

# Prepositional and Adverbial Phrases



# Aim

- To identify prepositional phrases and adverbial phrases
- To distinguish between adverbial and noun phrases.



# Prepositions

- A preposition is a word that indicates place or direction.

**Examples:** across, into, between, above, beyond, towards, behind, over.

- Prepositions describe the relationship between the subject of a sentence and another object.

**For example:** The apple was under the table.

The glider flew through the air.

The boy walked towards the school.

Which of the following words are **prepositions**?

in

to

house

location

travel

walk

inside

tomorrow

visit

mountain

beside

later

journey

upon

off

during

# Prepositional Phrases

- A prepositional phrase includes the object that the preposition in a sentence is referring to and any other words that link it to the preposition.  
For example: He hid *beneath the duvet*.
- A prepositional phrase usually includes a preposition, a noun or pronoun and may include an adjective. IT DOES NOT INCLUDE THE VERB!

Can you pick out the **prepositional phrases** from these sentences?

The general ordered the troops to retreat **to the valley**.

Jules was delighted to find a present **inside the egg**.

Mike didn't think he could run **up the hill**.

Where could it be? It wasn't **in the box** and it wasn't **round the back**.

When the siren sounded they all set off **into the ancient woods**.

# Prepositional Phrases

How many prepositional phrases can you make using these prepositions and objects. Can you make any interesting ones?

down  
above  
among  
before  
under  
concerning  
between  
inside  
towards  
along

during  
beyond  
amid  
until  
over  
between  
to  
against  
beside

crow  
cow  
chocolate  
song  
tiger  
knife  
hamster  
carrots  
tune  
fridge

computer  
hill  
whale  
dawn  
trees  
cave  
mystery  
stadium  
beach

# Adverbs

- Adverbs are best known as being words which give us more information about verbs.  
**For example:** He ran quickly to the gate.  
However, they can also be used to moderate adjectives:  
He was extremely brave.  
- and other adverbs.  
He picked it up incredibly carefully.

Which of the following words are **adverbs**?

quickly

hunted

wishing

entirely

ancient

everywhere

nervously

wispy

ferociously

tomorrow

safely

deceive

# Adverbial Phrases

Adverbial phrases are two or more words that tell us more about a verb or an adjective.

They appear as a part of a sentence.

They do not make sense alone.

They tell us: how, where, when, how long or why.

Can you pick out the **adverbial phrase** from each of these sentences and decide what it tells us?

**With a smiling face**, he accepted the award. **Adverbial phrase tells us HOW.**

Milo liked to sleep **on his master's bed**. **Adverbial Phrase tells us WHERE.**

**For eight years**, she waited for a rescue ship. **Adverbial Phrase tells us HOW LONG.**

He would not do a bungee jump **because of the danger**. **Adverbial Phrase tells us WHY.**

# So What Is the Difference Between a Prepositional Phrase and an Adverbial Phrase?

A **PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE** is the overall term for any phrase that includes an object and a preposition (but not a verb).

One type of prepositional phrase is an **ADVERBIAL PHRASE**.

If a prepositional phrase answers any of these questions: 'Where?' 'When?' 'Why' or 'How', then it is also an adverbial phrase.



This is a **PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE** because it contains a preposition and an object, with no verb. It is also an **ADVERBIAL PHRASE** because it tells us **WHERE** he lost it.



# Which of These Prepositional Phrases Are Also Adverbial Phrases and Which Are Also Noun Phrases?

## Adverbial

Where? When? In what manner? To what extent?

## Noun

How many? Which one? What kind?

One fossil from Africa was 400 million years old. Noun phrase.

The markings on the animal were rare and unusual. Noun phrase.

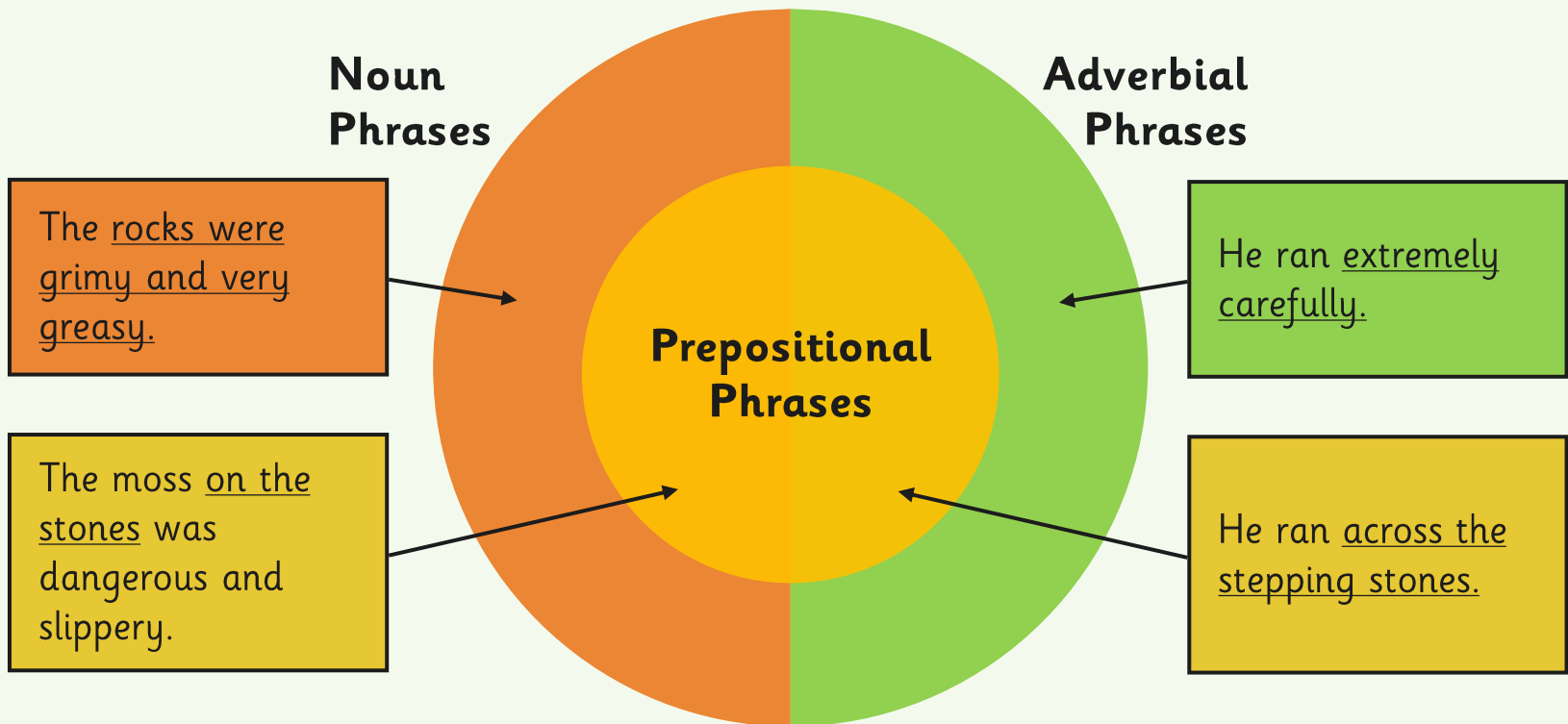
Several people each year are killed by vending machines. Adverbial phrase.

The car sped towards the wall. Adverbial phrase.

He flicked the coins into the pot. Adverbial phrase.

# So are all Adverbial Phrases also Prepositional Phrases?

Not quite – look at the Venn diagram below, complete with examples. Can you think of any more examples for each section?



# Would you like a challenge?

- Plan how to explain this to someone who doesn't understand it.
- Find more examples of each type of phrase in a range of books.
- Make a list of as many adverbial phrases as you can think of.



