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Teaching Prepositions

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Examples of Prepositions

The following words are examples of some common prepositions:

above, after, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beside, between, beyond, by, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, out, outside, over, past, to, toward, under, up

Example: The boy woke *up* and walked *down* the steps. We first ask, "*up* what?" There is no object for that word so it is not a preposition. We then ask, "*down* what?" *Down the steps* is the answer which makes the word *down* a preposition. The prepositional phrase is *down the steps*, starting with the preposition *down* and ending with the object *steps*.



What Is a Preposition?

A *preposition* is a word that begins a prepositional phrase and shows the relationship between the noun and another word in the sentence. A preposition must have an object and often indicates a noun's location. Prepositions can also be used as other parts of speech such as adverbs. To decide how a word is used, say the preposition followed by *whom* or *what*. If a noun or a pronoun answers the question, the word is a preposition. Comprehension of prepositions is important for students' success in school, for example—following classroom instructions (e.g., "Put your homework folders *in* the bin *by* my desk.").



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Activities for Practicing Prepositions:

There are many ways to help children learn and practice prepositions at home, at school, and in the community. Read the examples below for some fun ideas!



Home

- Sing a song that has prepositions in it.
- Watch a TV show and talk about where the characters are in different scenes.
- Let your children help put dishes away by telling them where to put each item.
- Look through magazines with your children and cut out pictures that have objects in different places. Name the location of each object as you go.
- Talk about where plants/flowers are growing in the yard.
- Let your children help put groceries away by telling them where to put the food.
- Pick 1-2 toys to play with and hide them in different spots.



School

- Go for a nature walk and point out the locations of different things in the environment.
- Have students color pictures with several objects in different locations and scenes.
- Name items in the classroom and have students tell you their locations.
- Engage students by playing a following-directions game where they go around the room to find certain items.



Community

- Go shopping at the grocery store and talk with your children about where food is located.
- Go to a restaurant and let your children tell everybody where to sit at the table.
- Drive in the car and point out where you find common objects.
- Go to a retail store and have your children tell you where to find their favorite toys.

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