

PREPOSITIONS

in

- something is in a room
 - *She is waiting **in** the classroom.*
 - *I'm relaxing **in** my bedroom.*
- something is inside something else
 - *The apples are **in** the grocery bag.*
 - *I accidentally locked my keys **in** my car.*
 - *The answer is **in** the back of the book.*
- sitting in a chair/ in bed
 - *Would you stop jumping around and sit **in** the chair?*
 - *Getting **in** bed is my favorite part of the day.*

on

- something is on top of something else
 - *The dishes are already **on** the table.*
- pages in a book
 - *Please look at the picture **on** page 35 of the textbook.*
- something is on the surface of something else
 - *The museum has many paintings **on** the wall.*
 - *I went to doctor to discuss the strange mark **on** my skin.*
 - *We live **on** planet Earth.*
- turn on a device
 - *Why did you leave the computer **on**?*
- verb/ noun combinations
 - *I'm **planning on** doing my homework... when pigs fly!*
 - *I'm **on my way** to her house.*

by

- something is located near something else
 - *I left my keys right **by** my jacket.*
 - *The store is **by** the coffee shop.*
- identifying something/someone that does something
 - *The homework was completed **by** him.*

- *Harry Potter is written **by** J.K. Rowling.*
- *The police think that the crime was committed **by** her.*
- going somewhere
 - *I'll stop **by** the store on my way home to pick up some milk.*

with

- when two people/things are together
 - *My brother is out **with** his friend.*
 - *To make chocolate milk, mix chocolate syrup **with** milk.*
 - *What has that got to do **with** it?*
 - *I work **with** my mom in her office.*
- noun/ verb combinations
 - *They are always **fighting with** each other.*

to

- traveling/ going somewhere
 - *I'm planning on taking a trip **to** Cuba this Summer.*
 - *You should be on your way **to** school.*
 - *Let's take the train **to** Chicago.*
 - *It's 100 miles **to** the nearest gas station.*
- belonging/ relationship
 - *The book belongs **to** me.*
 - *Who does this belong **to**?*
 - *What does that have **to** do with anything?*
- function (how something is used)
 - *You shouldn't use Wikipedia **to** research something.*
 - *You need to wear a coat **to** stay warm in the Winter.*
 - *You need a key **to** unlock that door.*
 - *We danced **to** really good music. (music is something you use to dance)*

- *I have a scholarship **to** teach English.*
- verb/ noun combinations
 - *I'm **trying to do** my homework, but it's too loud.*
 - *Would you please **listen to** me.*

for

- purpose/ intention (something meant for something else)
 - *The password **for** my phone is...*
 - *Why did you open your brother's present? That was meant **for** him!*
 - *I need to **study for** the test tomorrow.*
 - *It's Godzilla! Run **for** your life!*
- doing something for somebody else
 - *The boss wasn't able to be here today, so I will speak **for** her.*
 - *You shouldn't ask me to do your homework **for** you!*
- time periods
 - *I waited in line **for** 25 minutes!*
- noun/ verb combinations
 - *I can't find my keys, would you please help me **look for** them?*
 - *It costs \$10 **for** a new hat.*

at

- point in time
 - *School starts everyday **at** 8:00 a.m.*
 - ***At** that point, I was so tired that I gave up.*
 - ***At** first, I was very nervous at the new school.*
- location
 - *I'm **at** the store, what do you want me to buy?*
 - *I've been **at** the library all day.*
 - *I can't talk now, I'm **at** work.*
- noun/ verb combinations

- *What are you **looking at**?*
- *I got scared when the horse **ran at** me.*

about

- almost/ approximately
 - *They've been dating for **about** a year.*
 - *The dog weighs **about** 70 pounds.*
- topics
 - *What is this book **about**?*
 - *He talked way too long **about** himself.*

of

- direction/ location
 - *The school is 4 km East **of** the Hauptbahnhof.*
- possession
 - *I love all the dogs **of** mine.*
 - *There are many plays **of** Shakespeare.*
 - *The bears **of** the Alps are very aggressive.*
- part of a whole
 - *Most **of** the team is not athletic.*
- about
 - *The stories **of** her travels are quite exciting.*
 - *My love **of** nature made me study biology.*
- cities
 - *The city **of** Frankfurt is the fifth largest in Germany.*
 - *The city **of** St. Louis...*

from

- starting point of a movement
 - *I came to Frankfurt **from** Berlin.*
 - *The most exciting thing I've done today is go **from** my couch to the fridge.*
- starting point of a time period
 - ***From** 6:00 p.m. to 8 p.m., I will be cooking dinner.*
- origin of something
 - *I am **from** the U.S.*
 - *The first human beings came **from** the African continent.*
 - *The letter is **from** your grandmother.*

- *There is call waiting **from** your mother.*
- point of an activity
 - *I tried to call **from** my cell phone. (the phone is where the call is done)*
 - *During the crisis, many people are working **from** home.*

Above is some of the most difficult and how they are used. **It is not all of the prepositions or all the ways that they are used!** Here are 15 more popular prepositions:

as

into

like

through

after

over

between

out

against

during

without

before

under

around

among

EXCERCISE

Below is the first page of the *The Hunger Games* by Suzzanne Collins with most of the prepositions removed (I've left some of the more difficult ones so you can see how they are used). Begin by finding the prepositions that are still in the text then it's your job to fill in the missing ones. *The best way to learn how prepositions are used, is to read or listen to English texts!*

When I wake ____, the other side ____ the bed is cold. My fingers stretch ____, seeking Prim's warmth but finding only the rough canvas cover ____ the mattress. She must have had bad dreams and climbed in ____ our mother. Of course, she did. This is the day ____ the reaping.

I prop myself ____ on one elbow. There's enough light ____ the bedroom ____ see them. My little sister, Prim, curled up ____ her side, cocooned ____ my mother's body, their cheeks pressed together. In sleep, my mother looks younger, still worn but not so beaten-down. Prim's face is as fresh as a raindrop, as lovely as the primrose for which she was named. My mother was very beautiful once, too. Or so they tell me.

Sitting ____ Prim's knees, guarding her, is the world's ugliest cat. Mashed-in nose, half ____ one ear missing, eyes the color ____ rotting squash. Prim named him Buttercup, insisting that his muddy yellow coat matched the bright flower. He hates me. Or at least distrusts me. Even though it was years ago, I think he still remembers how I tried ____ drown him ____ a bucket when Prim brought him home. Scrawny kitten, belly swollen ____ worms, crawling ____ fleas. The last thing I needed was another mouth ____ feed. But Prim begged so hard, cried even, I had to let him stay. It turned out okay. My mother got rid ____ the vermin and he's a born mouser. Even catches the occasional rat. Sometimes, when I clean a kill, I feed Buttercup the entrails. He has stopped hissing ____ me.

Entrails. No hissing. This is the closest we will ever come ____ love.

ANSWER

When I wake up, the other side of the bed is cold. My fingers stretch out, seeking Prim's warmth but finding only the rough canvas cover of the mattress. She must have had bad dreams and climbed in with our mother. Of course, she did. This is the day of the reaping.

I prop myself up on one elbow. There's enough light in the bedroom to see them. My little sister, Prim, curled up on her side, cocooned in my mother's body, their cheeks pressed together. In sleep, my mother looks younger, still worn but not so beaten-down. Prim's face is as fresh as a raindrop, as lovely as the primrose for which she was named. My mother was very beautiful once, too. Or so they tell me.

Sitting at Prim's knees, guarding her, is the world's ugliest cat. Mashed-in nose, half of one ear missing, eyes the color of rotting squash. Prim named him Buttercup, insisting that his muddy yellow coat matched the bright flower. He hates me. Or at least distrusts me. Even though it was years ago, I think he still remembers how I tried to drown him in a bucket when Prim brought him home. Scrawny kitten, belly swollen with worms, crawling with fleas. The last thing I needed was another mouth to feed. But Prim begged so hard, cried even, I had to let him stay. It turned out okay. My mother got rid of the vermin and he's a born mouser. Even catches the occasional rat. Sometimes, when I clean a kill, I feed Buttercup the entrails. He has stopped hissing at me.

Entrails. No hissing. This is the closest we will ever come to love.