

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- abcteach.com/directory/basics/grammar/parts_of_speech/
This web site provides activities about adjectives and adverbs, such as an adjective brainstorm and an adverb wordsearch.
- www.funbrain.com/grammar
"The Grammar Gorillas" is a fun game for students to play that tests their knowledge of parts of speech.
- stufun.com/grammar/
Learn more about adjectives, adverbs and prepositions on this fun web site!
- www.eduplace.com/tales
This Wacky Web Tales[®] site enables kids to use their knowledge about parts of speech to create interesting stories!

Suggested Print Resources

- Cleary, Brian P. *Hairy, Scary, Ordinary: What is an Adjective?* Carolrhoda Books, Minneapolis, MN; 2000.
- Cleary, Brian P. *Under, Over, By the Clover: What is a Preposition?* Carolrhoda Books, Minneapolis, MN; 2002.
- Heller, Ruth. *Behind the Mask: A Book About Prepositions.* Grosset & Dunlap, New York, NY; 1995.
- Heller, Ruth. *Many Luscious Lollipops: A Book about Adjectives.* Sandcastle Books, New York, NY; 1992.
- Heller, Ruth. *Up, Up and Away: A Book About Adverbs.* Grosset & Dunlap, New York, NY; 1991.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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TITLES

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| • DESCRIPTIVE WORDS
& PHRASES | • PUNCTUATION |
| • NOUNS | • SENTENCES |
| | • VERBS |

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Descriptive Words & Phrases

Grades K-4

Grammar consists of a set of rules of language that can be clearly defined and applied to everyday speech and writing. In the classroom, grammar instruction can often be didactic and static, presenting grammar rules as absolute truth and diminishing the knowledge students already possess about language. In order to maximize the usefulness of teaching grammar, students need to be encouraged to discover the rules themselves, based on their own language experiences in real world contexts. Students already instinctively know a great deal about how language works, and as teachers, we need to bring this information to the surface in a dynamic and useful way.

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Introduction

Descriptive words and phrases spice up the English language! Adjectives are one type of descriptive word; they describe nouns. Adverbs are descriptive words that usually describe verbs. Groups of words called prepositional phrases can describe both nouns and verbs. The use of descriptive words and phrases can certainly make sentences more interesting!

Vocabulary

grammar — The set of rules that explains how we use language.

descriptive words — Words that tell us more about other words. Adjectives and adverbs are descriptive words.

descriptive phrases — Groups of words that tell us more about other words. Prepositional phrases are descriptive phrases.

noun — A word that names a person, place or thing.

adjective — A word that describes a noun.

verbs — Words that show action or being.

adverbs — Words that usually describe verbs.

prepositions — Words that connect with nouns, pronouns or noun families. Some examples of prepositions are *by*, *to*, *with*, *at* and *for*.

noun family — A noun and all the words that go with it.

prepositional phrase — A group of words made up of a preposition and a noun, pronoun or noun family.

Grammar Rules

- Using adjectives to compare nouns:
 - Sometimes you add *-er* to an adjective to compare nouns (e.g., fast, faster; “Kim is a *faster* runner than Brandon.”).
 - To single one noun out of many, add *-est* to most adjectives (e.g., fast, fastest; “Kim is the *fastest* runner in the class.”).
 - Sometimes you use “more” or “most” before an adjective to compare nouns.
 - “More” can be used before an adjective to compare two nouns (e.g., “The zoo was *more interesting* than the park.”).
 - “Most” can be used to single one noun out of many (e.g., “That is the *most beautiful* flower I have ever seen.”)
- Using adverbs to compare verbs:
 - Just like with adjectives, adverbs can be used to compare verbs by adding *-er* or *-est* (e.g., “Kim jumped *higher* than Jim.” OR “Kim jumped *highest* of all.”).
 - “More” or “most” can also be used before an adverb to compare verbs (e.g., “Steve walks *more quickly* than Ian.” OR “Of all her classmates, Kate studies *most seriously*.”).

Grammar Tests

- A **“Tip Off Test” for finding adjectives**: “The ____ NOUN is very ____.” If a word can fill in both blanks, then it is probably an adjective (e.g., “The *happy* dog is very *happy*.”).
- The **“Adverb Movement” Test**: If a word can be moved to a different position in the sentence and still make sense, then the word is probably an adverb (e.g., “The dog ran *quickly*.” “*Quickly*, the dog ran.” “The dog *quickly* ran.”).

Focus Questions

1. What do descriptive words and phrases do? Why are they important?
2. What is a noun? Give some examples.
3. What does an adjective do? Name some adjectives.
4. How do you make an adjective more than it was before? Use the adjective “happy” as an example.
5. What is a verb? Give some examples.
6. What do adverbs do? Name some adverbs.
7. How are adjectives and adverbs similar and different?
8. What is a preposition? List some prepositions.
9. What is a noun family? Give an example.
10. What is in a prepositional phrase? Provide an example.

Follow-up Activities

- Students can create a name poem in an acrostic format with adjectives that describe them (e.g., “S” is for smart).
- Share the Schoolhouse Rock songs “Lolly, Lolly, Lolly, Adverbs Here” and “Unpack Your Adjectives.” (See www.apocalypse.org/pub/u/gilly/Schoolhouse_Rock/HTML/grammar/adverb.html and www.apocalypse.org/pub/u/gilly/Schoolhouse_Rock/HTML/grammar/adjective.html for online versions of the songs and lyrics.) Students can then write their own songs about adjectives and adverbs.
- Encourage students to rewrite a favorite picture book, removing all adjectives and adverbs. Students can compare the new version of the story with the original version. Which do students prefer, and why?
- Encourage students to bring in postcards and pictures of places they have traveled or would like to travel. Students should make lists of as many adjectives as possible that describe the pictures. They can then write and illustrate travel brochures using the adjectives.
- Each student can act out a certain action, and the class can throw out adverbs to determine how each of the actions should be performed (e.g., run slowly; jump high).
- Students should write detailed directions of how they get from one place to another (e.g., home to school, classroom to library). They should be sure to include lots of prepositional phrases in their directions! Students can swap their directions with a classmate and underline all of the prepositions and prepositional phrases.
- Play hide-and-seek in your classroom! Encourage one student to hide an object while a partner covers his or her eyes. The student who hid the object can then give directions to find the object, using only prepositional phrases.
- As a class, students can make a Descriptive Words & Phrases Book as one volume in a class Grammar Library. This book can include definitions, examples and illustrations for key concepts like adverbs, adjectives and prepositional phrases.
- Students can write advertisements for their favorite books, TV shows or snacks using lots of descriptive words!
- Provide students with two index cards. On one card, they should write an adjective and on the other, a noun. Collect cards from the class and place them in two separate piles. Students should pick one adjective card and one noun card and then draw a picture of what the cards describe.