

What is Fronting and Topicalisation?

Worksheet

Fronting is moving a phrase from its normal position to the beginning of a sentence for emphasis and focus. For example: 'Chocolate, I love' (fronted object) vs. the normal 'I love chocolate.' It marks the fronted item as the main topic.

Questions

1. Which sentence uses fronting?

- A) I love coffee.
- B) Coffee, I love.
- C) I drink coffee daily.
- D) Coffee is good.

2. Normal order: 'I have never seen such talent.' Fronted:

- A) I have never seen such talent.
- B) Never I have seen such talent.
- C) Never have I seen such talent.
- D) Seen I have never such talent.

3. Why might a writer front a phrase?

- A) To confuse the reader
- B) To emphasize it and make it the topic
- C) To shorten the sentence
- D) To make it more difficult

4. Can you front an adverbial?

- A) No, never
- B) Yes — adverbials can be fronted
- C) Only in poetry
- D) Only with nouns

5. Normal: 'I find this book boring.' Fronted version?

6. Normal: 'She had never seen such beauty.' Fronted version?

7. Normal: 'We can solve this problem if we work together.' Fronted version?

8. Define: What is fronting?

9. Define: Why use fronting?

10. Define: What can be fronted?

Answer Key

1. B) Coffee, I love. — 'Coffee, I love' moves the object to the front for emphasis — that's fronting.
2. C) Never have I seen such talent. — 'Never have I seen such talent' fronts 'never' AND inverts the subject/verb order — correct fronting.
3. B) To emphasize it and make it the topic — Fronting emphasizes the moved element and marks it as the main focus or topic.
4. B) Yes — adverbials can be fronted — Yes, adverbials are commonly fronted — 'Quickly, he ran.' or 'In the morning, I exercise.'
5. Identify the object: 'this book' Move to front: 'This book, I find...' Full fronted: 'This book, I find boring.' (or 'Boring, I find this book.')
6. Identify what to emphasize: 'such beauty' or 'never' Fronted: 'Such beauty, she had never seen.' or 'Never had she seen such beauty.' (inverted)
7. Move the condition to front: 'If we work together, we can solve this problem.' Or emphasize the object: 'This problem, we can solve if we work together.'
8. Moving a word or phrase from its normal position to the beginning of a sentence for emphasis and focus.
9. To emphasize information, create suspense, improve flow, or mark something as the main topic of the sentence.
10. Objects, adverbials, adjectives, prepositional phrases — anything except the main verb (usually).

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