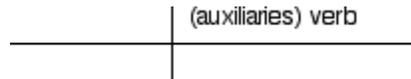
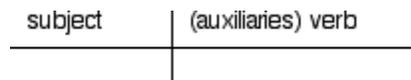


Diagramming Scripture

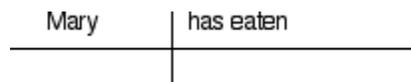
As always, the first step in understanding any text, at least in the English language (and in every other language), is to identify the verb or verbs. "What is happening?" "What's going on?" "What is the action in this text?" The main verb, along with any auxiliaries (helping verbs) is the simple predicate, and is placed on the right side of a horizontal line:



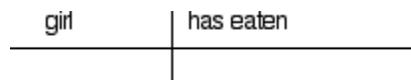
The second step is to find the subject. Ask yourself "who or what is performing that verb?" The simple subject (without any adjectives or other modifiers) is placed on the left side of that horizontal line. A vertical line crosses the horizontal line and separates the simple subject from the simple predicate. It might be helpful at first to use simple sentences and then locate a simple text in the Bible. Example:



So a simple sentence like "Mary has eaten." would diagram as:



Before moving on to more complicated verses in the Bible, try a more complicated sentence like "The girl in the corner in the blue shirt has eaten fried eggs for breakfast every day of her life." would still start the diagram with the simple subject and predicate:



Another interesting case is the command form in English, where no subject is present. In that case, the subject of the sentence is "the understood you" and is shown as such, in parentheses. So a command like "Listen!" would be diagrammed:



So what? So, you have figured out the core of the sentence/text, the simple subject and simple predicate. Everything else branches off those two basic pieces.

The Components of the Text

A Scripture can contain a number of different components, which must work together. Diagramming scriptures or text allows you to separate and identify these different components of the text by arranging them pictorially. Although there are several different methods of diagramming a scripture, each involves separating the subject, the predicate (the verb), and the other components found in the text.

Those components can include:

- Subject: Who or what the sentence is about. The person doing the action
- Predicate: Verb or action being done
- Direct Object: Something/someone the action is done to
- Indirect Object: The person/thing the action is done to or for
- Prepositions: Relationship words that provide information about how the other parts of the sentence fit together
- Modifiers: Words that provide additional detail about a subject, action or object in the sentence
- Articles: Words that modify nouns
- Dependent/subordinate clauses: Clauses that can't stand alone

When writing scriptures, subjects and verbs must agree in number (for example, a singular subject must have a singular verb). Modifiers also must be placed as close as possible to the subject or object being modified. Sometimes, in complex passage of scripture, it can be difficult to determine which subject and which verb, are related, or what an adjective is describing. By diagramming scriptures, you learn how to identify, and how each component of a text work together, and you develop a deeper understanding of the function that words play in the text.

How to Diagram a Text

- **Create your "Base Line"**

Your base line is the top line of your diagram, which explains what your text is about. It is the fundamental pieces of the text.

1. Begin with the verb and the subject. Write them on one line, with a straight line between them
2. Write the object on the same line, with a vertical line separating the object from the verb

Diagram the other parts of your text below the base line

Each of the other components of the text modifiers, prepositional phrases, subordinating clauses, interjections, and so on, are placed below the base line of the text, according to specific sentence/text diagramming rules.

- Modifiers (Words and phrases that provide additional detail about a subject, verb or object) are placed below the base line on slanted lines extending from the thing that they are modifying
- Prepositional phrases also go below the base line, on slanted lines extending from the subject, object or verb they are modifying. However, the object of the preposition goes on a horizontal line below the preposition.

Compound Sentences in a Text

- Each component of a compound sentences in a Text gets its own separate diagram, with its own separate base lines.
- The two clauses are joined by dotted lines, with the conjunction written on a horizontal line next to the dotted line.

Examples

The easiest way to understand sentence/scripture diagramming is to study sentences in the text that have been diagrammed and to practice diagramming your own.

