1 Drawing Trees: Practice

Draw trees for the following sentences. You should fully expand all XPs with more than one word—**only use triangles for 1-word XPs**!

Remember that your constituency tests can guide your tree representations—there should be a node reflecting every constituent (X, X′, and XP) in the tree.

If it helps, start by labelling the words, and then bracketing the phrases. Then draw a tree that reflects the brackets.

1. John picked up the book on Tuesday.
2. John picked the book up.
3. John relied on Mary for advice.
4. John relied on Mary at school.
5. John gave a book to Mary.
8. John walked the dog on Sunday in the park.
9. John joined the discussion of the riots.
10. John joined the discussion on Friday.
11. They banned the discussion of the trial in the media.
12. The belief that the Earth is flat is wrong.

**Answers appear on the following pages.** Don’t peek until you’ve tried drawing these yourself!
2. Drawing Trees: Key

1. John picked up the book on Tuesday.

The NP “the book” is a complement (and sister) to the V.
The PP “on Tuesday” is an adjunct, and is therefore a sister to V′.

2. John picked the book up.

The PP “up” and the V “picked” must be sisters, since they are part of the same constituent. (There is also no V′ test that would allow you to strand “up” on its own—meaning that it must be the daughter of the same V′ as the head V.)

If you expand a phrase, make sure to include all three levels—X, X′, and XP (even if the X′ level is “empty”, like it is for the P′ above up).
3. **John relied on Mary for advice.**

The two PPs are both complements of the verb (the second one is not required, but it is still a complement; try using a different preposition and you’ll see only “for” works in that context). Therefore, they must both be sisters to the head, V.

```
TP
  NP  VP
    John
      V
        PP
          P
            NP  NP
              on  for
              Mary advice

V′  PP
  relied
```

4. **John relied on Mary at school.**

The PP “at school” is an adjunct (an adverbial, indicating place), and it is a sister to the V′ node. As in the previous example, “on Mary” is still a complement (and thus, a sister to V).

```
TP
  NP  VP
    John
      V′
        PP
          P
            NP
              at
              school

V′  PP
  relied
  P
    NP
      on
      Mary
```
5. **John gave a book to Mary.**

*Give* is a ditransitive verb, and therefore has two complements—an NP (DO) and a PP (IO). Both are sisters to V.

6. **John gave Mary a book on syntax.**

We’ve still got the ditransitive verb “gave,” but now the IO has been promoted (and is a NP, not a PP). The DO is now “a book on syntax”. Both are sisters to V.

Notice also that “on syntax” is a complement of the N “book”. It is not obligatory (nouns never take obligatory complements), but the type of preposition is restricted (only “on” or “about”), and no adjunct can come between “book” and “on syntax” (e.g. *a book with a blue cover on syntax*).

Here, the PP “for Christmas” is an adjunct. It does not modify the noun “book”, but rather the verb (“for Christmas” is when he gave it to her), and it is therefore a sister to V′.

This tree illustrates how attachment sites mirror/reflect what element is being modified by a particular XP: if it is attached inside the NP, it’s modifying the N; if it modifies the V, it’s attached inside the VP.

```
TP
  NP  VP
    John

  V′
    NP
      gave
      NP
        Mary
        Det
          a
          N
          book

  PP
    P′
      NP
        for
        NP
            for
            N
            Christmas
```

8. John walked the dog on Sunday in the park.

The VP has 1 complement and 2 adjuncts—so we need 2 V′ nodes (i.e. because each adjunct needs to be sister to a distinct V′).

```
TP
  NP  VP
    John

  V′
    PP
      P′
        NP
          in
          Det
            the
            N
            park

  V′
    NP
      walked
      Det
        the
        N
        dog

  V′
    PP
      P′
        NP
          on
          NP
            Sunday
```

5
9. **John joined the discussion of the riots.**

The PP “of the riots” is a complement to (modifies) the noun “discussion”.

10. **John joined the discussion on Friday.**

Now “on Friday” is an adjunct (an adverbial indicating the time of the “joining” event), and as a result it is a sister to V’.
11. They banned the discussion of the trial in the media.

The verb only has one complement (the DO): “the discussion of the trial in the media”.

The PP “in the media” does not attach to the verb at all, but it is inside the NP instead, as an adjunct. In other words, it is the discussion that happens in the media, not the ban.

The noun “discussion” has its own complement, “of the trial”—just like “of the riots” in Example 9.
12. **The belief that the Earth is flat is wrong.**

The complement to the noun “belief” is a finite clause (CP). This is a complement clause, not a relative clause (try to replace “that” with “which,” and you’ll see that it’s ungrammatical).

Another new thing about this sentence is that it has two predicative Adjectives. They are complements of the two instances of the verb “be”.

```
TP
  NP
    Det the
    N belief
  CP
    C that
  VP
    V is
      AdjP wrong

TP
  NP
    Det the
    N world
  VP
    V is
      AdjP flat
```

This AdjP complement to the verb “be” includes an adjunct AdvP (“totally”), which is placed as sister to AdjP’. The adjective “full” has a PP complement “of facts”. Notice the difference in branching direction between the adjunct “totally” and the complement “of facts”—adjuncts may come either before or after a head.

Here, I have represented “totally” as an adjunct, and not a specifier. In either case, its position would be as a sister to Adj’; the difference is whether it is a daughter of AdjP (specifier), or a daughter of Adj’ (adjunct).


The AdjP “interesting” is an adjunct to the noun (all adjectives modifying nouns are).