

Lesson 1 – Teaching Comprehension with Cascade Reading

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The Who and The Do: Teaching Subject and Predicate with Cascade Reading

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROPE - LESSON ONE

The first in our '[Other Side of the Rope](#)' lesson series intended to help teachers improve reading comprehension using Cascade Reading with their students. For more on this series and how to get started with Cascade Reading – [see our introductory post](#). [Download the PDF](#) for this lesson.

SUMMARY:

The most essential components of a complete sentence include the following:

- The 'who,' also known as the subject;
- The 'do,' also known as the predicate.

These basic building blocks get special attention in the Cascade Format. In this lesson, we'll explain subject-predicate formatting, show how you can use the Cascade Explorer to teach these concepts, and help students identify the 'who' and the 'do' as they read.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVE:

- Students will be introduced to the concept of subject and predicate.
- Students will understand the difference between a simple subject and predicate and a complete subject and predicate.
- Students will be introduced to the concept of embedded phrases and clauses.
- Students will explore how the subject and predicate are represented in a cascade.
- Students will explore how prepositional phrases are represented in a cascade.

SAMPLE SENTENCES:

This lesson will demonstrate Cascades for the sentences below:

The dog barked.

The sun brightly shines.

The little boy loudly cried.

Carlos dived into the refreshing swimming pool.

The kids on the hot bus stopped for ice cream.

The girl in the colorful dress with the yellow flowers sang happily as she walked.

LESSON – DIRECT TEACHING OF SKILL

Introduction

The most essential components of a complete sentence include the following:

1. It has a '**who**', also known as the subject.
2. It has a '**do**', also known as the predicate.

Modeling

Introduction of Cascade Principle One: Focusing on Subject and Predicate

Let's explore the cascade!

Example

The dog barked.

The cascade for this sentence looks like this:

```
The dog
barked.
```

Here is another example:

The sun brightly shines.

```
The sun
brightly shines.
```

What is the subject?

The sun

How did you know?

It is what shines.

What is the predicate?

brightly shines

How did you know?

It is what the sun does.

Example 2:

The little boy loudly cried.

```
The little boy
loudly cried.
```

What is the subject?

The little boy

What is the predicate?

loudly cried

What do we know about the boy?

He is little.

How did he cry?

He cried loudly.

Many sentences include prepositional phrases. A prepositional phrase is part of a sentence that begins with a preposition and gives more information about elements in the sentence. Let's see what that looks like in a cascade!

Example 3:

Carlos dived into the refreshing swimming pool.

```
Carlos
dived
| into the refreshing swimming pool.
```

Note – the Cascade Format includes alignment lines that make it easy to visually interpret indentations.

Who is the subject?

Carlos

What did Carlos do?

dived

Where did Carlos dive?

into the refreshing swimming pool

Notice how the prepositional phrase, into the swimming pool, was indented while the subject (*Carlos*) and predicate (*dived*) remained aligned. Even though the prepositional phrase adds extra information, you can still immediately find the ‘who’ and the ‘do’ because they are aligned.

What part of the sentence does the prepositional phrase go with? – It gives more information about the ‘do’ (where Carlos dived.). That is why it is indented under ‘dived’.

In Cascade, a prepositional phrase will always be indented under the part of the sentence that it describes. Here’s another example.

Example 4:

The kids on the hot bus stopped for ice cream.

```
The kids
|  on the hot bus
stopped
|  for ice cream.
```

What is the subject?

The kids

What is the predicate?

stopped

How many prepositional phrases did you see in this sentence?

two

What does “on the hot bus” describe?

the kids. That is why it is indented under ‘the kids.’

What does “for ice cream” describe?

stopped. That is why it is indented under ‘stopped’.

Notice that even though the prepositional phrases add more information about the subject and the predicate, the Cascade Format makes it easy to identify the basic subject and predicate because they are aligned.

The simple subject is ‘the kids.’ The entire subject is ‘the kids on the hot bus.’ The entire subject is referred to as a *complete subject*.

The simple predicate is ‘stopped.’ The entire predicate is ‘stopped for ice cream.’ The entire predicate is referred to as a *complete predicate*.

Example 5:

The girl in the colorful dress with the yellow flowers sang happily as she walked.

The girl
| in the colorful dress
| with the yellow flowers
sang
| happily
| as she
| walked.

What is the simple subject?

the girl

How do you know?

it's positioned all the way to the left

What is the simple predicate?

sang

How do you know?

it's aligned with the 'the girl'

How many prepositional phrases are there?

Two – 'in the colorful dress' and 'with the yellow flowers'

What part of the sentence do they go with?

'in the colorful dress' describes 'the girl' and 'with the yellow flowers' describes 'the dress'

How do you know?

Because each phrase is indented under the part of the sentence that it describes.

The *complete subject* is "The girl in the colorful dress with the yellow flowers." It includes the simple subject "the girl" and also the prepositional phrase that goes with "the girl", namely "in the colorful dress with the yellow flowers." This is actually a prepositional phrase with another embedded prepositional phrase, and we know it goes with "the girl" because the first part is indented under "the girl."

The complete subject also includes the prepositional phrase "with the yellow flowers" which gives more information about the dress. The Cascade Format shows this by indenting "with the yellow flowers" under "in the colorful dress."

We also have a complete predicate here- "sang happily as she walked." We know this because "happily" is indented under 'sang' and 'as she walked' is also indented under sang. Both of these phrases describe 'sang:'

How did she sing?

happily

When did she sing?

as she walked

Notice that "as she walked" is an embedded clause that contains its own subject and predicate.

What is the subject of the embedded clause?

she

What is the predicate of the embedded clause?

walked

Even though these subjects and predicates are indented under 'sang' they are still aligned in relation to each other. This makes it easy to see which subject goes with which predicate, and how the embedded clause is related to the main sentence about the girl singing.

We will discuss embedded clauses more in future lessons, as well as other types of modifying phrases.

CLOSURE

This lesson demonstrated how the Cascade Format helps a reader identify the subject and predicate of a sentence. We also explored how the Cascade Format uses indentations to show what parts of a sentence are related to other parts.

On your Exit Ticket, describe the two main parts of every sentence.

- What do they do?
- How are they written in a cascade?
- What is the difference between a simple subject/predicate and a complete subject/predicate?

Next, explain what it means when part of a sentence is indented in the Cascade Format.

EXIT TICKET

The two main elements of a sentence are a subject and a predicate. The subject identifies who or what is doing something in a sentence. The predicate tells what the subject is doing in a sentence.

The simple subject is on its own line and answers who or what did something in a sentence. A complete subject includes the simple subject plus all of the other words and phrases that are indented under it.

The simple predicate is aligned with the subject and answers what the subject did in a sentence. A predicate can also be complete. A complete predicate includes the simple predicate plus all the other words and phrases that are indented under it.

When a word or phrase is indented in the Cascade Format, it means that word or phrase describes the part of the sentence it is indented under.

LESSON SENTENCES

This lesson demonstrated Cascades for the sentences below:

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The little boy loudly cried.

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ADDITIONAL SAMPLE SENTENCES*

Copy and paste these sentences into Cascade Explorer to demonstrate the concepts explained here. Try out highlighting and labeling tools to show students how the Cascade changes for related sentences in this list.

For more practice with subject-verb alignment in Cascade:

Puppies are cuddly!

The weather is unpredictable.

The lady quickly screamed.

The lady screamed quickly.

Note that when 'quickly' is after the verb, it is indented under it to show that it modifies the verb. However, the subject-verb alignment of 'The lady screamed.' remains the same.

For more practice with prepositional phrases in Cascade.

Puppies with soft fur are cuddly!

The weather in Florida is unpredictable from one day to the next.

The lady at the scary movie quickly screamed.

For more practice with complete subjects and predicates in Cascade.

Newborn puppies with soft fur are so very cuddly!

The hot, steamy weather in Florida is completely unpredictable.

The nervous lady at the scary movie screamed in a panic.

For more practice with embedded prepositional phrases in Cascade.

Newborn puppies with circles around their eyes are so cuddly!

The weather in Florida was unpredictable on every day of this week.

The lady at the scary movie in the new theater screamed at the top of her lungs.

For more practice with embedded clauses in Cascade.

Newborn puppies who are learning to walk are cuddly.

The weather is unpredictable when hurricanes are possible.

The lady that the movie frightened screamed as she watched.

For writing practice, see the [Sentence Building Exercise](#) provided by Literacy How.

*NOTE: Try out your own sentences to illustrate these concepts! However, be aware that some errors in the Cascades are possible, because this is a Beta version of the algorithm (i.e., still under development). We encourage teachers to test out their sentences **before** using them in the classroom, in case unexpected results may occur.

LESSON RESOURCES

[Download the PDF](#) for this lesson.

[Sentence Building Exercise](#) provided by Literacy How