

## Answer Key: Practice Identifying Prepositional Phrases with Nouns with *English with Mrs. English*

Sample sentences are from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain  
(Please remember the writing style of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* evokes the perspective, language, and environment of a pre-teen boy in the mid-1800s in a small Mississippi town and is *not* a formal writing style of today.)

How did you do?

Did you find some prepositional phrases with compound objects (more than one object)?

Did you find words from the preposition list that were not being used as prepositions but were used as adverbs, subordinating conjunctions, coordinating conjunctions, or in cooperation with the verb? You do not need to know these other "jobs" to know if a "preposition" was doing the job of a preposition. Remember a preposition always has a noun or pronoun as an object. If it does not have an object, it is not being a preposition.

Did you find any prepositional phrases that ended with pronouns?

Immediately below are the sentences marked with prepositions and their objects circled and a "rainbow" or line connecting the two. Remember, everything under the "rainbow" is part of the prepositional phrase.

In the next section, you will find (1) the phrases for each sentence diagrammed and (2) a description or explanation of words that may have caused problems or questions for you.

Continue to look for prepositional phrases with nouns in other sentences you read—or in conversations you hear—including in what you say yourself! Continue reading and watching *English with Mrs. English* for more lessons and/or review.

1. There was a slight noise behind her and she turned just in time to seize a small boy by the slack of his gait and arrest his flight.
2. He had criticized air about him that ate into Tom's vitals.
3. The new boy took two broad coppers out of his pocket and held them out with derision.
4. Tom struck them to the ground.
5. He began to think of the fun he had planned for this day, and his sorrows multiplied.
6. At this dark and hopeless moment an inspiration burst upon him!
7. Tom's mouth watered for the apple but he stuck to his work.
8. Tom gave up the brush with reluctance in his face, but alacrity in his heart.

9. And while the late steamer *Big Missouri* worked and sweated in the sun, the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade close by, dangled his legs, munched his apple, and planned the slaughter of more innocents.
10. If he hadn't run out of whitewash, he would have bankrupted every boy in the village.
11. The boy mused awhile over the substantial change which had taken place in his worldly circumstances, and then wended toward headquarters to report.
12. Tom's army won a great victory, after a long and hard-fought battle.
13. She halted a moment on the steps and then moved to the door.
14. Tom sulked in a corner and exalted his woes.
15. Tom turned in without the added vexation of prayers, and Sid made mental note of the omission.
16. The sun rose upon a tranquil world, and beamed down upon the peaceful village like a benediction.
17. Then Tom traded a couple of white alleys for three red tickets, and some small trifle or other for a couple of blue ones.
18. But when he saw this small newcomer, his soul was all ablaze with bliss in a moment.
19. The visitors were given the highest seat of honor and as soon as Mr. Walters's speech was finished, he introduced them to the school.
20. Walters was not expecting an application from this source for the next ten years.
21. Let us draw a curtain of charity over the rest of the scene.
22. He was regarded as a wonderful reader.
23. One of his upper front teeth was loose.
24. Huckleberry came and went, at his own free will.

I marked *will* as the object of the preposition and considered *free* to be an adjective describing *will*. However, I would accept an answer that circled *free will* as the object if you consider it a compound noun.

25. When Tom reached the little isolated frame schoolhouse, he strode in briskly, with the manner of one who had come with all honest speed.
26. He hung his hat on a peg and flung himself into his seat with businesslike alacrity.
27. When school broke up at noon, Tom flew to Becky Thatcher, and whispered in her ear.
28. The boys moved off and disappeared in the gloom.
29. Potter started on a trot that quickly increased to a run.
30. All the town was drifting toward the graveyard.
31. The raft drew beyond the middle of the river; the boys pointed her head right, and then lay on their oars.
32. The pipe dropped from the fingers of the Red-Handed, and he slept the sleep of the conscience-free and the weary.
33. They lay around in the shade, after breakfast, while Huck had a smoke, and then went off through the woods on an exploring expedition.
34. A deep peal of thunder went rolling and tumbling down the heavens and lost itself in sullen rumblings in the distance.
35. The Harpers and Aunt Polly's family were being put into mourning, with great grief and many tears.
36. They had been hid in the unused gallery listening to their own funeral sermon!
37. Tom fled home at noon.
38. He started to school and had the luck of coming upon Becky Thatcher at the head of Meadow Lane.
39. Poor girl, she did not know how fast she was nearing trouble herself.

40. This nightmare occupied some ten pages of manuscript and wound up with a sermon so destructive of all hope to non-Presbyterians that it took the first prize.
41. A third witness swore he had often seen the knife in Potter's possession.
42. Tom glanced at Injun Joe's iron face and his tongue failed him.
43. The slow days drifted on, and each left behind it a slightly lightened weight of apprehension.
44. The boys were there that night, about the appointed time.
45. They sat in the shadow waiting.
46. It was a lonely place, and an hour made solemn by old traditions.
47. Spirits whispered in the rustling leaves, ghosts lurked in the murky nooks, the deep baying of a hound floated up out of the distance, an owl answered with his sepulchral note.
48. Their interest grew stronger, and their industry kept pace with it.
49. They had started down the hill by this time.
50. About noon the next day the boys arrived at the dead tree they had come for their tools.
51. As the sun began to sink into the west they took their way homeward athwart the long shadows of the trees and soon were buried from sight in the forests of Cardiff Hill.
52. On Saturday shortly after noon the boys were at the dead tree again.
53. The adventure of the day mightily tormented Tom's dreams that night.
54. Tom concluded to let Huck lead up to the subject.
55. It was not custom for elderly people to mar picnics with their presence.
56. They plunged into the narrow path between the tall sumac bushes, and were at once hidden in the gloom.
57. Then he remembered that the Widow Douglas had been kind to him more than once, and maybe these men were going to murder her.

58. When he emerged at the quarry, he felt secure, and so he picked up his nimble heels and flew.
59. He banged at the door and presently the heads of the old man and his two stalwart sons were thrust from windows.
60. Three minutes later the old man and his sons, well-armed, were up the hill, and just entering the sumac path on tiptoe, their weapons in their hands.
61. He waited for no particulars.
62. As the earliest suspicion of dawn appeared on Sunday morning, Huck came groping up the hill and rapped gently at the old Welshman's door.
63. These were strange words to the vagabond boy's ears, and the pleasantest he had ever heard.
64. There was no Sabbath school during day-school vacation, but everybody was early at church.
65. Whispers passed along, and a boding uneasiness took possession of every countenance.
66. One young man finally blurted out his fear that they were still in the cave!
67. Mrs. Thatcher recognized the ribbon and cried over it.
68. Three dreadful days and nights dragged their tedious hours along, and the village sank into a hopeless stupor.
69. The widow burst into tears.
70. They smoked their own names under an overhanging shelf and moved on.
71. Becky responded to his call, and they made a smoke mark for future guidance, and started upon their quest.
72. Tom found a subterranean lake, shortly, which stretched its dim length away until its shape was lost in the shadows.
73. At last Becky's frail limbs refused to carry her farther.

74. The peaceful face reflected somewhat of peace and healing into his own spirit, and his thoughts wandered away to bygone times and dreamy memories.
75. Tom divided the cake and Becky ate with good appetite while Tom nibbled at his moiety.
76. A frightened look in Becky's face brought Tom to his senses and he saw that he had made a blunder.
77. The children groped their way back to the spring.
78. Tom's fright weakened every muscle in his body.
79. The children awoke tortured with a raging hunger.
80. Aunt Polly had drooped into a settled melancholy and her gray hair had grown almost white.
81. Three days and night of toil and hunger in the cave were not to be shaken off at once, as Tom and Becky soon discovered.
82. Tom learned of Huck's sickness and went to see him on Friday but could not be admitted to the bedroom; neither could he on Saturday or Sunday.
83. Tom turned as white as a sheet.
84. When the cave door was unlocked, a sorrowful sight presented itself in the dim twilight of the place.
85. In one place near at hand, a stalagmite had been slowly growing up from the ground for ages built by the water drip from a stalactite overhead.
86. The morning after the funeral Tom took Huck to a private place to have an important talk.
87. Then Huck told his entire adventure in confidence to Tom, who had only heard of the Welshman's part of it before.
88. By this time everything was ready and the boys entered the hole, Tom in the lead.

89. The boys began to quiet down to whispers now, for the stillness and gloom of the place oppressed their spirits.

90. Tom went first, cutting rude steps in the clay hill as he descended.

91. They had concealed a natural chasm which led under the rock.

92. It weighed about fifty pounds.

93. The money was soon in the bags, and the boys took it up to the cross rock.

94. Tom ran out of doors.

95. Tom entered, struggling with the weight of his sacks, and Aunt Polly did not finish her sentence.

96. The sum amounted to a little over twelve thousand dollars.

97. The reader may rest satisfied that Tom's and Huck's windfall made a mighty stir in the poor little village of St. Petersburg.

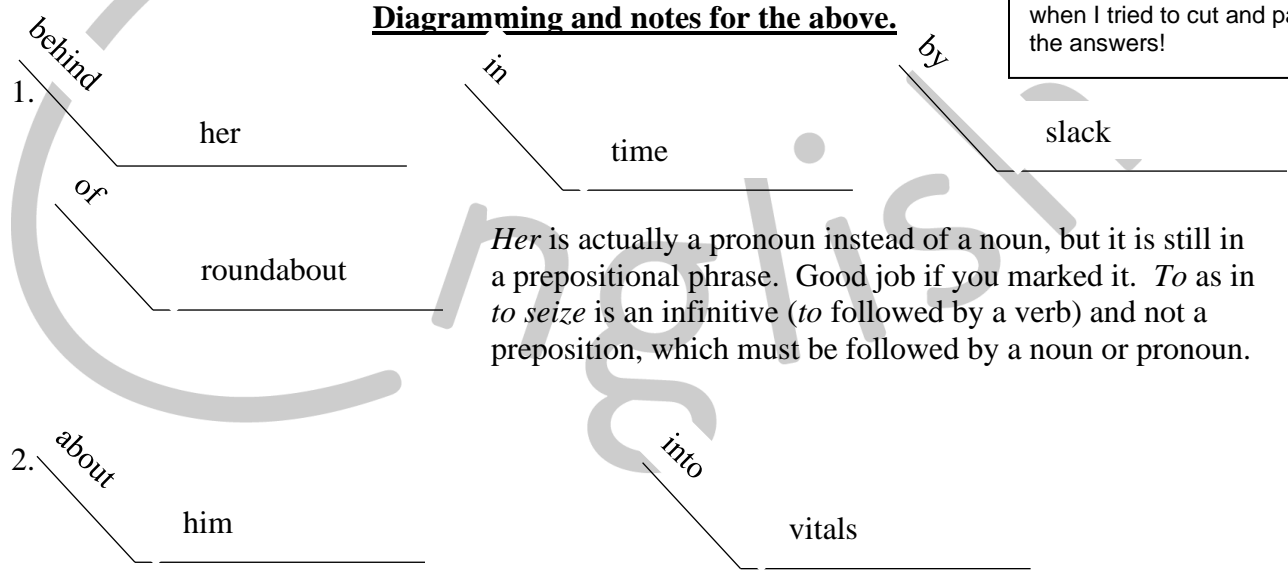
98. The village paper published biographical sketches of the boys.

99. Judge Thatcher had conceived a great opinion of Tom.

100. Huck was silent for some time, engaged in a mental struggle.

Please note that the preposition does *not* need to be at the top of the diagonal, but that is how it came out when I tried to cut and paste the answers!

**Diagramming and notes for the above.**



*Her* is actually a pronoun instead of a noun, but it is still in a prepositional phrase. Good job if you marked it. *To* as in *to seize* is an infinitive (*to* followed by a verb) and not a preposition, which must be followed by a noun or pronoun.

3. *out of* pocket *with* derision

*Out* is not a preposition here; it does not have a noun or pronoun as an object. Instead, it is an adverb in this sentence and modifies the verb *held*.

4. *to* ground

5. *of* fun *for* day

*To* is an infinitive here (see #1).

6. *At* moment *upon* him

7. *for* apple *to* work *in*

8. *with* reluctance *in* face *in* heart

*Up* in this sentence is neither a preposition nor an adverb. It is one of those odd situations in which the *verb and a "preposition"* work together to create the verb phrase. *Brush* first appears to be the object of *up* but is actually the direct object of the transitive verb *gave up*. We will get to these additional grammar terms later.

If *up* were not part of the verb but a prepositional phrase, you could take the prepositional phrase out of the sentence, and it would still make sense. If you use this trick, sentence #8 does not make sense; therefore, it is *up* is part of the verb.

For now, understand that sometimes the words *up* and *out*, along with other exceptions, might go along with the verb as they do in these sentences. (1) Tom *gave up* the brush. (2) The witness could not *make out* the license plate number. (Also see #15.)

9. *in* sun *on* barrel *in* shade



*By* is not a preposition since it does not have an object. *Close by* is working as a compound adverb modifying *sat* and answering the question "where." Modifiers and adverbs will be covered around Lessons 36 & 44.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ of innocents
10. \_\_\_\_\_ out of whitewash \_\_\_\_\_ in village
11. \_\_\_\_\_ over change \_\_\_\_\_ in circumstances \_\_\_\_\_ toward headquarters
12. \_\_\_\_\_ after battle
13. \_\_\_\_\_ on steps \_\_\_\_\_ to door
14. \_\_\_\_\_ in corner
15. \_\_\_\_\_ without vexation \_\_\_\_\_ of prayers \_\_\_\_\_ of omission

*In* is not a preposition because it does not have a noun or pronoun as an object. It is an exception that is explained in #8 above.

16. \_\_\_\_\_ upon world \_\_\_\_\_ upon village \_\_\_\_\_ like benediction
17. \_\_\_\_\_ of alleys \_\_\_\_\_ for tickets \_\_\_\_\_ for couple

17. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ ones
18. \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ bliss \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ moment
19. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ honor \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ school

As is not a preposition in this sentence. Instead it is functioning as a subordinating conjunction. Although it can be a subordinating conjunction by itself, in this sentence it is part of the "compound" *as soon as*. What makes it a subordinating conjunction? It creates a dependent clause, which is then part of a complex sentence. A dependent clause looks and sounds like a sentence by itself if the subordinating conjunction were omitted. Learn more about these in or about Lesson 94.

20. \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ source \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ years
21. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ charity \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ rest \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ scene
22. \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ reader
23. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ teeth
24. \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ free will \_\_\_\_\_ if you considered "free will" to be a compound noun
25. \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ manner \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ one \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ speed

*In* is not a preposition in this sentence. It is working with the verb *strode*. See #8.



26. *on* peg *into* seat *with* alacrity

27. *at* noon *to* Becky Thatcher *in* ear

*Up* is not a preposition in this sentence but works with *broke*. See #8.

As a proper noun (which will be covered in about Lesson 64), *Becky Thatcher* as a whole is the object of the preposition since it is the name of one person.

28. *in* gloom

*Off* works with the verb *moved*. See #8. This "exception" of a "preposition" working with a verb seems to be a rule, instead of an exception, in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer!*

29. *on* trot *to* run

Did you mark "to a run"? At first glance, it might appear to be an infinitive (*to* + verb) (See #1), but notice *a*. Remember, *a* is an article, which comes before a noun. Therefore, *run* in this sentence is a noun (because it names an activity) and is the object of the preposition *to*.

30. *toward* graveyard

31. *beyond* middle *of* river *on* bars

32. *from* fingers *of* Red-Handed *of* conscience-free  
*and* weary

This sentence has a couple of tricky elements. *Red-Handed* is used as a proper name, so it is a noun and the object of its preposition. Then you have a preposition with two objects (also known as compound objects). *Of* applies to both of its objects. *Conscience-free* could be used as an adjective, but here Mark Twain uses it as a noun, which is reinforced by his use of the article *the*. The same thing applies to his use of *weary*.

33. in shade after breakfast through woods

34. on expedition *Off is not a preposition in this sentence but works with the verb. See #28*

34. of thunder down heavens in rumblings

35. in distance into mourning with grief and tears

36. in gallery to sermon

37. at noon with Mrs.

38. to school of coming upon Becky Thatcher

39. at head of Meadow Lane *Meadow Lane, just like Becky Thatcher, as in ##27 is a proper noun and the whole name is the object of the preposition.*

39. nearing trouble

40. of manuscript with sermon of hope

to non-Presbyterians *Up is not a preposition in this sentence but is working with the verb. See #8 above.*

41. in possession

42. at face

43. behind it

of apprehension

*On* is not a preposition in this sentence but is working with the verb. See #8 above.

44. about time

45. in shadow

46. by traditions

47. in leaves

in nooks

of hound

out of distance

with note

*Up* is not a preposition in this sentence but is working with the verb. See #8 above.

48. with it

49. down hill

by time

50. about noon

at tree

for tools

51. into west

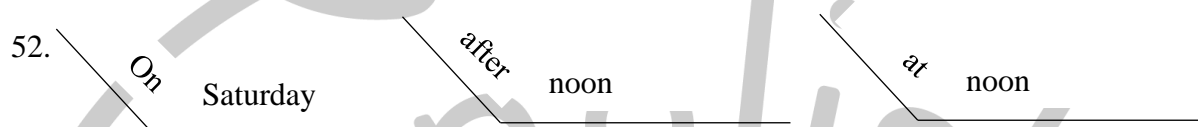
athwart shadows

of trees

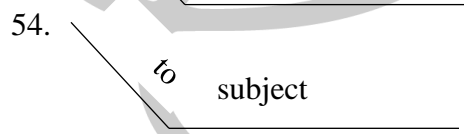
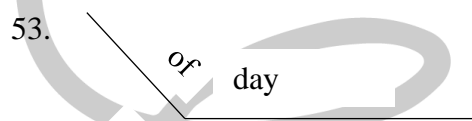


Back in *Preposition Practice Before the Presentation (English with Mrs. English lesson/video #4)* I said that you may come across a preposition that is not on this list, but if you practice these, you will be able to identify an uncommon preposition if you come across one. Now you have! I mean the word *athwart*. Did you find it?

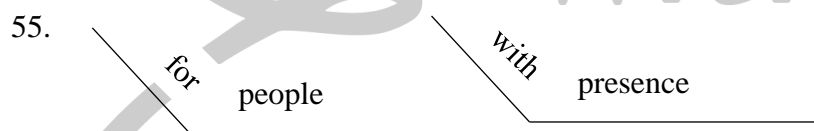
This sentence also has a couple of more words that may have caused a problem for you. *As* is a subordinating conjunction in this sentence (See #19). *To* is an infinitive here (See #1).



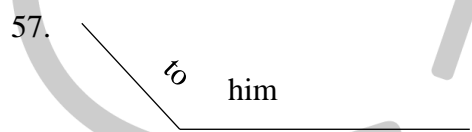
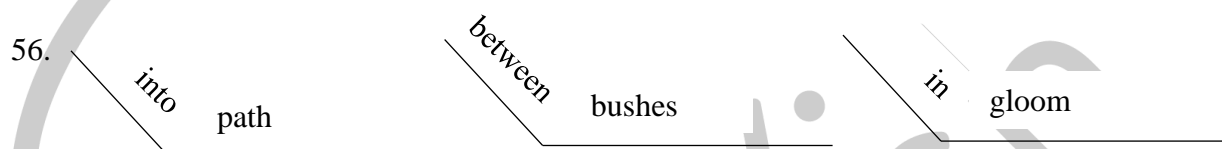
In today's English, *afternoon* is used as a one-word adverb. However, in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Mark Twain writes it as a prepositional phrase (see the diagramming above). He lived before and during the American Civil War, so I assume that was a typical way of writing it at that time.



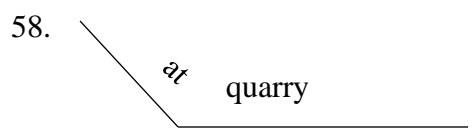
*To* in the phrase *to let* is an infinitive, not a preposition. See #1. *Up* works with the verb and is not a preposition. See #8.



*To* is an infinitive, not a preposition. See #1.



*To* in the phrase *to murder* is an infinitive, not a preposition. See #1.



*Up* works with the verb and is not a preposition. See #8.

59. at door of man and sons from windows
60. up hill on tiptoe in hands
61. for particulars
62. of dawn on morning up hill
63. at door
64. during vacation to ears at church
65. of countenance
66. in cave
67. over it
68. into stupor

As is not a preposition (with an object) in this sentence but is a subordinating conjunction at the beginning of a dependent clause. See #19



69. into tears

70. under shelf

*On* is not a preposition with an object but instead works with the verb *moved*. See #8.

71. to call

for guidance

upon quest

72. in shadows

73. at last

*To* is an infinitive, not a preposition. See #1.

74. of peace

into spirit

to \_\_\_\_\_

and memories

75. with appetite

at moiety

76. in face

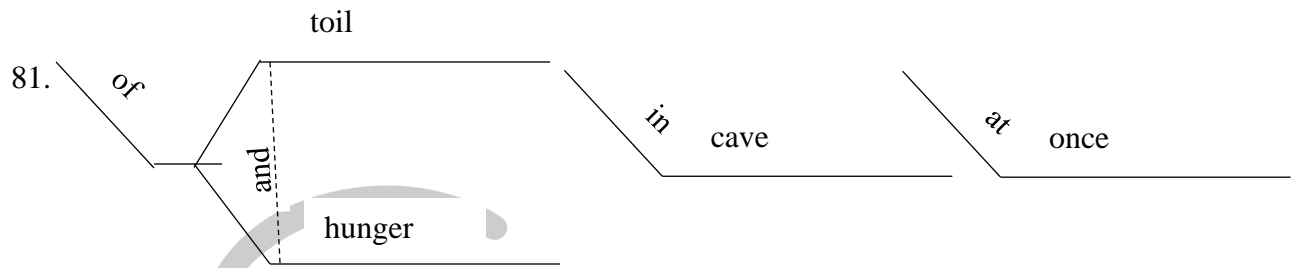
to senses

77. to spring

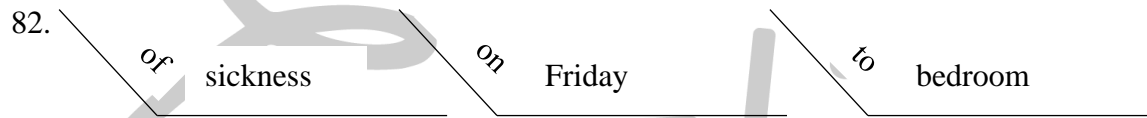
78. in body

79. with hunger

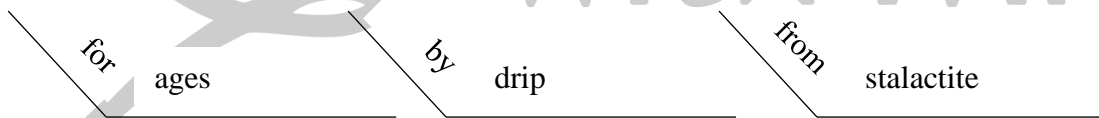
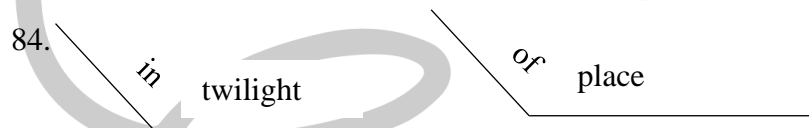
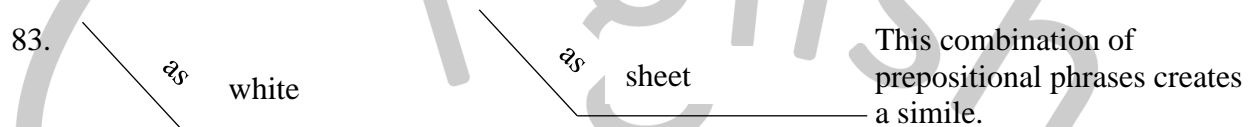
80. into melancholy



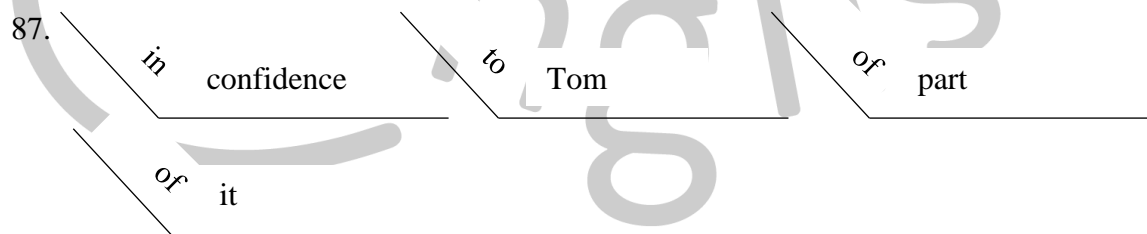
*To* is an infinitive, not a preposition. See #1. *As* is a subordinating conjunction, not a preposition. See #19.



*To* in *to see him* is an infinitive, not a preposition.



*Up* is not a preposition in this sentence but instead is part of the verb phrase. See #8.



88. By time in lead

89. to whispers of okace

This sentence contains three words that look like prepositions but instead perform other functions: *to* – infinitive (See #1), *down* – adverb (See #3), and *for* – coordinating conjunction (Coordinating conjunctions connect two or more grammatically equal elements. Here *for* is connecting two independent clauses to create a compound sentence. See Lesson/Video at or about #60.)

90. in clay

91. under rock

92. about pounds

93. in bags to rock

*Up* is in an odd spot here. Although it is not right after the verb *took*, it works with it. (See #8) Consider it rewritten as the following: "...the boys took up it..." Maybe it is now more obvious. Regardless, *up* is not a preposition in this sentence as it does not have an object.

94. out of doors

95. with weight of sacks

96. to little over dollars

97. in village of St. Petersburg

See #27 for a note on proper nouns, such as *St. Petersburg*.

98. of boys

99. of Tom

100. for time

in struggle

