



Direct Objects and Indirect Objects

Direct Objects

- **1A** A direct object can be a person, place, or thing that a verb affects or changes in some way. It answers the questions *Who/Whom?* or *What?*

A: Who/Whom did he see?

B: He saw **his sister**.

A: What is she explaining?

B: She is explaining **her ideas**.

- **1B** Some verbs always have a direct object. Without an object, their meaning is not complete. Some common verbs that need direct objects are *bring, buy, get, have, like, make, need, say, take, turn on/off, and want*.

Lynn **needs a car**.

✗ Lynn needs. (INCORRECT)

Indirect Objects

- **2** An indirect object is a person or group. It is the person that receives the direct object. It answers the questions *To whom?* and *For whom?* An indirect object can be an institution such as a library or a bank.

A: To whom did he send the check?

A: For whom did you buy a book?

B: Corey sent the check to **the bank**.

B: I bought a book **for Marta**.

Direct Object + *To/For* + Indirect Object vs. Indirect Object + Direct Object

- **3A** There is no difference in meaning between direct object + *to/for* + indirect object and indirect object + direct object.

He is writing a **letter to us**. = He is writing **us a letter**.

She bought a **dress for me**. = She bought **me a dress**.

- **3B** Some verbs have similar meanings but follow different patterns. For example, the verbs *say* and *tell* have similar meanings, but only *tell* can have an indirect object before a direct object.

**Direct Object + To/For +
Indirect Object**

He told **his name to the teacher**.

He said **his name to the teacher**.

Indirect Object + Direct Object

He told **the teacher his name**.

✗ He said the teacher his name. (INCORRECT)