

SN	= Subject Noun
INF ADV	= Infinitive Adverb
V	= Verb
INF ADJ	= Infinitive Adjective
ADV	= Adverb
INF N S	= Infinitive Noun Subject
ADJ	= Adjective
INF D O	= Infinitive Direct Object
AUX	= Auxiliary (helping) verb
PRON	= Pronoun
D O N	= Direct Object Noun
S PRON	= Subject Pronoun
CC	= Coordinating Conjunction
D O PRON	= Direct Object Pronoun
ART ADJ	= Article Adjective
PRED ADJ	= Predicate Adjective
INF	= Infinitive
PRED N	= Predicate Noun
INF N	= Infinitive Noun

LABELED: Susan and Jane swim.
 SN **CC** **SN** **V**

DIAGRAMMED:

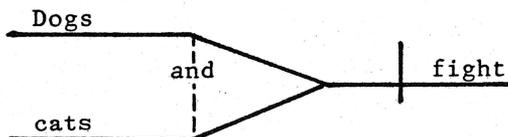


1. Dogs and cats fight.
2. Boys and girls study and learn.
3. The ugly man chased and caught the brown dog.
4. John wanted to leave.
5. To win was his great desire.

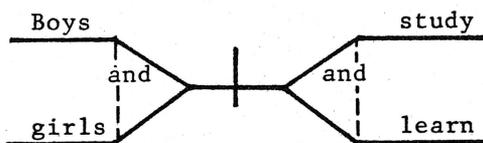
ANSWER SHEET - DIAGRAMMING II

Simple sentences with modifiers, compound subjects and compound verbs, single subjects and compound verbs, compound subjects with single verbs and diagramming sentences.

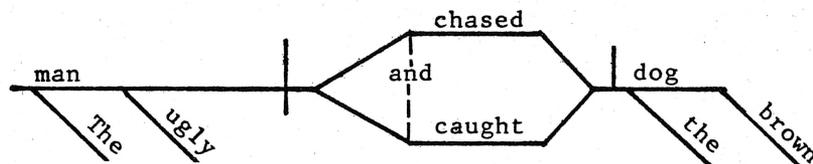
1. ^{SN} ^{SN}
 Dogs and cats fight.
 _{CC} _V



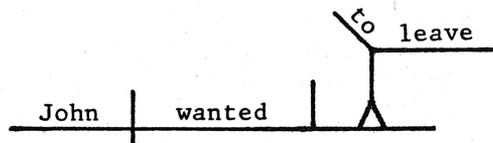
2. ^{SN} ^{SN} ^{CC}
 Boys and girls study and learn.
 _{CC} _V _V



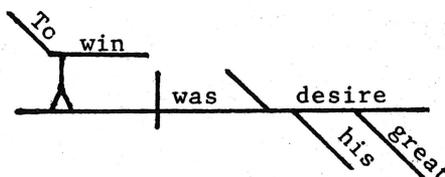
3. ^{ART-ADJ} ^{SN} ^{CC} ^{ART-ADJ} ^{D-O-N}
 The ugly man chased and caught the brown dog.
 _{ADJ} _V _V _{ADJ}



4. ^{SN} ^{INF-D-O}
 John wanted to leave.
 _V _V



5. ^{INF-N-S} ^{ADJ} ^{ADJ} ^{PRED-N}
 To win was his great desire.
 _V _(pronominal) _(pronominal)



POST TEST - DIAGRAMMING III

Compound sentences with modifiers.

For each sentence below, label the part of speech and function of all words and diagram the sentence.

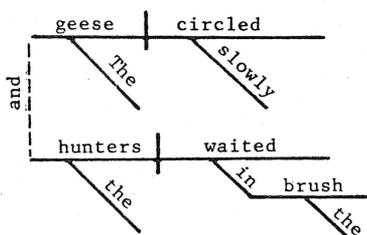
EXAMPLE: The geese circled slowly, and the hunters waited in the brush.

- LABELS:**
- SN = Subject Noun
 - V = Verb
 - ADV = Adverb
 - ADJ = Adjective
 - AUX = Auxiliary
 - P PRON S = Personal Pronoun Subject
 - INF = Infinitive
 - DON = Direct Object Noun
 - CC = Coordinating Conjunction
 - ART ADJ = Article Adjective
 - PREP = Preposition
 - OPN = Object of the Preposition Noun
 - P PRON O = Personal Pronoun Object

LABELED: The geese circled slowly, and the hunters
 ART- SN V ADV CC ART- SN
 ADJ

waited in the brush.
 V PREP ART- O-P-N
 ADJ

DIAGRAMMED:

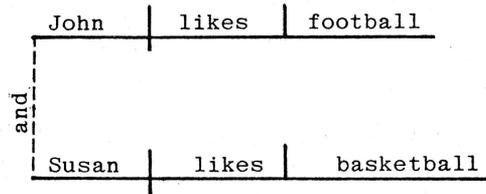


1. John likes football, and Susan likes basketball.
2. Mary spoke to Henry, but he did not answer.
3. Peter knows the answer, for he studied hard.
4. James must study, or he will fail.
5. The man cannot dance, nor can he hope to learn.

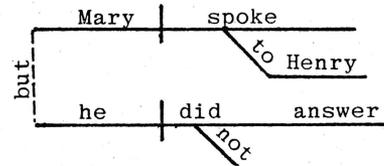
ANSWER SHEET - DIAGRAMMING III

Compound sentences with modifiers.

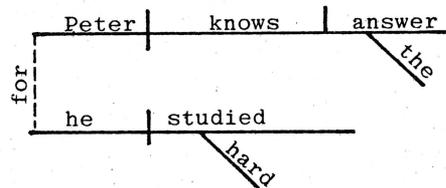
1. SN D-O-N SN D-O-N
1. John likes football, and Susan likes basketball.
 V CC V



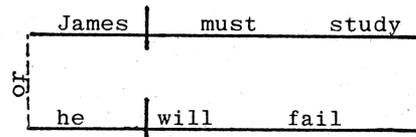
2. SN PREP CC AUX V
2. Mary spoke to Henry, but he did not answer.
 V O-P-N P-PRON-S ADV



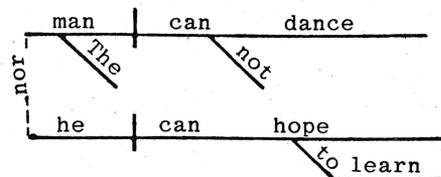
3. SN ART-ADJ CC V
3. Peter knows the answer, for he studied hard.
 V D-O-N P-PRON-S ADV



4. SN V P-PRON-S V
4. James must study, or he will fail.
 AUX CC AUX



5. ART-ADJ AUX ADV CC P-PRON-S
5. The man cannot dance, nor can he hope to learn.
 SN V AUX V INF-ADV



POST TEST - DIAGRAMMING IV

Complex sentences with modifiers.

DIRECTIONS: For each sentence below, label the part of speech and function of all words and diagram the sentences.

EXAMPLE: After Mary left, John started to practice.

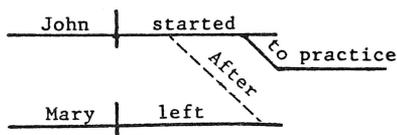
LABELS:

SN	= Subject Noun
V	= Verb
ADV	= Adverb
ADJ	= Adjective
AUX	= Auxiliary
P PRON S	= Personal Pronoun Subject
P PRON O	= Personal Pronoun Object
INF	= Infinitive
DON	= Direct Object Noun
D O P PRON	= Direct Object Personal Pronoun
CC	= Coordinating Conjunction
S CONJ	= Subordinating Conjunction
ART ADJ	= Article Adjective
PREP	= Preposition
O P P PRON	= Obj. of the Prep. Personal Pronoun
INF D O	= Infinitive Direct Object

LABELED: After Mary left, John started to practice.
S-CONJ SN V SN V INF-D-O

(Note: The dependent clause is always placed below the main clause.)

DIAGRAMMED:

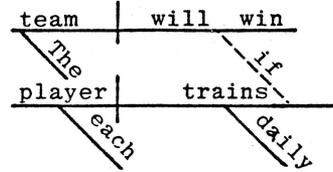


1. The team will win if each player trains daily.
2. Although John wants to go, he has to study.
3. He drove his car as if he were in a race.
4. Because he did not study, he failed the test.
5. When Ralph came home, his dog greeted him.

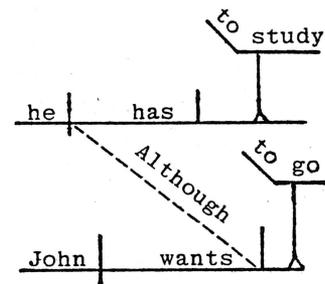
ANSWER SHEET - DIAGRAMMING IV

Complex sentences with modifiers.

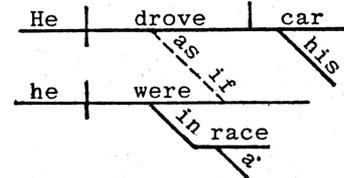
1. SN V PRON/ADJ V
 1. The team will win if each player trains daily.
 ART/ADJ AUX S-CONJ SN ADV



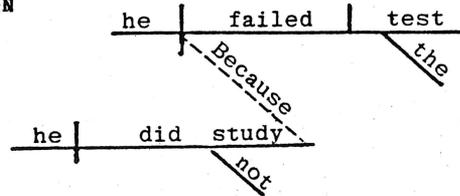
2. SN INF-D-O V
 2. Although John wants to go, he has to study.
 S-CONJ V P-PRON-S INF-D-O



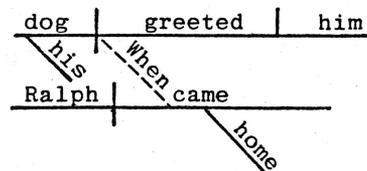
3. V D-O-N P-PRON-S PREP O-PREP-N
 3. He drove his car as if he were in a race.
 P-PRON-S P-PRON-ADJ S-CONJ V ART/ADJ



4. P-PRON-S ADV P-PRON-S ART/ADJ
 4. Because he did not study, he failed the test.
 S-CONJ AUX V V D-O-N



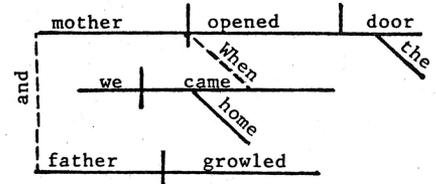
5. SN ADV SN P-PRON-O
 5. When Ralph came home, his dog greeted him.
 S-CONJ V P-PRON-ADJ V



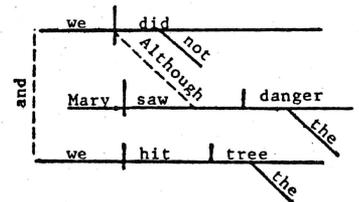
ANSWER SHEET - DIAGRAMMING V

Compound-complex sentences with modifiers.

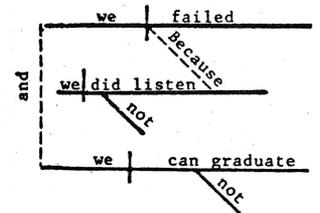
1. S-CONJ V SN ART-ADJ CC V
 When we came home, mother opened the door; and father growled.
 P-PRON-S ADV V D-O-N SN



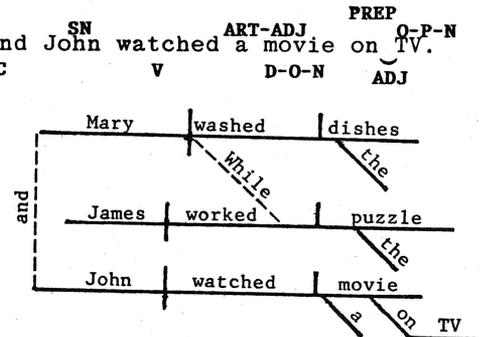
2. S-CONJ V D-O-N V CC V D-O-N
 Although Mary saw the danger, we did not; and we hit the tree.
 SN ART-ADJ P-PRON-S ADV P-PRON-S ART-ADJ



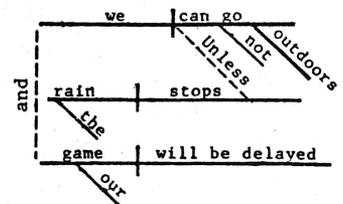
3. S-CONJ AUX V V P-PRON-S V
 Because we did not listen, we failed; and we cannot graduate.
 P-PRON-S ADV P-PRON-S CC V ADV



4. S-CONJ V D-O-N V D-O-N SN ART-ADJ PREP O-P-N
 While James worked the puzzle, Mary washed the dishes; and John watched a movie on TV.
 SN ART-ADJ SN ART-ADJ CC V D-O-N ADJ



5. S-CONJ SN P-PRON-S V CC SN AUX
 Unless the rain stops, we cannot go outdoors; and our game will be delayed.
 ART-ADJ V AUX ADV ADV PRON-ADJ AUX V



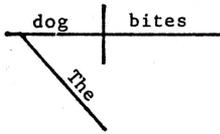
DIAGRAMMING GRAMMATICAL RELATIONSHIPS
UNIT POST TEST

DIRECTIONS: Diagram the following sentences.

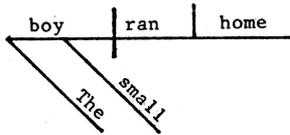
1. The dog bites.
2. The small boy ran home.
3. The small girl picked the flowers.
4. John spoke softly.
5. Bill looks tired.
6. Mary lost her purse.
7. James and Ed worked quickly.
8. You can diagram a sentence.
9. Crissy and Jonathan run and play in the yard.
10. Many people like raw oysters.
11. Jonathan did not know that Crissy left.
12. Chris bought a new dress.
13. Sharon who is fourteen likes dancing.
14. Sam likes baseball, but Joe prefers football.
15. Because it was raining, we could not play ball.
16. You will get good grades if you study the assignment.

ANSWER SHEET - UNIT POST TEST

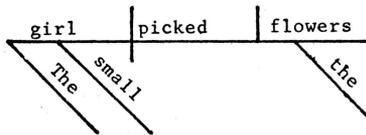
1. The dog bites.



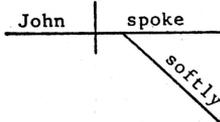
2. The small boy ran home.



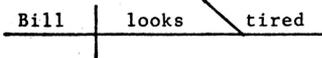
3. The small girl picked the flowers.



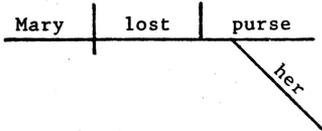
4. John spoke softly.



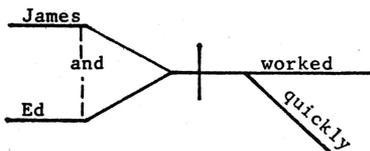
5. Bill looks tired.



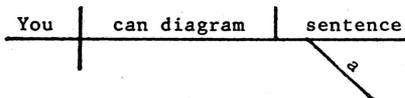
6. Mary lost her purse.



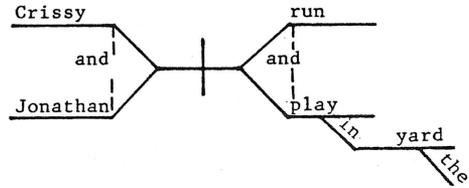
7. James and Ed worked quickly.



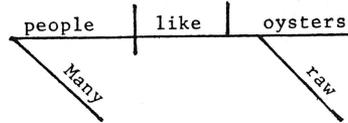
8. You can diagram a sentence.



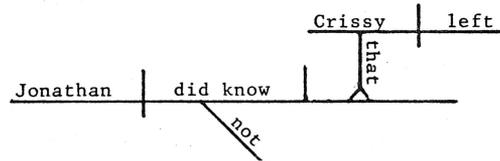
9. Crissy and Jonathan run and play in the yard.



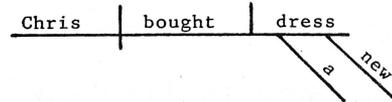
10. Many people like raw oysters.



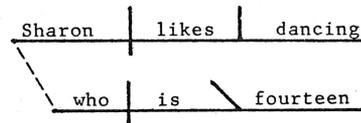
11. Jonathan did not know that Crissy left.



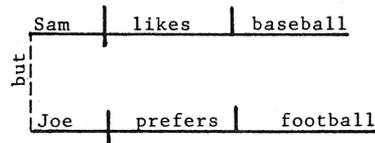
12. Chris bought a new dress.



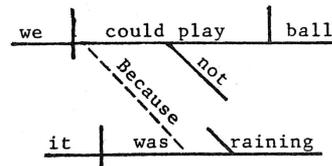
13. Sharon who is fourteen likes dancing.



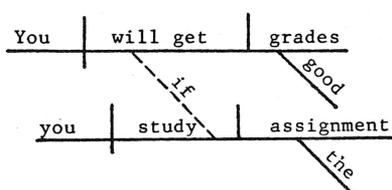
14. Sam likes baseball, but Joe prefers football.



15. Because it was raining, we could not play ball.



16. You will get good grades if you study the assignment.



OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

APPLE II

These programs are on self-starting diskettes and are loaded by inserting the diskette and then turning the computer on. A program disk may be restarted by holding down the CTRL key and pressing RESET, or by pushing RESET and then typing PR#6.

TRS-80 DISK

Turn on the machine. When the red light goes out in the lower drive, insert the disk, close the door, and press the RESET button. The program will load and run automatically.



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