

# Sentences

“The fundamental problem of communication is that of reproducing at one point either exactly or approximately a message selected at another point.”

Claude Shannon

A Mathematical Theory of Communication

*The Bell System Technical Journal*,

Vol. 27, pp. 379–423, 623–656, July,

October, 1948

Write  
About  
Science **WAS**

The frimframs diggled the boofa

# What is a sentence?

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A grammatical unit that is syntactically independent

The American Heritage Dictionary

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Collins Essential English Dictionary

A sentence is a complete unit of thought

Little, Brown Handbook

The frimframs diggled the boofa



The artichokes ambled the signpost

The frimframs diggled the boofa

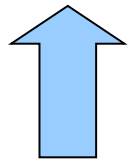
The electrons ionised the gas

A simple sentence  
or a declarative sentence

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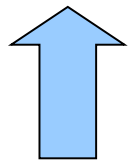
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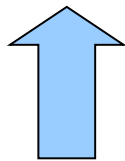
subject

A simple sentence  
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The electrons ionised the gas



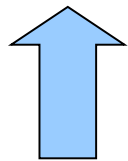
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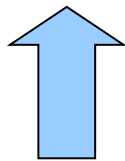
verb

A simple sentence  
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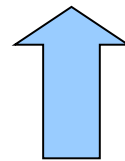
The electrons ionised the gas



subject



verb



object

Remember:

The main actor should always  
be the subject of the sentence



The intention of the physicists  
was to ionise the gas

The physicists intended to ionise  
the gas

The physicists made a  
decision to ionise the gas

The physicists decided to ionise  
the gas

# Exercise

In each case, select the sentence below that focuses best on the actor and action

1.

- a) Scientific literature does not have to have boring qualities.
- b) Scientific literature does not have to be boring.
- c) Boring qualities are not always a part of scientific literature.

2.

a) We must focus—in order to have an objective account of their themes and characters—on the books themselves.

b) We must focus on the books themselves so that we may have an objective account of their themes and characters.

c) In order to have an objective account of themes and characters, we must focus on the books themselves.

3.

- a) The focus of American philosophy is rugged individualism.
- b) American philosophy is rugged individualism.
- c) Rugged individualism is the focus of American philosophy.



4.

- a) Reductionism is an apparent theme in scientific literature.
- b) Scientific literature has a theme of reductionism which is apparent.
- c) An apparent theme in scientific literature is reductionism.

5.

a) The dominant social order, or the prevailing ideas of the time, challenges many popular science authors to think outside the box.

b) Challenging many popular science authors to think outside the box are the prevailing ideas of the time, or the dominant social order.

c) The consideration of the dominant social order, or the prevailing ideas of the time, challenges many popular science authors to think outside the box.

6.

- a) Over time, American society has come to value individuality.
- b) Individuality in American society has over time become valued.
- c) Over time, individuality has come to be valued by American society.

- 7.
- a) As early as 1832, Alexis de Tocqueville, in his book Democracy in America, wrote about the national desire for individualism.
  - b) As early as 1832, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in his book, Democracy in America, about the national desire for individualism.
  - c) As early as 1832, the national desire for individualism was written about by Alexis de Tocqueville in his book, Democracy in America.
  - d) A national desire for individualism was observed as early as 1832 by Alexis de Tocqueville in his book, Democracy in America.

# The Passive Voice

Passive: The ball was kicked by Janet

Passive: The ball was kicked

# The Passive Voice

Passive: The ball was kicked by Janet

Passive: The ball was kicked

Active: Janet kicked the ball

Passive: The gas was ionised by the electrons

Passive: The gas was ionised by the electrons

Active: The electrons ionised the gas



The boofa sab diggled osi the frimframs

The boofa sab diggled osi the frimframs

The gas was ionised by the electrons

# Remote verbs

All children (n = 99, 54 boys and 45 girls) born between 1990 and 1995, adopted during 1993-1997 from Poland, Romania, Russia, Estonia and Latvia through authorised adoption agencies in Sweden and living in the region of Vastra Götland, were invited to participate in the study.

# Remote verbs

We invited to participate in the study all children...

# Exercise

## Sample answers

1. The emergence of swine flu occurred in the US in 1998 and hog farms across North America have since found it to be endemic.

## Sample answers

*1. Swine flu emerged in the US in 1998 and has since become endemic in hog farms across North America.*

## Sample answers

2. Equipped with a suite of pig, bird and human genes, the evolution of swine virus has been happening rapidly.



## Sample answers

*Swine virus has been evolving rapidly, equipped with a suite of pig, bird and human genes.*

## Sample answers

3. Many animals are known to become infected with flu, including waterfowl, pigs and humans.

## Sample answers

*Flu infects many animals, including waterfowl, pigs and humans.*

## Sample answers

4. Were a pig to catch two kinds of flu at once, it could start to act as a mixing vessel, and it is possible for hybrids to emerge with genes from both viruses.

## Sample answers

*If a pig catches two kinds of flu at once, it can act as a mixing vessel. When this happens, hybrids can emerge with genes from both viruses.*

## Sample answers

5. Few fossil traces were left by the very first animals.

## Sample answers

*The first animals left few fossil traces.*

## Sample answers

6. A sketch of our great-to-the-nth grandmother is slowly being pieced together by evolutionary detectives by comparing the genes of living organisms and painstakingly working out family trees.



## Sample answers

*Evolutionary detectives are piecing together a sketch of our great-to-the-nth grandmother by comparing the genes of living organisms and working out family trees.*

## Sample answers

7. The confirmation of this close kinship comes from DNA sequence comparisons.

## Sample answers

*DNA sequence comparisons confirm this close kinship.*

Remember:

Remember:

Make the main actor in your thoughts the subject of your sentences

