

Read the following sentences carefully. Remember that sentences bearing an asterisk (*) are ungrammatical.

- 1) His leaving the farm was a surprise.
- 2) A man's directing traffic solved the problem.
- 3) *John running away was unexpected.
- 4) *Him acting in the play was a major disappointment.

Paying attention only to the sentences listed above, give the **most general statement** as to why the first two sentences are grammatical while the latter two are not (*hint: use the underlined words as your guide in making the generalization*).