

Prepositions

HSK 3 Grammar

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

关于 + Topic (about / regarding)

■ A topic phrase can describe a book

- You identify a book whose subject is Chinese history.
- 这是一本关于中国历史的书。** – 关于中国历史 describes what the book is about.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **关于 + Topic (about / regarding)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

关于这件事，我不知道。

guān yú zhè jiàn shì wǒ bù zhī dào

Word guide: 关于 – about; 这 – this; 件 – (measure word); 事 – matter; 我 – I; 不 – not; 知道 – know.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这是一本关于中国历史的书。**: 关于中国历史 describes what the book is about.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 关于 can introduce a sentence topic or appear inside a noun modifier with 的.
- It is not restricted to sentence-initial position. Identify the noun or clause whose topic it supplies.

■ Use the distinction

- 关于中国历史 describes what the book is about.
- 关于 can introduce a sentence topic or appear inside a noun modifier with 的. It is not restricted to sentence-initial position. Identify the noun or clause whose topic it supplies.

■ Try it with help closed

You identify a book whose subject is Chinese history. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 这是一本关于中国历史的书。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 关于 can introduce a sentence topic or appear inside a noun modifier with 的.
- It is not restricted to sentence-initial position. Identify the noun or clause whose topic it supplies.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

直到 ... , ... 才 ... (all the way until)

■ A late understanding begins at a boundary

- An explanation becomes clear to you only now.
- 直到现在，我才明白。** – 直到 gives the boundary and 才 emphasises that understanding did not occur earlier.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **直到 ... , ... 才 ... (all the way until)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

直到现在，我才明白。

zhí dào xiàn zài wǒ cái míng bai

Word guide: 直到 – until; 现在 – now; 我 – I; 才 – only then; 明白 – understand.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **直到现在，我才明白。**: 直到 gives the boundary and 才 emphasises that understanding did not occur earlier.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 直到 can also mark a continuing action's endpoint without 才: 我们一直等到十点.
- Avoid adding 才 mechanically when there is no delayed onset to emphasise.

■ Use the distinction

- 直到 gives the boundary and 才 emphasises that understanding did not occur earlier.
- 直到 can also mark a continuing action's endpoint without 才: 我们一直等到十点. Avoid adding 才 mechanically when there is no delayed onset to emphasise.

■ Try it with help closed

An explanation becomes clear to you only now. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 直到现在，我才明白。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 直到 can also mark a continuing action's endpoint without 才: 我们一直等到十点.
- Avoid adding 才 mechanically when there is no delayed onset to emphasise.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

向 + Direction / Person + Verb (towards)

■ An apology has a recipient

- You apologise to a friend rather than travel toward the friend.
- 我向他道歉。 – 向他 identifies the person to whom the apology is directed.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **向 + Direction / Person + Verb (towards)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

向左转。

xiàng zuǒ zhuǎn

Word guide: 向 – towards; 左 – left; 转 – turn.

■ Read examples in context

我们向他学习。

wǒ men xiàng tā xué xí

Word guide: 我们 – we; 向 – towards; 他 – him; 学习 – learn.

- In the opening example, 我向他道歉。: 向他 identifies the person to whom the apology is directed.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 向 works with physical directions and abstract targets.
- 向他学习 names a model to learn from; it does not mean physically walking toward him.

■ Use the distinction

- 向他 identifies the person to whom the apology is directed.
- 向 works with physical directions and abstract targets. 向他学习 names a model to learn from; it does not mean physically walking toward him.

■ Try it with help closed

You apologise to a friend rather than travel toward the friend. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我向他道歉。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 向 works with physical directions and abstract targets.
- 向他学习 names a model to learn from; it does not mean physically walking toward him.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.