

Parsing

Parsing means to break down a sentence into each of its separate parts.

The word *parsing* comes from the Latin word *pars* meaning ‘part’. When you parse a sentence, you identify the name and function of each word. That is, you state the job that each word is doing.

Here is an example of parsing:

The hungry tiger watched them closely.

1. Start by naming each part of speech in the sentence:

The	hungry	tiger	watched	them	closely.
article	adjective	noun	verb	pronoun	adverb

2. Then, say what you know about each part of speech:

The	definite article
hungry	descriptive adjective modifying the noun <i>tiger</i>
tiger	common noun, third person; singular number; common gender (masculine or feminine); subjective case, subject of the verb <i>watched</i>
watched	transitive, finite verb; third person, singular number to agree with its subject, <i>tiger</i> ; past tense, indicative mood, active voice
them	personal pronoun; third person; plural number; common gender; objective case after the verb <i>watched</i>
closely	adverb of manner modifying the verb <i>watched</i>

Today, we are more interested in the functions of words in a text as a whole, and how texts work in real-life situations.