

Noun phrases

Study the following sentences:

I want something.

I want to go home.

In sentence 1, the word *something* is a noun and is the object of the verb *want*. In sentence 2, the group of words *to go home* is the object of the verb *want* and hence it does the work of a noun. The group of words 'to go home' is therefore a noun phrase.

Definition

A noun phrase is a group of words that does the work of a noun.

More examples of noun phrases are given below:

I enjoy playing tennis.

Did you enjoy reading this book?

He hopes to win the first prize.

He refused to answer the question.

I promise to come again.

I hate having to punish my servants.

The wicked vizier loves getting people into trouble.

Horses prefer living in dark stables.

I should hate to do such a thing.

He denied stealing the money.

Exercise

Complete the following sentences by supplying suitable noun phrases.

1. I want -----

2. I don't expect -----

3. We all hope -----

4. ----- surprised me.

5. Do you wish -----?

6. My father hates -----

7. ----- gives me no pleasure.

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Answers

1. I want *to become a great writer*.
2. I don't expect *to finish the work today*.
3. We all hope *to succeed in life*.
4. *His winning the first prize* surprised me.
5. Do you wish *to go home*?
6. My father hates *having dinner so late*.
7. *Having so many children to look after* gives me no pleasure.