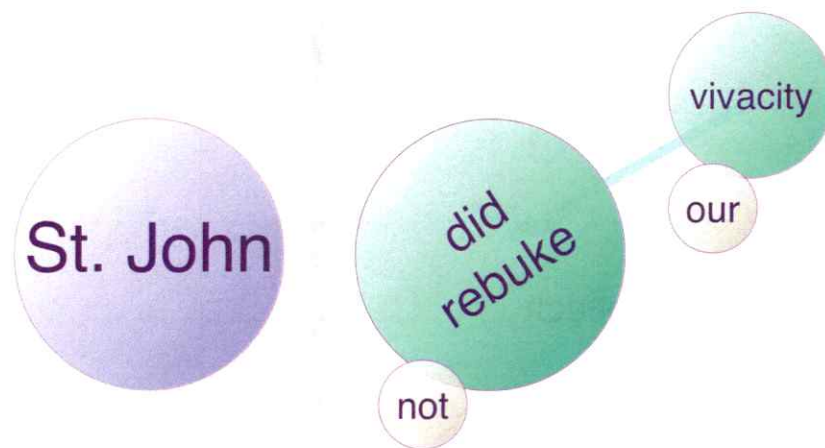




From Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*:

	St. John	did	not	rebuke	our	vivacity.
Parts of Speech	----n.----	v.	adv.	v.	adj.	n.
Parts of Sentence	---subj.---	AVP-----AVP				D.O.
Phrases	no phrases					
Clauses	-----independent clause----- a simple declarative sentence					

This sentence from *Jane Eyre* is typically efficient, doing its job with well-chosen verbs and nouns. Notice that the verb *did rebuke* is interrupted by an adverb, *not*. Notice also that *our* is a possessive adjective, modifying a noun; the possessive pronoun is *ours*. Even though we have not yet studied the four levels of grammar, I will give you previews like this so that you can begin to anticipate our path. We will refer to any graphic model such as the one above as an MCT model, or t-model for short. Literary vocabulary words will appear in black.

Introduction:

Grammar is an idea construction set.

Once you understand grammar, the lights come on everywhere. All kinds of things start to make sense. Academic writing becomes fun. Punctuation becomes logical. It is so much better than not understanding.

You discover that grammar is an idea construction set, that grammar explains your mind, that grammar shows you the way you think things. You notice the grammar in your ideas, in your friends' words, in books that you read, and in papers that you write. You suddenly see grammar structures, patterns, and processes in everyone's sentences, including the sentences that great writers create. Great writers use adjectives to modify nouns, just as you do. They pair verbs with their subjects, just as you do. Despite the superficial changes that time brings to language, Charles Dickens and Jane Austen and F. Scott Fitzgerald used much the same grammar that we use today.

To find beautiful sentences—sentences that show our thinking process at its best—we need look no further than the sentences of great novelists. In their sentences we see the same parts of grammar that we use in our own sentences, but if we look closely, we also see that the parts of speech are used beautifully, efficiently, and with particular clarity. In the pages that follow, we will study sentences from great novelists, most of which will include a literary vocabulary word.

In this book I am not going to give elaborate explanations of every detail of grammar. If you would like that sort of extensive review, please consult either *Grammar Voyage* or *The Magic Lens I*. What I will do here is focus on the simplicity of grammar by providing brief overviews of the four levels of grammar—parts of speech, parts of sentence, phrases, and clauses—followed by several examples for you to analyze. I want this to be beautiful, clear, and simple, like grammar itself. Let us have a nice time looking at the grammar; we will begin with the parts of speech.

I will illustrate our sentences with my sentence model, the t-model. Note that I have done away with the misleading horizontal line in traditional diagramming to enhance the binary nature of sentences; sentences have two sides: a subject side and a predicate side that is about the subject.