

Sentence and Phrase

Difference between a Sentence and a Phrase

What do you understand by the words **SENTENCE** and **PHRASE**?

Sentence

A **Sentence** is a **group of words that makes complete sense**. It does not depend upon anything else to make its meaning clear.

For example:

Raju hit the ball.

Here, the individual words 'Raju' 'hit' 'the' 'ball' combine to form a group that has a particular meaning—*someone named Raju has hit the ball*.

A sentence consists of two parts—**subject** and **predicate**. The subject of a sentence is **the person, place, thing or idea being talked about**. The predicate consists of a word or words which show **what is being talked about the person, place, thing or idea**.

Let us take the previous example:

[Raju] [hit the ball.]

Here, 'Raju' is the subject. He is the **topic of the sentence**. The remaining part of the sentence forms the predicate as it contains all the **information regarding the topic** (i.e., Raju).

The Subject and Predicate of a Sentence

The Subject of a Sentence

The subject of a sentence is a **noun, pronoun or a group of words that acts as a noun**.

A noun, as you know, is a person, place, thing or idea.

For example:

Geeta moved the **table**.

(‘Geeta’ is the name of a person and ‘table’ is a thing.)

Paris is in **France**.

(‘Paris’ and ‘France’ are names of places.)

Freedom is good.

(‘Freedom’ is an idea.)

A pronoun is used in place of a noun.

For example:

She moved the table.

It is in France.

It is good.

(‘She’ and ‘it’ are examples of pronouns.)

Sometimes a group of words can also act as the noun.

For example:

To play professional tennis is my ambition.

(Here, ‘to play professional tennis’ is a group of words that acts as a noun. It is the subject of the sentence.)

The Predicate of a Sentence

The predicate of a sentence is composed of a verb, and either an object or a complement.

A verb, as you know, describes the action performed by its subject or the state of being of its subject.

For example:

Balram **kicked** the football.

(Here, 'kicked' is the verb that shows the action performed by the subject 'Balram'.)

Prachi **seems** happy.

(Here, 'seems' is the verb that shows the state of being of the subject 'Prachi'.)

In the last two examples, the predicate is composed of different elements.

In the first case, the predicate is composed of the verb and the object. What is this object? The object is the person or thing upon which the action is performed by the subject.

So,

Balram = **Subject**

Kicked the football = **Predicate**

Another way to express this is,

Balram = **Subject**

Kicked = **Verb**

The football = **Object**

Note: Like the subject, the object can be a noun, a pronoun or a group of words acting as a noun.

In the second case, the predicate is composed of the verb and the complement. What is this complement? The complement gives more information about the subject.

So,

Prachi = **Subject**

Seems happy = **Predicate**

Another way of writing this would be,

Prachi = **Subject**

Seems = **Verb**

Happy = **Complement**

Note: The complement can be a noun, an adjective or a group of words acting as a noun or an adjective.

Purposes of Sentences

On the basis of purpose, sentences can be divided as follows:

Declarative Sentences

A declarative sentence **makes some sort of declaration or statement.**

For example:

The service in that hotel is fantastic.

Here, the speaker of this sentence is making an assertion or stating a fact—*the service in a particular hotel is really good.*

Interrogative Sentences

An interrogative sentence **asks a question.**

For example:

Is Yudhishtir going to school?

Here, the speaker of this sentence is asking something—*whether Yudhishtir is going to school.*

Imperative Sentences

An imperative sentence **makes a request or gives a command.**

For example:

Open the door.

Please hold the bag for me.

In the first sentence, the speaker is commanding someone to do something—*open the door.*

In the second sentence, the speaker is requesting someone to do something—*hold the bag.*

Exclamatory Sentences

An exclamatory sentence **expresses some strong feeling or emotion.**

For example:

Oh no! My new dress is ruined!

Here, the speaker of this sentence is exclaiming her disappointment over something—*new dress is ruined*.

Purposes of Phrases

Within different sentences, phrases perform different roles. They can:

(a) Act as nouns: A noun is a person, place, thing or idea. Like a noun, a phrase working as a noun answers the questions *what* and *who*.

Also, like a noun, a phrase working as a noun can be the subject or object of a sentence.

[I] [saw] [**a ghost in the bed.**]

Here, 'a ghost in the bed' is the object of the action ('saw') performed by the subject ('I'). An object can only be a noun or a pronoun. Hence, in this sentence, the phrase is performing the role of a noun.

(b) Act as adjectives: An adjective describes or modifies a noun or a pronoun. Like an adjective, a phrase working as an adjective answers the question *which* and *of what kind*.

[My room] [is] [**full of books.**]

Here, 'full of books' is the complement of the verb ('is'). The complement tells us about the subject ('My room'). When you ask the question '*What kind of room is it?*', you get the answer 'it is *full of books*'. Hence, in this sentence, the phrase is performing the role of an adjective.

(c) Act as adverbs: An adverb describes a verb, an adjective or another adverb. Like an adverb, a phrase working as an adverb answers the questions *how*, *how much*, *how often*, *when*, *where* and *why*.

[The boy] [ran] [**into the house.**]

Here, 'into the house' is describing the verb ('ran'). When you ask the question 'ran *where?*', you get the answer 'into the house'. Hence, in this sentence, the phrase is performing the role of an adverb.