COMPLEMENTS
DIRECT AND INDIRECT OBJECTS, SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS
RECOGNIZING COMPLEMENTS

A complement is a word or word group that completes the meaning of a verb. Every sentence has a subject and a verb. Sometimes the subject and the verb can express a complete thought all by themselves.

Examples:
Adriana swam.
The puppy was sleeping.
RECOGNIZING COMPLEMENTS

Often, however, a verb needs a complement to complete its meaning.

- **Examples:**

  - **Incomplete:** My aunt found (what?)
  - **Complete:** My aunt found a wallet. (The noun wallet completes the meaning of the verb found.)
Examples:

Incomplete: Sarah bought (what?)
Complete: Sarah bought herself a new jacket. (The pronoun herself and the noun jacket complete the meaning of the verb bought.)

Incomplete: The longcase clock was (what?)
Complete: The longcase clock was an antique. (The noun antique completes the meaning of the verb was.)
RECOGNIZING COMPLEMENTS

Incomplete: The elephant seemed (what?)

Complete: The elephant seemed tired. (The adjective tired completes the meaning of the verb seemed.)
An adverb is never a complement.

**Adverb:** The koala chews slowly.
(The adverb *slowly* modifies the verb by telling *how* the koala chews.

**Complements:** The koala chews eucalyptus leaves. (The noun *leaves* completes the meaning of the verb *chews* by telling *what* the koala chews.)
RECOGNIZING COMPLEMENTS

A complement is never a part of a prepositional phrase.

Object of Preposition: Hannah is riding to her friend’s house. (The noun house is the object of the preposition to.)

Complement: Hannah is riding her bicycle. (The noun bicycle completes the meaning of the verb phrase is riding by telling what Hannah is riding.)
OBJECTS OF VERBS

Direct objects and indirect objects complete the meaning of transitive verbs.
DIRECT OBJECTS

The direct object is one type of complement. It completes the meaning of a transitive verb. A direct object is a noun, pronoun, or word group that tells who or what receives the action of the verb.
DIRECT OBJECTS

A direct object answers the question *Whom?* or *What?* after a transitive verb.

- **Examples:**
  - My brother bought a **model**. *(My brother bought what? Bought a **model**. The noun **model** receives the action of the verb **bought**.)*
  - Jan called somebody for the assignment. *(Jan called whom? Called somebody. The pronoun **somebody** receives the action of the verb **called**.)*
DIRECT OBJECTS

A direct object may be a compound of two or more objects.

Examples:
Did the car have spoked wheels and a spoiler? (The compound direct object of the verb Did have is wheel and spoiler.)
She needed glue, paint, and decals for her model. (The compound direct object of the verb needed is glue, paint, and decals.)
A direct object can never follow a linking verb because a linking verb does not express action.

Linking Verb: Julia Morgan was an architect. (The verb was does not express action; therefore, architect is not a direct object.)
The indirect object is another type of complement. Like the direct object, the indirect object helps complete the meaning of a transitive verb. If a sentence has an indirect object, it must also have a direct object.
INDIRECT OBJECTS

An indirect object is a noun, pronoun, or word group that usually comes between the verb and the direct object. An indirect object tells to whom or to what or for whom or for what the action of the verb is done.
INDIRECT OBJECTS

Examples:

- I gave that problem some thought. (The noun problem is the indirect object of the verb gave and answers the question “To what did I give some thought?”)
- Dad bought himself some peanuts. (The pronoun himself is the indirect object of the verb bought and answers the question “To whom did Dad buy some peanuts?”)
INDIRECT OBJECTS

If the word **to** or **for** is used, the nouns, pronoun, or word group following it is part of a prepositional phrase and cannot be an indirect object.

**Objects of Prepositions:**
The ship’s captain gave orders to the crew.
Vinnie made some lasagna for us.
INDIRECT OBJECTS

Like a direct object, an indirect object can be compound.

- **Examples:**

  She gave **Ed and me** the list of summer activities. (**Ed** and **me** are indirect objects of the verb **gave**. They answer the question "**To whom did she give the list?**")

  Did the peacock show **you and your sister** its tail?
SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS

A **subject complement** is a word or word group that is in the predicate and that identifies or describes the subject.

A linking verb connects a subject complement to the subject.

**Examples:**
Mrs. Suarez is a helpful
SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS

- **Examples:**
  
  The airport appears very busy. *(The subject complement busy describes the subject airport. The linking verb appears connects airport and busy.)*

  What smells so good? *(The subject complement good describes the subject what.)*
SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS

- **Examples:**
  
  He was the **one** in the middle of the line, in fact. (The subject complement **one** identifies the subject **He**. The linking verb **was** connects **He** and **one**.)

  The author of that story is **Anne McCaffrey**.
Subject complements always complete the meaning of linking verbs.

The two kinds of subject complements are the **predicate nominative** and the **predicate adjective**.
A predicate nominative is a word or word group that is in the predicate and that identifies the subject or refers to it.

A predicate nominative may be a noun, a pronoun, or a word group that functions as a noun.
PREDICATE NOMINATIVES

- Examples:
  Seaweed is **algae**, as I remember. (The noun *algae* is a predicate nominative following the linking verb *is*. *Algae* identifies the subject *Seaweed*.
  
  Was the first runner-up really he? (The pronoun *he* is the subject of the sentence.)
Expressions such as *It’s*, *I*, and *That was she* may sound awkward even though they are correct. In informal situations, many people use *It’s me* and *That was her*. Such expressions may one day become acceptable in formal situations as well. For now, however, it is best to follow the rules of standard, formal English in all formal speaking and writing.
Be careful not to mistake a direct object for a predicate nominative. A predicate nominative always completes the meaning of a linking verb.

Direct Object: My brother admired the acrobat. (Acrobat is the direct object of the action verb)
Examples:

Maya Angelou is a great poet and storyteller.

(Poet and storyteller are predicate nominatives. They identify the subject Maya Angelou and complete the meaning of the linking verb is.)
Examples:
Yesterday was my birthday, Labor Day, and the first day of the week! (Birthday, Labor Day, and day are predicate nominatives. They identify the subject Yesterday and complete the meaning of the linking verb was.)
A predicate adjective is an adjective that is in the predicate and that describes the subject. A predicate adjective is connected to the subject by a linking verb.

- **Examples:**

  By 9:30 P.M., I was very tired. (The adjective *tired* describes the subject *I*.)
Like a predicate nominative, a predicated adjective may be compound.

**Examples:**

The blanket felt **soft** and **fuzzy**. (Both **soft** and **fuzzy** describe the subject *blanket.*)

The cave looked **cold,** **damp,** and **uncomfortable**.