Prepositional Phrases

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:
• Identify prepositional phrases.
• Brainstorm prepositional phrases.
• Identify prepositional phrases in sentences.

Preparation

Materials Needed
• Chart paper and markers
• Prepositional Phrases (BLM 3)
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation
If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling and practice texts onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, write the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.

1. Focus

Explain Prepositional Phrases

Say: Prepositions usually tell us where, when, what, and what kind. Biography writers use prepositional phrases often to give information about their subjects. Listen to this sentence: “Frederick fell asleep in her arms.” In this sentence, the words in her arms tell you where Frederick fell asleep. We call these words a prepositional phrase, and the preposition is the word in. A prepositional phrase includes a preposition and a noun or pronoun called the object of the preposition. In the prepositional phrase in her arms, the word arms is called the object of the preposition.

Say: I’m going to write a few sentences from a biography that include prepositional phrases. Then I will show you how to identify the prepositional phrases and objects of the prepositions.

Model Using Prepositional Phrases

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, and read it aloud to students.

1. She worked long hours on a distant plantation.
2. Frederick saw her only a few times in his young life.

Modeling Text

Say: In the first sentence, the prepositional phrase is on a distant plantation. The prepositional phrase tells where she worked. I will underline the phrase and circle the preposition on. I look for the noun or pronoun in the phrase to identify the object of the preposition. The object of the preposition is plantation.

In the second sentence, the phrase in his young life tells when he saw her. The preposition is in. The noun in the phrase that is the object of the preposition is the word life. Writers use prepositional phrases and prepositions when they write biographies. The prepositional phrases tell when and where events in a person’s life happened.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Prepositional Phrases

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Ask students to work with partners to identify the prepositional phrase and the object of the preposition in each practice sentence. Ask them to think about the purpose of each preposition in the sentences. (Students do not need to copy sentences.)

1. Frederick was born a slave on a large plantation.
2. He had served under three presidents.
3. Slave life was harsh on the plantation.

Practice Text

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences with Prepositions

Invite pairs to share which prepositional phrases and objects of the prepositions they identified in the sentences. Discuss their choices. Ask the following questions:

• What is the preposition in the sentence?
• What does the preposition tell us?
• What is the object of the preposition?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that phrases starting with prepositions are helpful in telling us where, when, and what kind. Prepositions are important in biographies because they provide details about a person’s life.

If you would like to give students additional practice using prepositional phrases in sentences, have them complete BLM 3.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud their answers and sentences they wrote on BLM 3. Use students’ answers to provide corrective feedback. Ask students to share what they learned about the prepositional phrases.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Practice using the prepositions in and from with students. Model the sentence frames I was born in ______ and I am from ______. Write each sentence and read it aloud. Point to where you were born on a map, if necessary, to help students understand. Circle the preposition in each sentence. Then ask students to use each sentence to talk about themselves. Point to each preposition and use the label preposition to describe it.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair students with fluent English speakers to complete the practice activity and the BLM. Model and write the following sentence frames on chart paper to help students talk about prepositions:

The prepositional phrase is ______.
The preposition is ______.
The object of the preposition is ______.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: object/el objeto; phrase/la frase; preposition/la preposición.