AUNT LILY'S
MINI-GUIDE TO GRAMMAR FOR BUSY EDUCATORS

UNIT/CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
PHRASE Noun phrase (NP) Verb phrase (VP) Adjective phrase (AdjP) Adverb phrase (AdvP) Preposition phrase (PP)	A word or a group of words that function as a unit, but falls short of a complete thought. Different kinds of phrases, corresponding to the word class of its head: NOUN, VERB, ADVERB, ADJECTIVE, or PREPOSITION. Phrases can be simple, conjoined or complex––i.e., they can contain other phrases, which in turn can contain phrases, and even clauses!	**NPs:** moths, the moth, the growing moths, 20 moths, it, the markings on a moth's wing, any member of the Lepidoptera family that folds its wings into a tent over its body, its inability to–; **VPs:** ate a hole in the leaf; are insects; grew larger; do it, are eating a hole, might have been eating a hole in the wall; **AdjP:** very tall, day-glo orange, quite lovely; exceptionally long-winded; quite crazy; **AdvP:** quite likely, very wisely, widely, everyday, each year, once in a while, etc. **PP:** in the house, on its nose, with a spoon, witout much hair, until tomorrow, during the first several stages in the transformation from egg to pupa to chrysalis…
CLAUSE (NPsubj)-VPpred	A clause is formed around a VP, and implies a subject NP even when it is not present––it can be recovered from context. Types of clauses: independent, dependent (subordinated, embedded) as with relative clauses (see below.)	Each year, he traveled hundreds of miles on foot [[wearing a coffee sack with holes cut out for arms] and [[carrying a cooking pot], [which [he is said to have worn like a cap over his flowing hair.]]]
Sentence (S) S⟶ **NP**subj - **VP**pred	A grammatically complete structure (i.e., includes a subject and a predicate) expression of a thought.	His name was Jonathan Chapman. He planted apple trees and he moved on.
Sentence (S) S⟶ **NP**subj - **VP**pred	A grammatically complete structure (i.e., includes a subject and a predicate) expression of a thought. Single, compound, complex	In 1801, Chapman transported 16 bushels of apple seeds from western He planted apple trees and he moved on. In 1801, Chapman transported 16 bushels of apple seeds from western

Verb Phrase $VP \longrightarrow V \dots$	The verb is said to be the focal point of any sentence. The verb used in a sentence determines what else has to appear in the VP to complete it. Structures that complete the meaning of a verb are called "complements"--these can take the form of any of the phrase types mentioned above, or of a clause. The following is a very partial list of verb types categorized by their required complements:	
1. **VP**$\longrightarrow$**V**	Verbs such as *fall, cry, sleep, yawn, smile, die, mumble,* etc. require no complement at all. These are called "intransitive verbs	The boy yawned. A baby cried. The frogs died (during the heat wave). The cat smiled (a silly smile). Notice that in practice sentences using such verbs often include a PP, an AdvP, and even NPs, but they are optional, rather than required.
2. **VP**$\longrightarrow$**V-Prt** **VP**$\longrightarrow$**V-NP-Prt**	Verbs with an attached particle such as *wake up, come apart, look up, go away.* (Some have causative or transitive alternates: *wake the kids up, look the address up., etc.*	The children woke up. The dog woke the children up. He looked the address up. He looked up the address. Notice the alternate position of the particle.
3. **VP** $\longrightarrow$**V-NP**	Verbs such as *kiss, hit, open, read, see,* & *push* require an NP as direct object. These are called transitive verbs. These allow passivization, whereby the object NP is promoted to subject position, and the grammatical subject is demoted to object of preposition phrase.	John kissed Mary. The man read the newspaper. We saw the story. The child solved the problem. The problem was solved by the child.
3. **VP** $\longrightarrow$**V-NP**	Verbs such as *kiss, hit, open, read, see,* & *push* require an NP as direct object. These are called transitive verbs. These	John kissed Mary. The man read the newspaper. We saw the story.

4. **VP ⟶ V-NP-PP**	Verbs such as *give, bring, take, show, & buy* require an NP direct object, and a PP indirect object. These are so-called ditransitive verbs.	He gave computers to the school. The school showed the parents their children's work. We'll buy the children some gifts.
5. **VP ⟶ V-PP**	Verbs such as *object, look, listen* require a preposition phrase complement.	I object to that suggestion. They looked at the data. The people will listen to you.
6. **VP ⟶ V-S**	Verbs such as *think, hope, feel, know* require a clausal complement (*i.e. a sentence as a complement*)	*I hope you can stay for the part.* He knows this is the best move. They feel the best is yet to come.
7. **VP⟶V-NP-S**	Verbs such as *persuade, tell, convince, inform* require a NP object and a clausal complement:	*The polls convinced Joe he should drop out of the race.* They informed Joe that he had better leave town.
8. **VP⟶V-VP**	Verbs such as *keep, want, want, promise, ask* require a VP complement (VP complements can be infinitives (to-V), notice that the subject of the VP complement is the same as the S's VP.	He will keep working. He wants to do it. I promised to bake a cake. Mary asked to do it.
9. **VP⟶ V-NP-VP**	Verbs such as *make, ask, use, promise, keep,* can also require both an NP and a VP complement.	*He promised his mother to mow the lawn.* *We asked him to clean his room.* *Mary asked Joe to lend her some money.* *Henry keeps working on that project*
10. **VP ⟶ V AdjP**	Verbs such as **feel, look, grow, turn** take an AdjP complement	He grew restless. She feels euphoric. The sky turned gray.
11. **VP⟶V S-that**	Verbs such as **think, demand, wish, insist, suppose, guess** require a that-S complement, although *that* can be omitted	I think that she was here. I think she was here. I demand that she be on time. He wishes that they would visit more
11. **VP⟶V S-that**	Verbs such as **think, demand, wish, insist, suppose, guess** require a that-S complement, although *that* can be omitted with *wish* and *think*	I think that she was here. I think she was here. I demand that she be on time. He wishes that they would visit more often

12 VP⟶V Swh/if	Verbs such as *wonder, know, ask* take a wh-clause or if-clause complement	I wonder what he meant. They know why their names were not on the list. He asked if he could be included.
13 VP⟶V NP VP (NP = instrument)	Verb *use* takes an NP object which is an instrument, and a VP which identifies the purpose.	The dog uses his nose to see who has been in his neighborhood. I use my nail-clipper to open this bag of chips. He used a knife to open the package.
14 VP ⟶ Vcop AdjP	Copular verbs such **as be, sound, become, grow,** take an AdjP complement.	That house is very pretty. That song sounds old. He became pensive. That dog is growing feeble.
15 VP ⟶ Vcop PP	Copular verbs **be, live, move,** take a PP complemeent	They moved to Houston. They lived in San Antonio. He's at work right now.
16 VP ⟶ VcopNP	Copular verbs such as **be, become** take a NP complement	He was the student body president. He was the party's choice. He became a politician.
CONDITIONAL SENTENCES (NB: as categorized & described by C. J. Fillmore)	Conditional sentences are interesting because they involve difficulties in comprehension, and are often the source of linguistic insecurity. Many different types. Illustrated here by example: Sometimes conditional sentences are used to relate a relationship of cause or consequence of explanation. There's an important relationship between the form of the verbal expressions in the two parts, exemplified in the following way:	Two clauses: If-clause, then-clause.
"Reliable dependency"	Simple past tense form in both parts. Notice that the **IF** part could be expressed with *when*.	If it rains, it pours. (When it rains, it pours.)
"Reliable dependency"	Simple past tense form in both parts. Notice that the **IF** part could be expressed with *when*.	If it rains, it pours. (When it rains, it pours.) If she's happy, he's miserable. If I take an aspirin, the headache

"Future prediction"	**IF-clause** is in simple present, but has "future" meaning. This is sometimes called *futurate present*. **THEN clause** has *will-future.*	If we get there by nine, they'll be awake. If you take this medicine tomorrow morning, the headache will go away.
"Hypothetical predication"	**IF-clause** uses past tense form, **THEN-clause** uses *would*; meaning is 'future' but uncertain.	If you asked her, she would accept. If you broke it, they'd be mighty upset.
"Present counterfactual"	**IF-clause** has "backshifted" form, **THEN-clause** has past-tense form. The copula *be* has a special form *were* in the U.S., but not in Britain.	If she were here, he'd be miserable. (US only--in Britain: If she was here, he'd be miserable.) If you lived here, you'd be home now. If he had opened the door, the house would be gone now.
"Past counterfactual"	**IF-clause** has past perfect form, **THEN-clause** has *would have.*	If you had opened it, we would have lost the house. If I had not said that, she wouldn't have been so mad If I'd known you were coming, I would have baked a cake.
Other kinds **The imaginative conditional**	This is a type that shows up occasionally in children's stories--it's rarely used otherwise. These involve speculation about events that are highly unlikely--but, fun to think about.	*What do you do with a nose like this? If you are an elephant, you use your nose to give yourself a bath.*
Conditionals that aren't really conditionals	If you're thirsty, there are some cokes in the fridge.	
How NPs become complex––Noun elaboration and	The head noun in a NP can be modified in various ways and for various reasons. The two	**Prenominal modifiers** Determiners (*a/an, some, this that, my, his, etc.*)
How NPs become complex––Noun elaboration and expansion	The head noun in a NP can be modified in various ways and for various reasons. The two principal devices are	**Prenominal modifiers** Determiners (*a/an, some, this that, my, his,* etc.) Quantifiers (*all, many, some, several*

Obligatory complements	Some nouns have obligatory complements--i.e., they complete the meaning of the head noun. For example, *Resolution that…, decision to…, the rumor that…, the argument that…,*	Note that complements can look like relative clauses, but there is a big difference between the two types of clauses.
Relative clause	Two kinds: restrictive, and non-restrictive. Restrictive relative clauses answer the question--"which one?" e.g., Non -restrictive relative clauses just gives more information about the noun: e.g.,	I saw my uncle last week. Which uncle? I saw my uncle who lives in Peoria last week. My uncle, who lives in Peoria, is a farmer.
COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES	In written academic registers, a lot of information can be packed into noun phrases, and one of the things students need to discover is how to unpack the information that is stuffed into some of the bloated bureaucratic beauties we found in texts. E.g., this description of invasive non-native plants by the California Invasive Plant Council, 2010, included as an exemplar informational text for grades 6-8 (CCSS, Appendix B):	The sentence structure itself is very simple-- **NPsubj- be-NPcompl** NP [Invasive non-native plants that threaten wildlands] are NP [plants that 1) are not native to, yet can spread into wildland ecosystems, and that also 2) displace native species, hybridize with native speicies, alter biological communities, or alter ecosystem processes.]
ADVERBIAL CLAUSES AND PHRASES **Adverbials take many forms: PP, AdvP, Clause, word.**	Adverbials are not just Adverb Phrases, although adverb phrases can function as adverbials. Got that? Confusing right? YES! What linguists call adverbial involve the many clause elements that add **circumstantial** (*when, where,*	**Circumstance adverbials:** **In 1801,** Chapman transported 16 bushels of apple seeds **from western Pennsylvania down the Ohio River.** **Stance adverbials:** You've **probably** heard about the **legendary** "Johnny Appleseed" who, **according to story and song**, spread

Conversational starters and questions
to draw students into instructional conversations

Focusing attention on t language in texts

This sentence is really (something, interesting, beautiful, wild, tough, etc.). A lot of information crammed into it, but what in the world is it saying? Let's see if we can figure it out. Anyone want to give it a try? Anything else? So you're saying that…. Do you agree? Why (or why not)? OK, let's see where we are on this. Let's look more closely at the parts, to see if we have everything….

Meaning

What this says is…. But why does the writer say it this way? What if he had said… Remember that earlier in the text, it said…. Is that relevant here? How are we going to read this sentence? What is the focus of it? So if this is what the writer is (saying, asserting, suggesting, alleging) here, what's his point? Having said that, what do you think we should expect next?

Mapping meaning to phrases

Let's see if we can figure out where it says that… What is this sentence about (focus on subject, topic)? Which part tells us that? What is the sentence saying about it (focus on the predicate). What about this phrase? Why do you think the writer put this phrase here (right at the beginning, at the end of the sentence)? Look at this part of the sentence, what is it saying?

References

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Sarah Michaels, Catherine O'Connor, & Lauren B. Resnick. Deliberative Discourse Idealized and Realized: Accountable Talk in the Classroom and in Civic Life. in *Studies in the Philosophy of Education.* 2007, DOI 10.1007/s11217-007-9071-1