

## PART 3: DECORATIVE WORDS, PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES AND CLAUSES

Bare-bones sentence can be decorated with adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, and interjections. The following four example sentences are still the same four basic types of sentences but now they are enhanced by describing words that make the sentences richer. The adjectives are shaded grey, the adverbs are shaded green, the co-ordinate conjunctions that join words are coloured orange, the co-ordinate conjunctions that join phrases are **bolded**, and the interjection is shaded aqua.

- a) The beautiful **but** nasty girl smiled wickedly, alas.
- b) The studious girl **and** the athletic boy slowly opened their new book together.
- c) Oh no! The most successful girl gave an algebra book to the least successful boy.
- d) The lucky girl was unbelievably **and** overwhelmingly happy.

Mark the parts of the sentence and colour the decorative words in the following sentences appropriately. The answers follow on the next page

1. The very agile little dog was twisting and turning rapidly.
2. The extremely tall giraffe was hungrily eating the most luscious leaves.
3. Hurray! Arthur, a life-long bachelor, has now finally given his girlfriend an engagement ring.
4. The food bank is always a busy place.
5. Yesterday, a strong wind was blowing all around.
6. Did the deaf men hear the noisy cats last night?
7. Give the little girls their weekly allowance, for heaven's sakes.
8. Yellow and white, the cute little cat is also very friendly.

## ANSWERS

1. The **very** agile little dog was twisting **and** turning **rapidly**.
1. The **extremely** tall giraffe was **hungrily** eating the **most** luscious leaves.
2. **Hurray!** Arthur, a life-long bachelor, has **now** **finally** given his girlfriend **an** engagement ring.
3. The food bank is **always** a busy place.
4. **Yesterday**, a strong wind was blowing **all around**.
5. **Did** the deaf men **hear** the noisy cats **last night**?
6. (YOU) Give the little girls their weekly allowance, **for heaven's sakes**.
7. **Yellow** **and** white, the cute little cat is **also** **very** friendly.

## PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Another way to decorate sentences is to use prepositional phrases.

Prepositional phrases are two or more words that work together and function as an adjective or as an adverb. Prepositional phrases always begin with a preposition and end with an object (a noun or a pronoun), and they may be decorated with adjectives and occasionally adverbs as well. In the example sentences, the prepositional phrases are enclosed in brackets.

The cat (in the hat) smiled evilly.

The cat chased the dog (up a tree).

Click [here](#) for a list of the most common prepositions.

In the following sentences, place brackets around the prepositional phrases.  
The answers follow.

1. My house is at the end of this street.
2. The car drove through the woods and into the valley.
3. Do you have a lot of money for me?
4. Tie a yellow ribbon around the old oak tree.
5. The three girls are no longer friends with each other.
6. The little cat sat patiently beside her food dish like a Buddha.
7. From the start, he was addicted to music.
8. She slid down the hill and over the fence.
9. Off the table fell the hat and onto the floor.

## **ANSWERS**

1. My house is (at the end) (of this street).
2. The car drove (through the woods) and (into the valley).
3. Do you have a lot (of money) (for me)?
4. Tie a yellow ribbon (around the old oak tree).
5. The three girls are no longer friends (with each other).
6. The little cat sat patiently (beside her food dish) (like a Buddha).
7. (From the start), he was addicted (to music).
8. She slid (down the hill) and (over the fence).
9. (Off the table) fell the hat and (onto the floor).

## *SUBORDINATE CLAUSES*

A third way to decorate sentences is to use subordinate clauses. Subordinate clauses are like principal clauses in that they have a subject and a verb, but they are unlike principal clauses in that they cannot stand alone. Subordinate clauses always begin with a subordinate conjunction, although sometimes the subordinate conjunction is understood. In the sentence *I noticed that you smiled just now*, the subordinate conjunction is “that” and the subordinate clause is “that you smiled just now”. Sometimes, however, “that” is omitted, as in *I noticed you smiled just now*. In the example sentences, the subordinate clauses are underlined with a double underline.

The doctor noted that his patient needed to lose some weight.  
Please forget (THAT) I told you this secret.

When subordinate clauses are at the beginning of sentences, they must be separated from the principal clause by commas.

Because he never smiles, people think that he is a grouch.

Click [here](#) for a list of some of the most common subordinate conjunctions.

In the following example sentence, the principal clause is underlined with a single line, while the subordinate clauses are underlined with a double underline.

The children, although they loved school, were still very happy when they left for Disney World.

In the following sentences, underline the principal clause with a single line and the subordinate clause(s) with a double underline. The answers follow on the next page.

1. Canada, which has ten provinces and three territories, is a very large country.
2. When our daughter goes camping, she always takes a tent.
3. Brush and floss your teeth whenever you get a chance.
4. If you go to the store for milk, I will have your cake baked before you have to leave for work.
5. While we were sitting in the restaurant, a fire started in the basement.
6. The map that shows the true size of the Arctic was left behind in the car.
7. We took our winter tires off early because this winter was not very snowy.
8. I am aware that Robert is not very trustworthy.
9. Jessica forgot she had left her car at the university.

## ANSWERS

1. Canada, which has ten provinces and three territories, is a very large country.
2. When our daughter goes camping, she always takes a tent.
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6. The map that shows the true size of the Arctic was left behind in the car.
7. We took our winter tires off early because this winter was not very snowy.
8. I am aware that Robert is not very trustworthy.
9. Jessica forgot (THAT) she had left her car at the university.

In the following example sentence, the principal clause is underlined with a single line, while the subordinate clause is underlined with a double underline. As well, the adjectives are shaded grey, the adverb is shaded green, the coordinate conjunction that joins words is coloured orange, the subordinate conjunction is outlined in pink, the interjection is shaded aqua, and the prepositional phrase is enclosed in brackets.

The most recent lightning strike, alas, scorched the roof where it touched the biggest branch (of the old pine tree) and the chimney.

Use the same format for the following sentences. The answers follow.

1. Did you know that ink for a colour printer costs about \$2,000 per litre, which is crazy?
2. After I hit my thumb with a hammer, I decided I would hire a professional carpenter.
3. Pineapples, although they look very unappetizing, actually contain juicy and delicious meat.
4. Yikes, my mother wants a purple BMW even though she doesn't have a driver's licence.
5. He asked me whether I truly knew the age of that elephant.
6. Since I really don't like bananas, I'm guessing I won't enjoy banana splits.

## ANSWERS

1. Did you know **that** ink (for a colour printer) costs **about** \$2,000 (per litre), **which** is crazy?
2. **After** I hit my thumb (with a hammer), I decided **(THAT)** I would hire a professional carpenter.
3. Pineapples, **although** they look **very** unappetizing, **actually** contain juicy **and** delicious meat.
4. **Yikes**, my mother wants a purple BMW **even though** she doesn't have a driver's licence.
5. He asked me **whether** I **truly** knew the age (of that elephant).
6. **Since** I **really** don't like bananas, I'm guessing **(THAT)** I won't enjoy banana splits.