

Some **action verbs** take **objects** to complete their meaning in the sentence. These objects may be either nouns or pronouns in the objective case (me, you, him, her, it, us, them, *and* whom).

**Objects** of action verbs receive or result from the action expressed in the verb. These are called **direct objects** because they directly receive or result from the action. The **direct objects** are underlined in the examples below:

Merrill gave away a book.  
Michele baked a cake.

To test for the presence of a direct object, ask *Whom?* or *What?* after the verb.

Merrill gave away *whom/what?* ----- Answer: *book*  
Michele baked *whom/what?* ----- Answer: *cake*

Sometimes another object appears with an action verb. This object comes between the verb and the direct object and answers the question *To whom?* or *For whom?* the action is done. This object is called the **indirect object**. In the examples below, the indirect object appears in parentheses, and the direct object is underlined.

Merrill gave (Stuart) a book.  
Stuart is the person *to whom* Merrill gave the book.  
Michele baked (Tonya) a cake.  
Tonya is the person *for whom* Michele baked the cake.

See if you can identify the indirect objects and direct objects in the following practice sentences. Identify the verb first and then its subject. Then look for the direct object. If there is a direct object, check for an indirect object. (The answer key is on page 2.)

1. Mark asked Carlos many questions.
2. In the summertime, the neighborhood children sell lemonade.
3. Kevin ate meat, potatoes, peas, and bread for Sunday dinner.
4. The rookie batter has hit the ball far into center field three times tonight.
5. Where could you possibly have laid down your glasses?
6. The secretary told the members the sad news of the president's death.
7. Snarling ferociously, the tiger attacked the three hunters.
8. Empty the trash right now, please!
9. Have you asked them their names?
10. In the last three weeks, Paula has memorized ten poems, studied three short stories, and read two novels for her literature class.

Answer Key

1. Mark asked **Carlos** many **questions**. **1) indirect object, 2) direct object**
2. In the summertime, the neighborhood children sell **lemonade**. **direct object**
3. Kevin ate **meat, potatoes, peas, and bread** for Sunday dinner. **direct objects**
4. The rookie batter has hit the **ball** far into center field three times tonight. **direct object**
5. Where could you possibly have laid down your **glasses**? **direct object**
6. The secretary told the **members** the sad **news** of the president's death.  
**1) indirect object, 2) direct object**
7. Snarling ferociously, the tiger attacked the three **hunters**. **direct object**
8. Empty the **trash** right now, please! **direct object**
9. Have you asked **them** their **names**? **1) indirect object, 2) direct object**
10. In the last three weeks, Paula has memorized ten **poems**, studied three **short stories**,  
and read two **novels** for her literature class. **direct objects**