

Writing and Study Skills Services – Laurier Brantford
English Language Learners (ELL) Support Handout
Parts of Speech: Prepositions

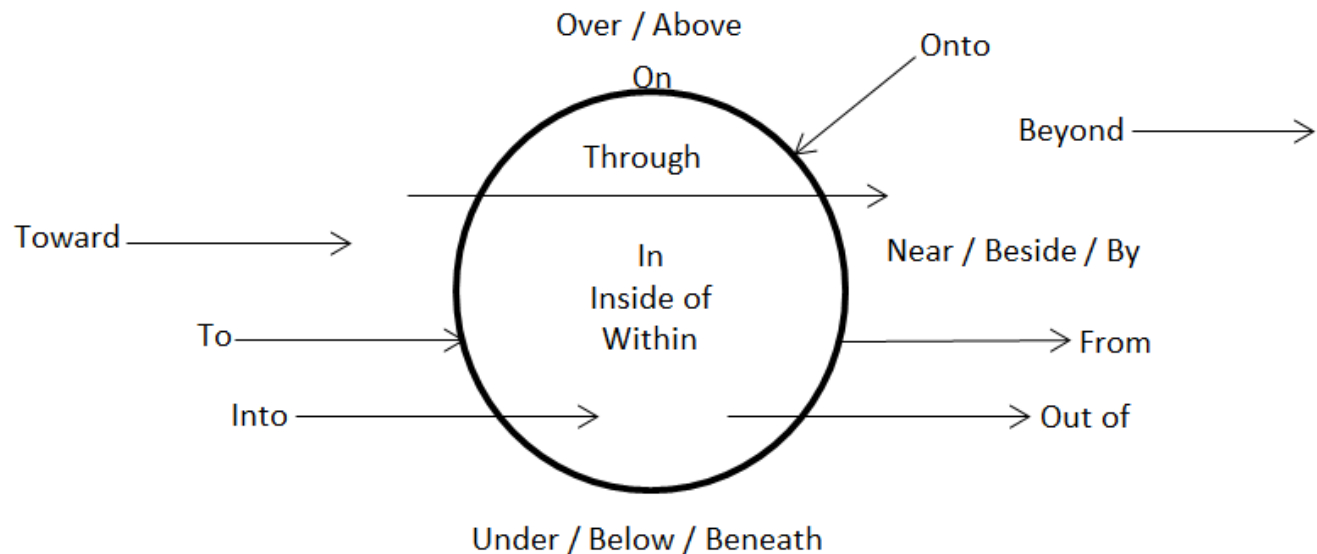
What Prepositions Do:

Ruvinsky explains that “prepositions don’t modify words (only adjectives and adverbs do that), but in linking the words of the phrase to the rest of a sentence, prepositions show important relationships” (21).

For example: Prepositions can indicate the time, position, direction, or manner of something.

Visual of Prepositions (adapted from Logos):

The following is a visual example of the relationship between an object and a preposition.



Practice Activity (A) - Circle the Preposition(s) in Each Sentence (from Ruvinsky 22):

1. “They will vote on the motion at this meeting.”
2. “We found your pocketbook in the house.”
3. “Flowers were planted along the path.”
4. “The author read from his new novel.”
5. “Rumors began to spread throughout the town.”
6. “He wrote a play about Canadian politicians.”
7. “The doctor walked into the room.”
8. “My cousin moved to Boston with her husband.”

Answers to Practice Activity (A):

1) On, At 2) In 3) Along 4) From 5) Throughout 6) About 7) Into 8) To, With

Deciding Which Preposition to Use When Writing (adapted from Coutlée et. al):
There are many instances where prepositions are needed. Here are some common categories.

When Referring to the Location of an Object (Where?):

- On:** a surface i.e.) She is on the field.
From: starting point i.e.) The book is from the library.
In: an area/volume i.e.) She is in the classroom.
To: another location i.e.) He moved from Canada to the United States.

When Referring to an Amount of Time (When or How Long?):

- For:** The time it takes to do something i.e.) I have been studying for three hours.
Since: A specific point in time i.e.) I have been studying since noon.
During: Inside a prolonged period of time i.e.) I took three breaks during my study session.
Until: End point of a period of time i.e.) I will study until 8:00.

When Referring to Movement (Where or How?):

- Through:** from one side to the other i.e.) We travel through Hamilton on our way to Toronto.
Toward: in the direction of something i.e.) Walk toward the fence and you will find the ball.

Prepositions are Not Needed After Certain Verbs (adapted from Perfect Your Grammar):

- Discuss:** We discussed her assignment. (NOT: We discussed about her assignment.)
Enter: He entered the grocery store. (NOT: He entered into the grocery store.)
Marry: He married his best friend. (NOT: He married to his best friend.)
Resemble: She resembles my mother. (NOT: She resembles to my mother.)
Lack: She lacks motivation. (NOT: She lacks of motivation.)
Approach: He cautiously approached the door. (NOT: He cautiously approached to the door.)

Practice Activity (B) – Circle the Correct Preposition for Each Sentence:

1. Bob was ____ the bus. (In / On / To / Leave Blank)
2. Oscar is ____ the car. (In / On / To / Leave Blank)
3. Jennifer had to choose three items ____ five. (Between / Among / Leave Blank)
4. Agnes entered ____ the school. (In / To / At / On / Leave Blank)
5. Lee only had to work ____ noon. (During / Until / Within / For / Leave Blank)
6. Rick found a stray cat ____ his walk. (At / In / During / Within / Leave Blank)
7. Marta practiced piano ____ an hour. (At / Since / For / To / Leave Blank)
8. Leah married ____ her high school sweetheart. (To / At / Leave Blank)
9. Carlos had to state his preference ____ two items. (Among / Between / Leave Blank)

Answers to Practice Activity (B):

1) On 2) In 3) Among 4) Leave Blank 5) Until 6) During 7) For 8) Leave Blank 9) Between

Works Cited

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Logos. "English Preposition Chart." Logos Bible Software, 2012. Web.
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