

Using Adjectives and Adverbs

Reteaching

Modifiers are words that describe or give more specific information about the meanings of other words. Modifiers may function as adjectives or adverbs.

Adjectives modify nouns and pronouns. They answer the questions *which one* (*that, this*), *what kind* (*blue, cool*), *how many* (*three, several*), and *how much* (*some, none*).

Words classified as other parts of speech can also function as adjectives.

NOUNScircus tent**POSSESSIVE NOUNS AND PRONOUNS**Shawn's drums, our town**INDEFINITE PRONOUNS**every performer**DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS**that elephant**PARTICIPLES**trained monkeys, cheering crowds**NUMBERS**three, 35

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They answer the questions *when*, *where*, *how*, and *to what extent*.

WHEN?The circus train arrived today.**WHERE?**Look up to see the trapeze artists.**HOW?**The crowd gathered expectantly.**TO WHAT EXTENT?**The animals were extremely well trained.

Identifying Adjectives and Adverbs

Identify the boldfaced word as an adjective or an adverb. Write **ADJ** or **ADV** on the line.

- "Come one, come all to the greatest show on Earth!" shouts the **enthusiastic** announcer at the circus. _____
- The spectacle **now** known as the circus began thousands of years ago. _____
- Roman games, which were similar to today's circuses, focused **mainly** on animal acts and daring horseback riding. _____
- During the Middle Ages, jugglers and tightrope walkers **skillfully** performed on street corners. _____
- Those** performers also performed before the royalty of Europe in organized shows. _____
- Modern circuses began in England in the 1700s when Philip Astley began a show of trick **horseback** riding accompanied by live music, all within a circular structure. _____
- American showmen **soon** began to imitate Astley's Circus, adding more acts. _____
- In the late 1700s, circuses began exhibiting **exotic** animals. _____
- One of these **traveling** circuses was owned by P. T. Barnum, a famous showman. _____
- At first, horse-drawn wagons **slowly** carried the circus from town to town. _____

Using Adjectives and Adverbs

More Practice

A. Identifying Adjectives and the Words They Modify

Underline the adjective once and the word it modifies twice in each of the following sentences. Ignore articles and proper nouns.

1. Circus audiences loved the high-wire act of the Great Wallendas.
2. This daring family of tightrope walkers put on an amazing show for decades.
3. Their famous act was their seven-person pyramid.
4. In this act, four men walked on the wire with a steel rod connecting them.
5. On the connecting rod stood two more men; another steel rod connected them, too.
6. At the very top of the pyramid was a young woman on a chair that rested on the second rod.
7. Their act, which was always performed without a safety net, may have been the most dangerous stunt in the history of the circus.
8. Different members of the extended family took part in this incredible feat over the years.
9. Unfortunately, the act had more than its fair share of disastrous results.
10. For example, in 1962, in the middle of the act, one member of the famous troupe lost his balance, and the whole pyramid collapsed.
11. Two members were killed and one was paralyzed for life in that tragic fall.

B. Identifying Adverbs and the Words They Modify

Underline the word modified by each boldfaced adverb. Then in the blank after each sentence, identify the part of speech of the modified word. Write **V** for verb, **ADJ** for adjective, or **ADV** for adverb.

Never look **directly** at the sun during an eclipse. _____ V

1. An **extremely** strong wind overturned the park bench. _____
2. "I **never** could do that!" exclaimed Helen. _____
3. The firefighter moved **very** cautiously through the blackened building. _____
4. We searched **everywhere** for the missing photos. _____
5. Hank drove **more** slowly as we continued up the winding road. _____
6. As we reached the stadium, we gasped at the **unusually** large crowd of fans waiting in line. _____
7. The small, **barely** red strawberries were not ripe enough to pick. _____
8. Please go to the library **now** for the information you need. _____
9. After he completed the first problem, he worked the next one **much** faster. _____
10. Marta jogs two miles **daily** in any weather. _____

Using Adjectives and Adverbs

Application

A. Writing Subjects and Predicates

Complete each of the following sentences by writing an adjective or an adverb in the blank. Then write **ADJ** or **ADV** on the line to identify your word.

1. Transporting an entire circus from city to city is a _____ task. _____
2. Smaller circuses, which travel by truck, give _____ performances within a certain area. _____
3. They may perform in a different city _____ every day. _____
4. _____ performer and worker pitches in where needed. _____
5. Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey uses railroad cars to travel _____ distances. _____
6. There are _____ units, a Red and a Blue, which follow their own routes. _____
7. Each unit puts on _____ performances with plenty of clowns, wild animals, and other acts. _____
8. Behind the scenes, the performers live in a _____ organized environment. _____
9. The circus _____ has a community kitchen, medical facilities, and a post office. _____
10. The circus workers and performers live together _____ closely, and this closeness makes them feel more like a family than a business. _____

B. Writing with Adjectives and Adverbs

Often, music concerts of today are as spectacular as the circus used to be. Performers still try to dazzle and amaze audiences with special effects and lighting. On the lines below, describe a live concert by a popular singer or band. You could choose to describe the audience, the hall, or the performers themselves. Use at least six adjectives and six adverbs in your description.

Using Comparisons

Reteaching

Use modifiers to compare things. There are three forms, or degrees, of comparison.

Degrees of Comparisons		
Base Form	describes one person, thing, or action	This park is <u>popular</u> .
Comparative	compares two	This park is <u>more</u> popular than that one.
Superlative	compares three or more	This park is the <u>most</u> popular of all.

Form the comparative or superlative of most one-syllable and two-syllable words by adding *-er* and *-est* (*sharper, sharpest*). Form the comparative or superlative form of modifiers that sound awkward with *-er* and *-est* by combining the basic form with the words *more* and *most* (*more tired, most tired*). Form the comparative or superlative of most modifiers with three syllables and those that end in *-ly* by using *more* and *most* (*more beautiful, most beautiful*). To make a negative comparison, use the words *less* and *least* (*less possible, least possible*).

Some familiar modifiers have irregular comparative and superlative forms: *good, better, best; bad, worse, worst; well, better, best; many, more, most; much, more, most*.

A. Identifying Comparative and Superlative Modifiers

On the line, label the boldfaced modifier **B** for base form, **C** for comparative, or **S** for superlative.

- Each year, a **greater** number of people visit our nation's parklands than before. _____
- Yellowstone, the world's **oldest** national park, attracts thousands of visitors yearly. _____
- Campers, hikers, and photographers flock to see the park's **magnificent** scenery. _____
- Possibly the **most unusual** of the park's attractions are the bubbling pools of mud called *mudpots*. _____
- The park has a **large** group of geysers. _____
- Old Faithful, which erupts on an average of every 73 minutes, is the **most famous**. _____
- People also come to see the park's animals since Yellowstone is the **largest** wildlife preserve in the country. _____

B. Using Modifiers in Comparisons

Study the boldfaced modifier in each of the following sentences. If the form of the comparison is correct, write **Correct** on the line. If it is incorrect, write the correct form.

- Over the last few years, my family has visited **many** national parks. _____
- I think the parks in Utah are the **more beautiful** of all. _____
- The rock formations in Bryce Canyon are **most unusual** than those in any other park. _____

Using Comparisons

More Practice

A. Using Comparisons

Underline the correct form of comparison for each sentence.

1. The styles of the classical order of Greek architecture vary from the simple Doric to the much (more elegant, most elegant) Ionic and Corinthian.
2. Of the three styles, the Doric is the (earliest, earlier) and the (less elaborate, least elaborate).
3. The three styles can be distinguished, in part, by the relative complexity of their capital—the upper part of the column: the Doric capital is rather (simple, simpler) and unadorned; the Ionic capital is more elaborate; and the Corinthian capital, decorated with carvings of leaves, is the (more complexly designed, most complexly designed) of all.
4. The Corinthian style, the (more decorative, most decorative) of the three, can be observed in the ruins of Corinth near Athens, Greece.
5. Many people consider the magnificent Parthenon, with its row of 46 Doric columns, to be the (better, best) of all classical Greek temples.
6. Set on the Acropolis and built entirely of marble, the Parthenon is one of the world's (more beautiful, most beautiful) buildings.

B. Using Modifiers in Comparisons

After each sentence, write the comparative or superlative form of the word in parentheses, choosing the form that is appropriate for that sentence.

1. This is the (bad) traffic I have ever seen on this road. _____
2. Dan speaks Spanish the (fluently) in the class. _____
3. The sheriff's department uses bloodhounds that can detect even the (faint) scents. _____
4. Wallis greedily grabbed the (large) piece of cake on the plate. _____
5. That auctioneer manages to speak (rapidly) than I thought was possible. _____
6. No one on the track team runs (fast) than Ryan. _____
7. *Pepperoni Plus* is the restaurant that serves the (good) pizza in town. _____
8. The director reminded the cast to speak (distinctly) than they had in the previous rehearsal. _____
9. The detective needed a (complete) description of the suspect than I could provide. _____
10. The planet Venus appears (bright) than many stars. _____

Using Comparisons

Application

A. Using Comparisons in Sentences

Write sentences comparing the following items by using the comparative or superlative form of the modifier in parentheses.

EXAMPLE one doll compared to another (lifelike)
This doll is more lifelike than that one.

1. weather today compared to yesterday (bad)

2. one hiking trail compared to two others (difficult)

3. one debater compared to three others (logically)

4. one piece of candy compared to another (sweet)

5. your health today compared to your health yesterday (well)

6. one painting compared to another (lovely)

B. Using Comparisons in Writing

Imagine that you are hiking a mountain trail with your dog or with a companion. Choose five of the words in the list below, and use their comparative and/or superlative forms in a paragraph describing your hike. Underline the words from the list that you have used.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| energetic | brightly | good | lovely | quiet |
| slowly | tired | steep | high | delicious |
| hazardous | carefully | lazily | playfully | clumsy |

Problems with Comparisons

Reteaching

Double Comparisons Do not use both *-er* and *more* to form the comparative. Do not use both *-est* and *most* to form the superlative.

NONSTANDARD Your cat is even more fussier than mine.

STANDARD Your cat is even fussier than mine.

Illogical Comparisons Use the word *other* or *else* to compare an individual member with the rest of the group.

NONSTANDARD My cat has a better pedigree than any cat.

STANDARD My cat has a better pedigree than any other cat.

Incomplete Comparisons When you make a compound comparison, use *than* or *as* after the first modifier to avoid an incomplete comparison.

NONSTANDARD Siamese cats are more popular in our neighborhood.

STANDARD Siamese cats are more popular in our neighborhood than Persians.

State both parts of a comparison fully if you suspect readers are likely to misunderstand your sentence.

NONSTANDARD I like my cat more than you.

STANDARD I like my cat more than you like it.

A. Using Comparisons Correctly

Choose and underline the correct modifier in each sentence.

- Although dogs and cats are both popular pets, cats tend to have the (more independent, more independenter) nature.
- Cats have a (more keener, keener) sense of balance than many other animals.
- They can see (better, more better) in dim light than people do.
- Cats have the reputation of being one of the (most curious, most curiousest) members of the animal kingdom.
- The ancient Egyptians considered the cat to be one of the (most sacred, most sacrest) of all creatures.
- Today, many people choose the cat as their (favoritest, most favorite) pet of all.

B. Using Comparisons Logically

In each pair of sentences, choose the sentence that uses modifiers logically and clearly. Underline that sentence.

- The whale shark is larger than any other fish.
 - The whale shark is larger than any fish.
- Our class decided it liked Robert Frost better.
 - Our class decided it liked Robert Frost better than any other American poet.
- Mr. Medeiros praised the cast more than you.
 - Mr. Medeiros praised the cast more than you praised them.
- For me, chemistry was a more challenging class.
 - For me, chemistry was a more challenging class than biology.

Problems with Comparisons

More Practice

A. Using Comparisons Correctly

Choose and underline the correct modifier in each sentence.

1. The *Domesday Book* is the (earliest, most earliest) census taken in England.
2. Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table, was the (oldest, most oldest), of four brothers; he was also King Arthur's nephew.
3. This movie is (scarier, more scarier) the first time you see it than it is the second time.
4. If we get to the concert any (more later, later), we might as well just stay home.
5. This joke is (funnier, more funnier) when you can see the comedian's expressions.

B. Correcting Double Comparisons and Illogical and Incomplete Comparisons

Rewrite each sentence to make the comparisons clear and correct.

1. Some people think that long-haired cats are more beautiful.

2. The Persian is the most popularest of the long-haired cats.

3. The most largest cat is the Maine coon cat.

4. The Angora breed is older.

5. Siamese tend to be more vocal than any cat.

6. The Manx has back legs that are more longer than its front legs.

7. Abyssinians have more melodic voices than any cats.

8. Kittens who have been handled frequently by their owners have fewer behavior problems than any kittens.

9. These kittens learn faster.

10. Cat lovers throughout the world show their most finest cats at shows.

Problems with Comparisons

Application

A. Proofreading for Comparison Errors

The following paragraph contains several errors involving comparisons. Rewrite each sentence that uses double comparisons, illogical comparisons, or incomplete comparisons on the corresponding line below. If the sentence has no comparison errors, write **Correct** on the line.

(1) James Herriot was one of the most belovedest veterinarians in England. (2) He took care of more farm animals than any kind of animal. (3) But he said that cats were one of the most importantest reasons he became a vet. (4) He wrote many stories, including one about a cat named Alfred who was more dignified than any cat. (5) Another story was about Oscar who was more social than any of the other cats in town. (6) One of his bestest stories was about an orphaned kitten that found a home on Christmas Day. (7) And there was Moses, a cat who was more comfortable around pigs than other cats. (8) Mr. Herriot's stories are some of the most delightful cat stories ever written.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

B. Using Comparisons in Writing

Imagine that you have just visited the zoo and spent a while observing the big cats—the tigers, the lions, the leopards, or the panthers. Describe the way they looked and sounded and how they moved. Use at least three comparative and three superlative modifiers, either adjectives or adverbs. Write your description on the lines below.

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Other Modifier Problems**Reteaching**

Avoid these common modifier errors.

This, that, these, and *those* are **demonstrative pronouns** used as adjectives. They must agree in number with the words they modify (nonstandard: *these* kind of garbage). *Here* and *there* are never used with demonstrative adjectives (nonstandard: *this here* truck). *Them* is never used as an adjective in place of *these* or *those* (nonstandard: *them* cans).

Two pairs of words—*good* and *well*, *bad* and *badly*—can cause special problems. Study these models of correct uses.

Good adjective and predicate adjective—describes a condition

Recycling is a good idea.

I feel good when I recycle.

Well (predicate adjective or adverb)

I feel well now that I can breathe fresh air.

The program is working well.

Bad adjective and predicate adjective—describes a condition

Pollution is a bad problem.

We feel bad about our behavior.

A **misplaced modifier** is a word or phrase placed so far away from the word it modifies that the meaning of the sentence is unclear or incorrect.

CONFUSING I glimpsed a rat sorting the recyclable materials.

CLEARER Sorting the recyclable materials, I glimpsed a rat.

A **dangling modifier** is a word or phrase that does not clearly modify any noun or pronoun in a sentence.

MISLEADING Speaking tirelessly to community groups, the recycling program was successful.

CLEARER Speaking tirelessly to community groups, recycling promoters made the program a success.

Avoid using **double negatives**—two negatives in a sentence (nonstandard: *She doesn't ask for no reward.*) The words *never*, *hardly*, *barely*, and *scarcely* are considered negative.

Using the Correct Modifier

In each pair of sentences, underline the sentence that uses modifiers correctly.

1. a. Placed at curbside, the drivers picked up the recycled items.
b. Placed at curbside, the recycled items were picked up by the drivers.
2. a. Remember to use them recycling baskets!
b. Remember to use those recycling baskets!
3. a. The people of the town are cooperating well at recycling, but I'm sure they could be doing better.
b. The people of the town are cooperating good at recycling, but I'm sure they could be doing better.
4. a. The speaker showed examples of items during her presentation that could not be recycled.
b. During her presentation, the speaker showed examples of items that could not be recycled.

Other Modifier Problems

More Practice

A. Using the Correct Modifier

Underline the correct word in parentheses in each sentence.

1. After a long hike in the hot sun, a cool drink tastes especially (good, well).
2. James Michener collected (them, those) Japanese woodblock prints.
3. Judy didn't divulge the sensitive information to (no one, anyone).
4. Angela feels (bad, badly) that she cannot accept the athletic scholarship.
5. (Them, These) bruised apples were (bad, badly) packed in the crate.
6. The Neanderthals (didn't know nothing, knew nothing) of metals.
7. Don't leave the hospital until you are (real, really) well.
8. (These, This) type of newspaper is more popular than (those, that) type.
9. Our lawn doesn't (never, ever) grow (good, well) unless we fertilize it.
10. Absorbed in the poems of *A Book of Americans*, Jennifer (was scarcely, wasn't scarcely) aware of her surroundings.

B. Using Modifiers Correctly

Rewrite each sentence to make it clearer and less confusing.

1. Reading the book, the characters seemed real to her.

2. Costing over \$200, the PTA donated a printer to our class.

3. As a person who values comfort above all, the too-small shoes bothered Patrice.

4. Remembering today's game at the last minute, their soccer equipment was hastily thrown in the trunk of the car.

5. Flying overhead, I saw the geese pass by in a V-formation.

6. Mesmerized by the approaching headlights, the car bore down upon the motionless deer.

Other Modifier Problems

Application

A. Using Adjectives and Adverbs Correctly

Write sentences in which you use correctly the adjectives and adverbs given.

1. **good** (predicate adjective) _____
2. **well** (adverb) _____
3. **well** (predicate adjective) _____
4. **bad** (adjective) _____
5. **bad** (predicate adjective) _____
6. **badly** (adverb) _____

B. Writing with Adjectives and Adverbs

The following paragraph has several errors involving modifiers. Read each sentence and decide if it has an error. If it does, rewrite it correctly on the corresponding line below. If it is correct, write **Correct** on the corresponding line.

Most of us ignore crucial conservation issues that affect our lives.

(1) For example, every week millions of newspapers are produced from thousands of trees that are never recycled. (2) Such misuse of that there natural resource—timber—makes no sense. After all, trees provide us with paper, wood, fruits, shade, and natural beauty. (3) Preventing flooding, soil erosion is controlled by the trees, too. (4) Releasing oxygen, life is sustained on our planet. (5) Unfortunately, deforestation is taking place at an alarming rate, contributing to air pollution. (6) Deforestation also affects the problem of global warming. (7) Climbing two to six degrees a year, Earth's climates may be changing. (8) We can do our part to preserve our forests and our planet by reducing paper usage and recycling.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____