

Classical Subjects *Creatively* Taught™

Well- Ordered Language

Level 2A

The Curious Child's Guide to Grammar

Tammy Peters and Daniel Coupland, PhD





Well-Ordered Language:
The Curious Child's Guide to Grammar
Level 2A
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At a Glance

Book A

Chapter	Main Topic	Supplemental Topics
1	Four Kinds of Sentences & Principal Elements	End marks: periods, question marks, and exclamation points; action verbs and helping verbs
2	Adverbs	Punctuation with addresses; <i>not</i> and <i>never</i> as adverbs
3	Adjectives	Use of commas to separate cities and states; correct usage of articles <i>a</i> and <i>an</i>
4	Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects	Units of measure and their abbreviations; transitive and intransitive predicate verbs
5	Predicate Nominatives	Titles before and after proper names and their abbreviations; linking verbs
6	Predicate Adjectives	Proper adjectives; use of hyphens for adjectives indicating how many years old; linking verbs
7	Predicate Review	Use of commas in dates
8	Possessive Nouns	Use of apostrophe and letter <i>s</i> ; use of commas to separate items in a list

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Well-Ordered Language

A Classical Approach to English Grammar Instruction

Why Study Grammar?

We study grammar because we wish to master language, and language cannot be easily mastered without grammar. Grammar is the study of what makes language work—the way letters form words, the way words form sentences, the way sentences express human thought.

An educated person wants to understand the rich variety of human thought enshrined in language of all sorts—books from yesterday and the last millennium, books in English and books in other languages as well. An educated person also yearns to express himself clearly, accurately, and completely. It is the study of grammar that yields the capacity to do this, and the student who sees the connection between the study of grammar and the mastery of language will study grammar with zeal.

Learning Grammar, Teaching Grammar

We have designed Well-Ordered Language (WOL) with the understanding that many teachers who will use this book don't know grammar as well as they would like. As a result, we have created a rich teacher's edition that will enable teachers to review and deepen their own understanding of grammar even as they teach students.

We have also worked to provide a clear, incremental presentation of grammar in this series that includes plenty of illustrations, practice, and review. For example, in each chapter, students will memorize through song clear definitions of relevant grammatical concepts. Helpful analogies and attractive graphical illustrations at the beginning of each chapter introduce and complement the concepts in the chapter. Students also will discover emerging from the sentence exercises a story that features characters who appear throughout the text and in the graphical illustrations.

Effective Teaching Methods

The series employs an innovative choral analysis method that makes learning enjoyable and permanent. With clear guidance from the teacher's edition, instructors will easily

be able to lead students through the choral analysis of grammar, and through this analysis, students will understand how grammar is embodied in the sentences they study. In *Well-Ordered Language Level 2* and beyond, the students also learn to diagram, visualizing the grammatical relationships within sentences. The program has been layered concept on concept, an approach that aids students in experiencing and mapping how a well-ordered language works. As their mastery of grammar develops, students also understand poems and stories more thoroughly and enjoy them more deeply.

Learning with Delight

We think that the right study of grammar should lead to delight. The traditional study of grammar should be more than mere rote memorization of rules; it must also include opportunities for students to engage language in works of literature and human expression. As students acquire a greater capacity to understand language and use it effectively themselves, they will experience joy and delight. This is one reason we have included for grammatical study beautiful poetry and excerpts from great literature. Students will see that their ongoing study of grammar will open up a deeper understanding of beautiful literature that both instructs and delights.

Compelling Need

In this cultural moment, there is a desperate need for language that is well ordered. Today's discourse is often filled with ambiguity, equivocation, and crudeness. Those who have mastered a well-ordered language not only will stand out as eloquent and clear but also will be able to say well what they mean and to say what others will heed. It will be those with a command of language who will be able to mine the wisdom of the past and to produce eloquence in the future.

Ongoing Support

We have created not only a series of texts but a constellation of products that will help teachers to use WOL effectively. Visit our website at ClassicalAcademicPress.com for additional support for using WOL, including downloadable PDF documents for printing and copying as well as other resources.

Thank you for joining us in this most important work of restoring a well-ordered language for the next generation!

Lesson-Planning Options

The Well-Ordered Language series is designed to be flexible, adaptable, and practical. Depending on her needs, the teacher can modify lessons to meet particular classroom expectations. The following options for teaching each chapter assume a 30–40 minute period.

	Option A (4 times per week)	Option B (3 times per week)	Option C (5 times, one week)
Week One	Day One ◇ Ideas to Understand ◇ Terms to Remember ◇ Sentences to Analyze & Diagram	Day One ◇ Ideas to Understand ◇ Terms to Remember ◇ Sentences to Analyze & Diagram	Day One ◇ Ideas to Understand ◇ Terms to Remember ◇ Sentences to Analyze & Diagram
	Day Two ◇ Lesson to Learn A	Day Two ◇ Lesson to Learn A	Day Two ◇ Lesson to Learn A
	Day Three ◇ Lesson to Learn B	Day Three ◇ Lesson to Learn B	Day Three ◇ Lesson to Learn B
	Day Four ◇ Lesson to Enjoy—Poem*		Day Four ◇ Lesson to Learn C
			Day Five ◇ Quiz (PDF)
Week Two	Day Five ◇ Sentences for Practice*	Day Four ◇ Lesson to Learn C	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> *The tales for chapters 1, 3–6, and 8 and the poems for chapters 2 and 7 can be found in the downloadable Extra Practice & Assessments PDF. </div>
	Day Six ◇ Lesson to Learn C	Day Five ◇ Sentences for Practice (if needed) and/or Lesson to Enjoy—Poem* <i>alternative</i> ◇ Sentences for Practice—Tale and/or Lesson to Enjoy—Tale*	
	Day Seven ◇ Sentences for Practice—Tale* ◇ Lesson to Enjoy—Tale*	Day Six ◇ Quiz (PDF)	
	Day Eight ◇ Quiz (PDF)		

Introduction to Students

Imagine receiving an amazing model of a castle, a pirate ship, or a spaceship. What would it look like? Imagine that this model is already constructed from hundreds of Legos of all colors and shapes. It even includes gizmos and gadgets. It is marvelous.

What would you do with it? Probably, after you set it on a table to admire it for a while, your curiosity would get the best of you, wouldn't it? Perhaps you would break the model apart into pieces to see how it's put together—how it's constructed. While doing that, you might scribble notes to remember which pieces fit into what part, or you might draw a picture to help understand it further. Then you would rebuild it.

That's what you do when you *analyze* a sentence. You take something amazing—a thought or an idea—which has been constructed into something marvelous—a sentence. You break it apart into words. You name the part of speech of each word. You identify how the parts of the sentence work together. You mark them with symbols and arrows that show how they connect to each other.

Then, just as you might draw a picture of the model castle or spaceship, you draw the sentence. **That's what you do when you *diagram* a sentence.** You draw the sentence parts, using horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines to show the connections between those parts. The lines of the diagram help you to understand the idea in the sentence. The complete thought expressed in the sentence becomes a blueprint for everyone to see.

A sentence isn't something to just set on a shelf to admire; it is something to experience.

Analyzing and diagramming are tools that bring order to thought. Humans need to analyze and diagram in order to understand, to plan, to act—to build. Consider the instructions for making model airplanes; maps for finding destinations; blueprints for building houses; medical sketches for learning anatomy; storyboards for producing movies. In short, there are plans and illustrations for just about every activity.

Analyzing and diagramming are skills. In *Well-Ordered Language Level 1 (WOL Level 1)*, you learned analysis, the skill of breaking a sentence into its parts and thoroughly understanding those parts. Here in *WOL Level 2*, you will add to it another skill—diagramming. Both analyzing and diagramming are skills that help you know how language works.

With pen and paper, you can go far beyond the limitations of plastic bricks. With the skills you learn in WOL, you can build almost anything you imagine because you are building with words.





Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

Have you ever fished off a bridge? Have you ever tossed twigs from a bridge and watched them sail beneath and beyond? Have you ever walked across a bridge to which tourists flock, snapping pictures and catching their breath in amazement, such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco? Rickety wooden footbridges on a park trail, ancient stone bridges built by the Romans, incredibly huge bridges that are accomplishments of modern engineering—they all have something in common. Bridges are constructed to provide passage over such things as rivers, ravines, or roadways.

Similarly, certain parts of speech act as grammatical bridges that provide passage within a sentence. For instance, the predicate verb can act like a bridge connecting the subject to something else. That something is called a *direct object*. The direct object receives the action of the verb. For example, in the sentence “The children made a paper boat,” the predicate verb *made* is the bridge connecting the subject *children* with the direct object *boat*.

Now, let us point out that there are some bridges that actually go nowhere. They are bridges that have one or both ends that do not lead to something. That may seem silly because bridges are meant to span, or go between, two different banks, but there is nothing ridiculous about predicate verbs that do not take a direct object. They are simply a different class of predicate verb. For example, in the sentence “The paper boat sank,” the predicate verb doesn’t need a direct object to receive the action. The poor homemade boat simply sank, end of sentence. This chapter covers the different kinds of verbs, focusing on predicate verbs that connect subjects and direct objects—in other words, verbs that are bridges to something.

Ideas to Understand

In his poem “The Blind Men and the Elephant,” John Godfrey Saxe describes six blind men who try to determine the nature of an elephant. Unable to see the huge beast, each man reaches a conclusion about the whole animal based on what he can feel. The problem is that each man is touching only the part of the elephant’s body that he happened to stumble upon. Here are the lines that describe the first man’s observation:

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
“God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!”¹

The first line of this stanza contains the principal elements and expresses a complete thought, so it could stand as a complete sentence: “The First approached the Elephant.” Notice that the predicate verb *approached* is the bridge between the subject *First* and something else; the verb leads from the subject directly to an object, namely the *Elephant*. *Elephant* completes the meaning of the verb *approached* because it tells what the first man approached. The First approached *what*? The First approached the *Elephant*. A direct object is an objective element that tells what the subject is acting on. It is a noun or pronoun after a transitive verb. It answers the question *what?* or *whom?* after the verb in a sentence.

The only kind of verb that connects to a direct object is a transitive verb. Understanding all the different kinds of verbs helps you identify the ones that are transitive and therefore helps you identify direct objects too. As you may know, verbs are divided into four groups, or classes, according to their meaning and their use in a sentence—*transitive verbs*, *linking verbs*, *intransitive verbs*, and *helping verbs*.

To the Source:

■ transitive

The word *transitive* comes from the Latin word *transire*, meaning “to cross.” A transitive verb makes a transition from the subject to the direct object.

The *transitive*[■] verb is a verb that always has an objective element and tells *what* or *whom* the subject is acting on in a sentence. A transitive verb is the bridge that connects the subject and direct object, as we saw in the sentence “The First approached the Elephant.” *What* did the first man approach? The first man approached the *elephant*.

1. John Godfrey Saxe, “The Blind Men and the Elephant,” in *Anthology of Children’s Literature*, ed. Edna Johnson, Carrie Scott, and Evelyn Sickels (Cambridge, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), pp. 63–64.

There is another type of verb called a *linking verb*. Rather than creating a bridge to a direct object like a transitive verb, this verb joins the subject to the predicate like an equal sign. For example, in the sentence “An elephant is a wall,” an elephant is being a wall. In the next two chapters, we will discuss more about linking verbs and the way they join subjects to predicates.

The *intransitive verb* is a predicate verb that expresses action like transitive verbs do, but it does not have an objective element. There is no need to ask *what?* or *whom?* after an intransitive verb because intransitive verbs do not need objects to complete them. For example, this sentence is complete in itself: “The blind man commented.” In a way, *commented* is a bridge to nowhere. The Latin roots of *intransitive* include not only *transire* (to cross) but also *in*, which means “not.” It does *not* cross over. The intransitive verb does not take an objective element or join a subject to a predicate.

The *helping verb*, or auxiliary verb, helps another verb express its meaning. *Auxiliary* is from the Latin word *auxilium*, meaning “to aid, help, support.” A helping verb is placed alongside a transitive, linking, or intransitive verb to form a *verb phrase*. Both words work together as one action, as in this sentence: “The elephant *is smirking*.” Both verbs—*is* and *smirking*—work as one unit, a verb phrase that tells the action of *elephant*.

Knowing the four classes of verbs enables you to identify the kind of verb that this chapter focuses on: transitive verbs. Now let’s look more closely at what they bridge: *subjects*, which are nouns or pronouns, and *direct objects*, which are also nouns or pronouns. Just as bridges can connect two banks or cliffs, transitive verbs connect nouns or pronouns.

A subject or direct object can be either a proper[■] noun or a common[■] noun. A *proper noun* names a particular person, place, or thing. Its first letter is always capitalized, which helps you identify it. The names of people, cities, states, and even things such as the Liberty Bell are examples of proper nouns. A *common noun* is any noun that is not a proper noun. *Flashlights, maps, erasers*, and even *acorns* are examples of common nouns. If a noun can be preceded by an article adjective (*the, a, or an*), it is likely a common noun.

Here is a sentence with a proper noun as a subject and a common noun as a direct object: “John Godfrey Saxe wrote a poem.” The subject names a particular person, and the direct object names any poem. They

To the Source:

■ proper

The word *proper* comes from the Latin word *proprius*, meaning “one’s own, particular to itself.”

To the Source:

■ common

The word *common* comes from the Latin word *communis*, meaning “public, shared by many, or general.”

are connected with the transitive verb *wrote*. Sometimes the direct object can be a proper noun too, as in this sentence: “The elephant was called Magnus.” The subject *elephant* is a common noun, but the direct object is the name of an elephant, the proper noun *Magnus*.

II Pause for Punctuation

- ◇ An **abbreviation** is a short form of a word or title. Abbreviations for most units of measurements are written in lowercase letters and are followed by periods.

inch/inches = in. foot/feet = ft. yard/yards = yd. mile/miles = mi.

- ◇ Abbreviations for metric units *do not* end with periods.

millimeter/millimeters = mm centimeter/centimeters = cm

kilometer/kilometers = km meter/meters = m

Terms to Remember

As you may have noticed, this chapter includes a lot of terms. Learning these two new songs will help you recognize all the concepts and remember all the definitions.

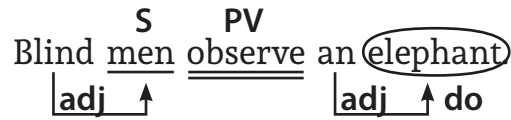
- ◇ Direct Object (1–9)
- ◇ Four Classes of Verbs (1–10)



Sentences to Analyze and Diagram

Now you are ready to analyze sentences that contain transitive verbs and direct objects. That means the order of analysis that you’ve learned so far will be slightly changed. You will still need to identify the subject and then the predicate first, but then you are to identify the direct object. Next, identify each modifier (adverbs and adjectives) starting at the end of the sentence (right-hand side) and working toward the beginning.

Follow these steps to analyze the following sentence with your teacher’s guidance. Remember to mark the sentence as you say the analysis aloud.



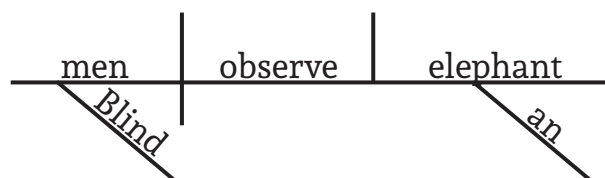
- a. First, read the sentence aloud. “Blind men observe an elephant.”
- b. “This is a sentence, and it is declarative.”
- c. “This sentence is about *men*. So, *men* is the subject because it is what the sentence is about.” (Since *men* is the subject, underline it and place a capital letter *S* above it.)
- d. “This sentence tells us that men *observe*. So, *observe* is the predicate because it is what the sentence tells us about *men*.” (Since *observe* tells us something about *men*, double underline the predicate and place a capital letter *P* above it.)
- e. “It is a predicate verb because it shows action. There is no linking verb because predicate verbs do not need linking verbs.” (Since *observe* shows action, place a capital letter *V* to the right of the letter *P*.)
- f. “These are the principal elements because they are what are needed for the sentence to be completed.”
- g. “*Elephant* tells us *what* men observe.” (Since *elephant* tells what men observe, draw a circle around it.)
- h. “So, *elephant* is an objective element because it completes the meaning of an action verb. It is a direct object because it tells *what* men observe.” (Write *do* in lowercase letters beneath the direct object.)
- i. (Now move from right to left from the end of the sentence to the beginning.) “*An* tells us *how many* elephants.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it modifies.) “So, *an* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective (or article).” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)
- j. “*Blind* tells us *what kind* of men.” (Draw a straight line down from the adjective, then a horizontal line toward the word that it modifies, and then a straight line with an arrow pointing to the word it

modifies.) “So, *blind* is an adjectival element because it modifies a noun. It is an adjective.” (Write *adj* in lowercase letters in the elbow opposite the line with the arrow.)

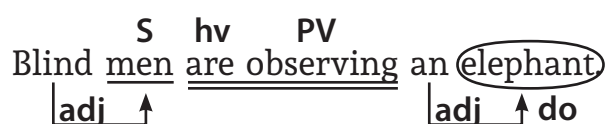
When you diagram a sentence that includes a transitive verb, the subject, predicate verb, and direct object all rest on the baseline. The subject is located on the left and is separated from the verb by a vertical line that crosses the baseline. The verb is between the subject and the direct object. The direct object rests to the right side of the direct object line, which is a vertical line that *does not* cross the baseline. If any modifiers are present, they will be written on diagonal lines under the nouns or verbs they modify.



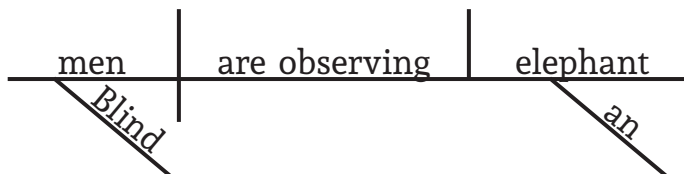
In the following diagram, notice that *men* is the subject and is written on the left side of the baseline. The dividing line separates the subject and the predicate verb—*observe*—while the word *elephant* is written on the right side of the baseline with the direct object line separating *observe* and *elephant*. The two adjectives—*blind* and *an*—are written on diagonal lines under the words they modify.



As you may remember, when you analyze a sentence that has a verb phrase and a direct object, helping verbs and transitive verbs are individually marked with *hv* and *PV*. Both words, however, are double underlined.



When you diagram a sentence that has a verb phrase and a direct object, place the helping verb and transitive verb together. For example, in the sentence “Blind men are observing an elephant,” the verb phrase *are observing* is placed on the baseline between the two vertical lines. Remember, when you diagram a sentence that has a direct object modified by an adjective, the adjective is written on a diagonal line slanting from left to right underneath the direct object.



Lesson to Learn

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects



1. Analyze the following sentences, and then diagram them in the space provided. Use a ruler to draw the lines.

a. Carelessly, Eden ate the cornbread.

b. Max made a terrible mess.

c. Cornbread crumbs filled every corner.

d. Afterward, the children swept the kitchen.

A

Lesson to Learn Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

2. Imagine Chip was under the table while the children were in the kitchen. Write a sentence including a *direct object* telling what Chip ate.

3. On the lines provided, write the correct abbreviations for the following measurements.

Unit of Measurement	Abbreviation	Unit of Metric Measurement	Abbreviation
inch/inches	_____	millimeter/millimeters	_____
foot/feet	_____	centimeter/centimeters	_____
yard/yards	_____	kilometer/kilometers	_____
mile/miles	_____	meter/meters	_____

4. On the lines provided, write the definition of a *direct object*. _____



Lesson to Learn

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

B

1. Analyze the following sentences, and then diagram them in the space provided. Use a ruler to draw the lines.

a. The kids carefully stacked the paint cans.

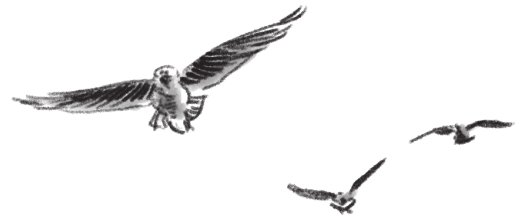
b. Later, Millie filled the sturdy basket.

c. Eden threw away the old boxes.

d. Max dragged the plastic bags out.

B

Lesson to Learn Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects



2. Imagine that Loki found something behind the trashcans. Write *one* sentence telling *what* Loki found.

3. Look around your classroom and then, in the table below, write a list of what and who you see, placing them in the correct category: proper or common nouns.

Proper Nouns

Common Nouns

4. Write the definition of a *direct object*.

Lesson to Learn

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects



1. Analyze the following sentences, and then diagram them in the space provided. Use a ruler to draw the lines.

a. Otis proudly had a lemonade stand.

b. Calvin might be making a big sign too.

c. Impatiently, Max wanted some lemonade.

d. Eventually, several neighbors came around.

C

Lesson to Learn Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

2. Imagine that Max wanted to help at Otis's lemonade stand. Write *one* sentence telling *what* Max did at the lemonade stand.

3. Using the verbs provided, fill in the missing transitive verbs in the following sentences.

Example: Otis read the pirate book.

spied

greeted

closed

read

saluted

raised

saw

finished

- a. The captain _____ the crew.
b. The first mate _____ the flag.
c. A crewmember _____ a pirate ship.
d. Otis _____ the book.

4. Write the definition of a *direct object*. _____



Sentences for Practice

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

Analyze the following sentences.

1. The October air briskly blew.
2. Aunt Bea was pruning the roses.
3. Several children are helping now.
4. Uncle Roy was planting a tiny maple tree.
5. The boys were digging a deep hole.
6. Suddenly, two boys discovered a heavy brick.

Sentences for Practice

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

7. One boy used the big shovel.

8. Then, Otis lowered the tree down.

9. Later, the bell rang loudly.

10. The whole family gave thanks together.



Lesson to Enjoy—Poem

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

Do you ever wonder if things, such as a bench in a park or a road sign along the highway, have feelings? Hilda Conkling, an American poet who wrote most of her poems before she turned ten years old, must have had such thoughts. In this poem, she personifies a bridge and describes its feelings. To personify means to give human characteristics to an object. We considered bridges to somewhere and bridges to nowhere at the beginning of this chapter. Do you think Conkling's personified bridge goes somewhere? If so, where?

The Old Bridge

by Hilda Conkling (1910–1986)

The old bridge has a wrinkled face.
He bends his back
For us to go over.
He moans and weeps
But we do not hear.
Sorrow stands in his face
For the heavy weight and worry
Of people passing.
The trees drop their leaves into the water;
The sky nods to him.
The leaves float down like small ships
On the blue surface
Which is the sky.
He is not always sad:
He smiles to see the ships go down
And the little children
Playing on the river banks.²

2. Hilda Conkling, "The Old Bridge," in *Modern American Poetry*, ed. Edna Johnson, Carrie Scott, and Evelyn Sickels (Cambridge, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), p. 396. Available online at: <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=OrorYOML5EYC&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA396>.

Lesson to Enjoy—Poem

Predicate Verbs & Direct Objects

Questions to Ponder

1. What type of bridge do you imagine when you read this poem?
2. What human characteristics and feelings are given to the bridge?
3. What is the meaning of “He moans and weeps but we do not hear”?
4. How are leaves described in the poem?

