Pretest: **Circle** the number of your proficiency in the following areas.
Posttest: Put an **X** on the number of your proficiency in the following areas.

**Level:** ABE   **Unit:** Modifying Phrases

**Standard:** CCR.LA.ABE.1.4.L

**Learning Goal:** Students will understand the use of modifying phrases such as, prepositional phrases and verb phrases.

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**Lesson Objectives**

You will be able to
- Understand the use of modifying phrases
- Identify prepositional phrases as modifiers
- Identify verb phrases as modifiers
- Identify renaming phrases as modifiers

**Skills**

- **Core Skill:** Clarify and Explain
- **Reading Skill:** Recognize Supporting Details

---

**Vocabulary**

adjacent
ambiguous
phrase

---

**Modifying Phrases**

**KEY CONCEPT:** A group of words called a *phrase* can modify another word in a sentence.

Underline the adjectives in each sentence. Tell what each modifies.

1. The spotted dog wagged its tail.

2. Enormous raindrops fell from the dark clouds.

Underline the adverb in each sentence. Tell what it modifies.

3. The kids giggled loudly while playing with their puppets.

4. We watched as the kite dipped and turned wildly.

**Modifying Phrases**

Sometimes a whole group of words acts to modify, or describe, another word in a sentence. A *phrase* is a group of words that contains either a noun (or pronoun) or a verb, but not both. A phrase also includes other words that describe the noun or verb or that tie the group of words to the rest of the sentence.

**Prepositional Phrases**

As you learned in Chapter 2, a *prepositional phrase* is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. In a sentence, a prepositional phrase works as an adjective or an adverb. When it serves as an adjective, it modifies a noun or a pronoun.

The water *in the pool* is clear.

When a prepositional phrase is used as an adverb, it modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

- Cindy jumped *off the high board.*
- She is skillful *at diving*.
- Cindy began diving *soon after her older sister.*

A prepositional phrase can be placed either before or after the word it modifies. However, the sentence will be clearer if the phrase is *adjacent*, or next to, the word it modifies.

**Confusing:** Cindy teaches children to jump off the low board from the grade school.

**Better:** Cindy teaches children from the grade school to jump off the low board.
RECOGNIZE SUPPORTING DETAILS

Details are words and phrases that give information. Supporting details describe or tell more about the subject or verb of a sentence or about the main idea of a passage. They can be factual details, commonly in a nonfiction piece, or descriptive details, commonly in fiction.

In this lesson, you will learn about how modifiers add details that describe another word in a sentence.

Read the following sentences and find the supporting details. Think about whether they support the subject or the verb.

(1) The smell of freshly baked cookies made her mouth water.
(2) The tiny white-and-black speckled kitten napped in the sun.

In sentence 1, the supporting detail freshly baked cookies tells more about the subject, smell. In sentence 2, the words tiny white-and-black speckled give details about the kitten. These words help us picture what the kitten looks like.

THINK ABOUT WRITING

Directions: Read each sentence and underline the prepositional phrase. Then write whether the phrase is an adjective or adverb, what the phrase modifies, and what information it gives you.

1. The sign at the end of the road had been blown down during the storm.

2. During the storm, the dog hid under the bed.

3. Kyle had to clear all the branches that blew off the trees.
Core Skill
Clarify and Explain

When writing is ambiguous, or unclear, it makes it difficult for readers to understand what they are reading.

In this lesson, you are learning about using modifiers in your writing. Modifiers help explain or clarify what you are trying to tell your readers. They can help "paint" a clear image in the readers' minds.

Read the following sentences:

The baby stopped crying.

The tired baby stopped crying as he finally fell asleep.

Although the first sentence is a complete sentence, it gives little information and leaves you wondering: Why was the baby crying? When did he stop crying? The second sentence uses modifiers, which help clarify and explain what is happening.

Read the sentences below. In a notebook, revise each sentence. Add more detail to clarify and explain.

The cake was ruined.

Luis missed the performance.

The bird chirped.

Verb Phrases

Another group of words that acts as a modifier is a verb phrase. A verb phrase begins with a verb form.

**Tired after a long day,** José took his dog for a walk.

José used a leash to walk his dog.

**Breaking the leash,** the dog was free.

**THINK ABOUT WRITING**

**Directions:** Underline the modifying phrase in each sentence below. Then write the word it modifies.

**Example:** __**Jan**__ Walking home, Jan watched dark clouds gather.

1. ____ Louis saw the bus at the corner.

2. ____ Opening the door, Shen looked outside.

3. ____ The smell of barbecued chicken made Shawna hungry.

4. ____ The exhausted runner, seeing the finish line, speeded up.

5. ____ Julie was sorry to lose the watch.

6. ____ Jacob left his books at the library.

7. ____ Already soaked from the rain, Ms. Cardenas opened her umbrella.

8. ____ The basketball game ended soon after sunset.

9. ____ The police car arrived at the accident scene in a hurry.

10. ____ Hoping to get more customers, the store manager lowered prices.

11. ____ Mrs. Cosmos crossed over the Canadian border.

12. ____ Sitting between her parents, Lenore felt quite happy.
Renaming Phrases as Modifiers

A renaming phrase, also called an appositive, is a group of words that gives more information about a noun in a sentence. It is made up of a noun and other words that modify it.

John Santos, a truck driver, left the warehouse at noon.

As with other phrases, a renaming phrase must be placed carefully in the sentence. Otherwise, it can be confusing or misleading. A renaming phrase usually comes directly after the noun it modifies. Occasionally, it may come before the noun.

A retired state senator, Margaret Fisher stayed active in politics.

Usually, renaming phrases are separated from the rest of the sentence by commas. If the renaming phrase occurs in the middle of a sentence, a comma comes before and after it.

**THINK ABOUT WRITING**

**Directions:** Find the renaming phrase in each sentence below and punctuate it correctly.

**Example:** Neil Armstrong, the astronaut, was the first person on the moon.

1. Yuri Gagarin the first human in space was from the Soviet Union.
2. Ham a chimpanzee tested the US spacecraft.
3. Alan Shepard the first American in space wrote a book about the early space program.
4. Shepard went into space in Redstone 3 a tiny spacecraft.
5. Shepard an astronaut and test pilot went to the moon years later.

**WRITE TO LEARN**

A modifying phrase is often used to begin a sentence. When you do this in your writing, use a comma to separate it from the rest of the sentence. A comma is not always needed if the phrase occurs somewhere else in the sentence.

Stumbling over the curb, Mindy almost fell.

In a notebook, write five sentences that include modifying phrases. At least three of the sentences should begin with a modifying phrase.
**Vocabulary Review**

**Directions:** Complete the sentences below using the following words:

adjacent ambiguous phrase

1. The group of words *Hoping to win* is an example of a(n) _____________.

2. The dog owner is happy to live ____________ to a beautiful park.

3. His answer was ____________, so I am not sure if he is coming to the party.

**Skill Review**

**Directions:** Read the sentences. Underline the supporting details.

1. Pang loves to play baseball. He practices every chance he gets. On Saturday mornings, he's the first one up and ready to go hit some balls.

2. Zilha just completed her third marathon. She has always been an active person. She ran, and won, her first race when she was only eight years old.

3. Lian cried and cried. When Dad tried to give her a bottle, she just turned her head away and rubbed her eyes. She didn't even want to play with her favorite toy. Dad knew it was time to put the baby to bed.

4. Walter likes to plan ahead. Every Sunday, he picks out the clothes he will wear during the week. He also plans what he will eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day.

**Directions:** Read each sentence. Then rewrite it, inserting a modifier to clarify and explain what is happening.

5. The dog sits.

__________

6. His shoes were wet.

__________

7. They walked home together.

__________

8. Liz cooked for hours.

__________
Skill Practice

Directions: Choose the best answer to each question.

1. Jumping up Isabel, my mother’s friend, ran after the children.
   Which correction should be made to the sentence?
   A. move jumping up to the end of the sentence
   B. insert a comma after up
   C. remove the commas after Isabel and after friend
   D. insert a comma before after the children

2. After we left the movie we stopped for some coffee. My friend Albert, an avid film buff, discussed the movie with me.
   Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).
   A. After we left the movie we stopped for some coffee.
   B. After we left, the movie, we stopped for some coffee.
   C. After we left the movie, we stopped for some coffee.
   D. After we left the movie, we stopped for some coffee.

3. Losing his wallet, Jerome called the security office to report his loss. Leonard Chino, chief of security, told him the wallet had been found.
   Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).
   A. Leonard Chino, chief of security,
   B. Leonard Chino, chief of security
   C. Leonard Chino chief of security,
   D. Leonard Chino chief of security

4. To rescue her cat Ann called the fire chief, an old friend. He sent a young firefighter up a long ladder to save the cat.
   Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).
   A. To rescue her cat Ann called the fire chief, an old friend.
   B. To rescue her cat, Ann called the fire chief, an old friend.
   C. To rescue her, cat Ann called the fire chief, an old friend.
   D. To rescue her cat Ann called the fire chief an old friend.

Writing Practice

Directions: Think about the many workplace skills that you have. Write a letter to a prospective employer. Describe your workplace skills in detail. Use prepositional phrases, verb phrases, and appositives to enhance and clarify your descriptions.
CHAPTER 3 Modifiers

Lesson 3.1

Think about Writing, page 77
1. adverb, arrived  3. adjective, children
2. adjective, dinner  4. adverb, moved

Think about Writing, page 78
1. rapidly  4. carefully
2. easily  5. badly
3. extreme

Think about Writing, page 79
1. dark  3. quickly
2. sad  4. carefully

Think about Writing, page 81
1. cheapest  3. happier
2. nearer or more nearly  4. more serious

Think about Writing, page 83
1. those  4. an
2. had scarcely  5. any
3. bitter  6. anywhere

Vocabulary Review, page 84
1. modify  4. adjective
2. adverb  5. negative
3. exception  6. visualize

Skill Review, page 84
1. (1) One of nature’s worst storms moved slowly toward the unprotected land. (2) Worried people were preparing for this hurricane. (3) It would hurl powerful winds and mountainous waves at them. (4) Already, gigantic waves were beating savagely against that shore. (5) One town was nearly empty. (6) Wisely, its people had run toward higher land far away from the dangerous sea.

Skill Practice, page 85
1. B. Careful is an adjective that is being used to modify the verb drove. The adverb is carefully.
2. B. When comparing two things, add er, not est.
3. D. Didn’t hardly is a double negative.
4. D. The manager is trying to hire the best people of all those available. The comparison, therefore, is among more than two.

Writing Practice, page 85
The paragraph should follow the prompt and use adjectives and adverbs to create a vivid and compelling description.

Sample Paragraph:
A few years ago, Hurricane Isabel paid a visit to the area where I live. I felt my anxiety growing as I nervously glanced at the ominous clouds overhead and listened to the dire warnings and predictions of the weather forecasters. I had been living through hurricanes for most of my life, but this one was the worst I ever experienced. The wind howled relentlessly for hours. The rain pounded on the roof and quickly flooded the already soaked ground. The crashing thunder and jagged streaks of lightning only added to my stress and fear. The storm finally moved on, but the worst was far from over. Our neighborhood was without electricity for two solid weeks. I am glad the name Isabel has been retired, as I would not want to live through another storm like that one.

Lesson 3.2

Think about Writing, page 87
1. At the end of the road, adjective, modifies sign. It tells where. During the storm, adverb, modifies blown and tells when.
2. During the storm, adverb, modifies hid and tells when. Under the bed, adjective, modifies dog and tells where.
3. Off the trees, adverb, modifies blew and tells where.

Think about Writing, page 88
1. bus Louis saw the bus at the corner.
2. Shen Opening the door, Shen looked outside.
3. smell The smell of barbecued chicken made Shawna hungry.
4. runner The exhausted runner, seeing the finish line, speeded up.
5. sorry Julie was sorry to lose the watch.
6. books Jacob left his books at the library.
7. Ms. Cardenas Already soaked to the skin, Ms. Cardenas opened her umbrella.
8. soon The basketball game ended soon after sunset.
9. arrived The police car arrived at the accident scene in a hurry.
10. manager Hoping to get more customers, the store manager lowered prices.
(Lesson 3.2 cont.)

11. crossed Mrs. Cosmos crossed over the Canadian border.
12. Lenore Sitting between her parents, Lenore felt quite happy.

Think about Writing, page 89
1. Yuri Gagarin, the first human in space, was from the Soviet Union.
2. Ham, a chimpanzee, tested the US spacecraft.
3. Alan Shepard, the first American in space, wrote a book about the early space program.
4. Shepard went into space in Redstone 3, a tiny spacecraft.
5. Shepard, an astronaut and test pilot, went to the moon many years later.

Vocabulary Review, page 90
1. The group of words Hoping to win, is an example of a phrase.
2. The dog owner is happy to live adjacent to a beautiful park.
3. His answer was ambiguous, so I am not sure if he is coming to the party.

Skill Review, page 90
1. Pang loves to play baseball. He practices every chance he gets. On Saturday mornings, he’s the first one up and ready to go hit some balls.
2. Zihna just completed her third marathon. She has always been an active person. She ran, and won, her first race when she was only eight years old.
3. Lian cried and cried. When Dad tried to give her a bottle, she just turned her head away and rubbed her eyes. She didn’t even want to play with her favorite toy. Dad knew it was time to put the baby to bed.
4. Walter likes to plan ahead. Every Sunday, he picks out the clothes he will wear during the week. He also plans what he will eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day.

Answers will vary. Sample answer:
5. The dog sits on his favorite pillow.
6. His shoes were wet after walking home in the rain.
7. Eating their ice-cream cones, they walked home together.
8. Liz, a chef in training, cooked for hours.

Skill Practice, page 91
1. A. A comma should be used to separate an introductory phrase from the rest of the sentence.

2. D. Except for introductory phrases and renaming phrases, phrases are not usually separated from the sentence by commas.
3. A. This sentence is correct as written.
4. B. An introductory phrase should be set off by a comma.

Writing Practice, page 91
Answers will vary. Make sure you follow the prompt and use prepositional phrases, verb phrases, and appositives.

Sample Paragraph
Dear Mr. Johnson:
Please consider me for the position of cook at your restaurant. I was an Army cook and head cook at two restaurants. I graduated with honors from the Downtown Culinary School. Mr. Wells, my pastry instructor, said my pies were the best she ever tasted. I would consider it an honor to bring my talents to your restaurant.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Knight

Chapter 3 Review, pages 92–94
1. D. The produce manager is a renaming phrase. It should be set off with a comma.
2. A. Can’t hardly is a double negative.
3. A. Them is always a pronoun. It can never be used to point out a noun.
4. C. An is used before words that begin with a vowel sound rather than A. A is used before words that begin with consonant sounds.
5. C. That means “there,” so saying “that there” is like saying “there there.”
6. A. Looks is sometimes a linking verb, sometimes an action verb. Here it is used as an action verb. Nervously modifies looks, telling how the letter carrier looks at the dog. Nervous is an adjective.
7. A. This sentence is correct as written.
8. C. I have ever read is the clue that this book is being compared to all other books. Funnier compares only two things.
9. B. Well, not good, is used to describe health.
10. C. The word more should not be used with an adjective to which the ending er has been added.
11. D. Easy is an adjective. In this sentence it is used to modify the verb sets, so an adverb, easily, is needed.
12. C. Isn’t hardly is a double negative.
13. D. Loud modifies the verb screamed, so the adverb, loudly, is needed.
8. The funnier book I have ever read is Roughing It. Mark Twain, a nineteenth-century writer, is the author.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

A. The funnier book I have ever read
B. The most funny book I have ever read
C. The funniest book I have ever read
D. The more funny book I have ever read

11. That basketball player has scarcely any competition. Watch how he sets up the play so easy.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

A. Watch how he sets up the play so easy.
B. Watch how he sets up the play more easy.
C. Watch how he sets up the play easy.
D. Watch how he sets up the play so easily.

9. Lee Chung did not feel very good yesterday. He feels even worse today.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

A. did not feel very good yesterday
B. did not feel very well yesterday
C. did not feel good yesterday
D. did not feel weller yesterday

12. That computer is less expensive than this one. However, it isn’t hardly the best one that I have ever seen.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

A. it isn’t hardly the best one
B. it isn’t hardly the bestest one
C. it is hardly the best one
D. it isn’t hardly the better one

10. If I were more smarter, I would have bought this television last week. That sale was better than the sale this week.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

A. If I were more smarter
B. If I were most smarter
C. If I were smarter
D. If I were more smartest

13. Waving frantically, the hungry, shipwrecked sailor screamed loud at the passing ship.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

A. the hungry, shipwrecked sailor screamed loud
B. the hungry shipwrecked sailor screamed loud
C. the hungrily, shipwrecked sailor screamed loud
D. the hungry, shipwrecked sailor screamed loudly
14. Patty seemed extremely happy when she was given those tickets there.
Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).
A. she was given those tickets there
B. she was given them tickets
C. she was given them tickets there
D. she was given those tickets

16. Mrs. Vega, my teacher, can hardly believe that she has taught children for thirty years.
What correction should be made to this sentence?
A. insert commas before and after my teacher
B. change can hardly to can’t hardly
C. change believe to not believe
D. insert a comma after children

15. Sarin and Ann like to walk together, but Sarin prefers to walk more faster than Ann.
Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).
A. Sarin prefers to walk more faster than Ann
B. Sarin prefers to walk faster than Ann
C. Sarin prefers to walk fastest than Ann
D. Sarin prefers to walk fast than Ann

17. All the athletes trained hard, but Lisa trained the most hardest.
What correction should be made to this sentence?
A. change trained hard to trained hardest
B. change most hardest to hardest
C. change the most hardest to more harder
D. insert a comma after Lisa

18. Write a brief paragraph about a hobby that you enjoy. Use several prepositional phrases, verb phrases, and appositives in your paragraph. Make sure to include clear descriptions to help readers visualize and to punctuate your sentences correctly.
(Lesson 3.2 cont.)

11. crossed Mrs. Cosmos crossed over the Canadian border.

12. Lenore Sitting between her parents, Lenore felt quite happy.

Think about Writing, page 89

1. Yuri Gagarin, the first human in space, was from the Soviet Union.

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Vocabulary Review, page 90

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3. His answer was ambiguous, so I am not sure if he is coming to the party.

Skill Review, page 90

1. Pang loves to play baseball. He practices every chance he gets. On Saturday mornings, he's the first one up and ready to go hit some balls.

2. Zhina just completed her third marathon. She has always been an active person. She ran, and won, her first race when she was only eight years old!

3. Lian cried and cried. When Dad tried to give her a bottle, she just turned her head away and rubbed her eyes. She didn't even want to play with her favorite toy. Dad knew it was time to put the baby to bed.

4. Walter likes to plan ahead. Every Sunday, he picks out the clothes he will wear during the week. He also plans what he will eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day.

Answers will vary. Sample answer:

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Skill Practice, page 91

1. B. A comma should be used to separate an introductory phrase from the rest of the sentence.

2. D. Except for introductory phrases and renaming phrases, phrases are not usually separated from the sentence by commas.

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Writing Practice, page 91

Answers will vary. Make sure you follow the prompt and use prepositional phrases, verb phrases, and appositives.

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Sincerely,

Jeffrey Knight

Chapter 3 Review, pages 92–94

1. D. The produce manager is a renaming phrase. It should be set off with a comma.

2. A. Can't hardly is a double negative.

3. A. Them is always a pronoun. It can never be used to point out a noun.

4. C. An is used before words that begin with a vowel sound rather than A. A is used before words that begin with consonant sounds.

5. C. That means “there,” so saying “that there” is like saying “there there.”

6. A. Looks is sometimes a linking verb, sometimes an action verb. Here it is used as an action verb. Nervously modifies looks, telling how the letter carrier looks at the dog. Nervous is an adjective.

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8. C. I have ever read is the clue that this book is being compared to all other books. Funnier compares only two things.

9. B. Well, not good, is used to describe health.

10. C. The word more should not be used with an adjective to which the ending er has been added.

11. D. Easy is an adjective. In this sentence it is used to modify the verb sets, so an adverb, easily, is needed.

12. C. Isn't hardly is a double negative.

13. D. Loud modifies the verb screamed, so the adverb, loudly, is needed.
14. D. Those means "there," so there is not needed in this sentence.

15. B. The word more should not be used with an adjective to which the ending er has been added.

16. A. My teacher is a renaming phrase. It should be set off with commas.

17. B. The word most should not be used with an adjective to which the ending est has been added.

18. The paragraph should follow the prompt and include clear descriptions with images that readers can picture easily.

Sample Paragraph
Most people might pass right by If Books Could Kill, a store selling beat-up old books, but I walk right in. I love to collect books, but my favorites are detective novels from the 1950s and 60s. I carefully sort through stacks and boxes of yellowed books, hoping to find a good story. I might find a good book that's been around so long that the cover is falling off and the brittle pages are coming out. Sometimes I find a book that's been carefully preserved with no bends or tears. That's an exciting find.