Day 11.1

Evidence relating to constituents:

1) pro-forms replace constituents
2) constituents can typically stand alone as fragments
3) constituents are movable
4) constituents resist being split by parenthetical material
5) linear order only applies within constituents
6) ambiguity

1) pro-forms replace constituents

Pro-forms are words which act as replacements for constituents

**Pronoun** -- replaces nouns and their dependants
   E.g. he, she, it, they

**Pro-verb** -- replaces verbs and their dependants
   E.g. do.

**Pro-preposition** -- replaces prepositions and their dependants
   E.g. there

example: "He went in the house"
"He went there:

2) free-standing as a fragment

Constituents may fill in as answers to gaps in an original question. The groups of words are constituents

Example Sentence: The embarrassed instructor finally changed the sentence on final exam.

   > Who **finally changed the sentence on final exam**?
   **The embarrassed instructor** <-
   > What did **the embarrassed instructor do**?
   **Finally changed the sentence on final exam** <-
   > What did **the embarrassed instructor finally do**?
   **Changed the sentence on final exam.** <-
   > What did **the embarrassed instructor finally change**?
   **The sentence on final exam.** <-

NOT "echo questions":
The embarrassed instructor finally .. **what ... on final exam**?
Changed the sentence.
3) constituents are "movable"

Sentences with the same meaning exist with a constituent in different places.

E.g.: I've gotten three tickets since I bought the car.
     Since I bought the car, I've gotten three tickets

E.g.: Bob bought a new car for 20k. The car he likes. The price he hates.
     He likes the car. He hates the price.

warning: NOT
E.g.: He likes the car.
     The car he likes.

4) constituents resist being split by parenthetical material

Parenthetical = material which is structurally unrelated to the rest of the sentence.

E.g.’s of parentheticals: "Eh?" (Canadian) "Yaknow" etc…

5) linear order only applies within constituents

Example: Det Adj Noun

But, what about the following sentence?

I bought Bob a new car

Pron. V N Det Adj N

6) Ambiguity

Ambiguity = two meanings for one form.
(NOT Vagueness, which = not much meaning for one form)

Example: “I thought about the car in my office. “

Principle of Compositionality must apply over sub-parts of a sentence successively. These sub-parts are constituents.