

Diagramming: Step-By-Step

1. Identify the sentence type, either declarative, interrogative, or imperative.
 - If it is declarative, move to step 2.
 - If it is interrogative, rewrite as declarative and move to step 2.
 - If it is imperative, (you) is the subject. Move to step 2.
2. Identify and circle all prepositional phrases and deal with those later. At this point they only clutter things up.
3. Identify the subject(s) and verb(s). Watch out for compound parts. Don't forget that verb phrases always stay together.
4. Determine if the verb is action or linking.
 - If it is action, check to see if there is something receiving that action. If so, there is a direct object that needs to be expressed in the diagram following a vertical line, sitting on the horizontal.
 - If there is no direct object, move on to step 5.
 - If it is a linking verb, identify it and diagram the predicate noun or predicate adjective it links back to the subject, following a back-slanting line, sitting on the horizontal.
5. Identify and diagram any modifiers (adjectives or adverbs)
6. Look back at the prepositional phrases you circled. Determine what word(s) they are modifying and diagram accordingly.
7. Read the diagram and see if it will reflect the original sentence. Double check for your capital letter signifying the beginning of the sentence.