

## What is a Complement?

A **Complement** is a word or group of words that complete the meaning of the verb. In essence, it carries the action from the subject “through” to another word or words. There are four kinds of complements: *direct object*, *indirect object*, *object complement*, *subject complement*.

**Direct Object:** Answers the question *what?* or *whom?* After an action verb.

Carlos served **dinner**. (served *what?*)

**Indirect Object:** Answers the question *to whom?* *for whom?* *to what?* or *for what?* after the action verb. Most often the indirect object is located between the direct object and the action verb.

Greta gave **him** a **seat**. (gave the seat to whom?)

**Object Complement:** Answers the question *what?* after a direct object. That is, it *completes* the meaning of the direct object by identifying or describing it further. An object complement can be an adjective, noun, or a pronoun. Object complements occur only in sentences with direct objects and only in those sentences with the following “action verbs.” In general, action verbs that are a meaning of “make” or “consider.”

appoint	elect	render	consider	name
choose	make	call	find	think

Residents find the **park peaceful**. (adjective)

Katie appointed **me assistant**, **treasurer**, and **cook**. (nouns)

My grandmother considers the **property hers**. (pronoun)

**NOTE:** Remember, indirect objects are in front of the direct object and object compliments are “after” a direct object. Do not get confused by the two.

**Subject Complement:** Follows a subject and a “linking verb” and identifies or describes the subject. There are two kinds of subject complements—*predicate nominative* and *predicate adjective*.

A **Predicate nominative** is a noun or pronoun that follows a linking verb and points back to the subject to “rename” it or identify it further.

Julia became both a **musician** and an **actress**.

A **Predicate adjective** is an adjective that follows a linking verb and points back to the subject to further “describe” it.

Most ballerinas seem **intense** and **hard-working**.

### Example:

**Directions:** Identify the marked word in each of the following sentences.

Dwight Eisenhower was **one** of seven sons.

The gym was **ready** for the class banquet.

All of the students felt **ravenous**.

He was the Republican presidential **candidate** in 1952.

The most popular sport, in my opinion, is **cheerleading**.

Cowboys from North and South America would probably tell very similar **tales**.

**FROM *THINGS FALL APART* BY CHINUA ACHEBE**

Okonkwo had just blown out the palm-oil lamp and stretched **himself** on his bamboo bed when he heard the *ogene* of the town crier piercing the still night air. *Gome, gome, gome, gome* boomed the hollow metal. Then the crier gave his message, and at the end of it beat his instrument again. And this was the **message**. Every man of Umuofia Okonkwo wondered what was amiss, for he knew certainly that something was amiss. He had discerned a clear overtone of tragedy in the crier's voice, and even now he could still hear it as it grew dimmer and dimmer in the distance.

The night was very **quiet**. It was always quiet except on moonlit nights. Darkness held a vague terror for these people, even the bravest among them. Children were warned not to whistle at night for fear of evil spirits. Dangerous animals became even more sinister and uncanny in the dark. A snake was never called by its name at night, because it would hear. It was called a string. And so on this particular night as the crier's voice was gradually swallowed up in the distance, silence returned to the world, a vibrant silence made more intense by the universal trill of a million forest insects.