Adjective

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to:—

- learn about Adjectives
- understand Determiners and Quantifiers.
- Identify usage of Adjectives.

Real Life Example

Games and Puzzles

Word puzzles and related activities can have adjective themes. Any group of words can be composed into common puzzles like crosswords and word finds for students who are studying vocabulary and may already be familiar with adjectives and their grammatical functions. Easier games, such as those involving simple spelling and letter jumbles, are an ideal way to introduce adjectives as a new concept. Games and puzzles help beginners understand spelling differences and improve their word recognition.

QUICK CONCEPT REVIEW

Adjectives are descriptive words that modify nouns pronouns. They usually come before the noun they and can be grouped together with several other adjectives to accurately describe something. Adjectives used in English to describe colour and size. Adjectives describe number, quality and appearance and have different forms, depending on how they are being used.

Examples: the tall professor/the mournful lieutenant, commitment, a month's pays, a six-year-old child, the unhappiest, richest man, etc.

If a group of words containing a subject and verb acts as adjective, it is called an Adjective Clause.

Example: My sister, who is much older than I am, is an engineer.

If an adjective clause is stripped of its subject and verb, the resulting modifier becomes an Adjective Phrase.

Example: He is the man who is keeping my family in the poorhouse.

FEATURES

(A) Position of Adjective: Adjectives nearly always appear immediately before the noun or noun phrase that they modify. Sometimes, they appear in a string of adjectives, and when they do, they appear in a set order according to category.

1. When indefinite pronouns— such as something, someone, and anybody—are modified by an adjective, the adjective comes after the pronoun: Anyone capable of doing something horrible to someone nice should be punished. Something wicked this way comes.
2. And there are certain adjectives that. in combination with certain .words, are always "postpositive (coming after the thing they modify): The president elect, heir apparent to the Glitzy fortune/lives in New York proper.

(B) Degrees of Adjectives: Adjectives can express degrees of modification:

Example: Gladys is a rich woman, but Josie is richer than Gladys, and Sadie is the richest woman in town.

The degrees of comparison are known as the positive, the comparative, and the superlative. (Actually, only the comparative and superlative show degrees.) We use the comparative for comparing two things and the superlative for comparing three or more things. Notice that the word "than" frequently accompanies the comparative and the word "the" precedes the superlative. The inflected suffixes-er and -est suffice to form most comparatives and superlatives, although we need -ier and -iest when a two-syllable adjective ends in y' (happier and happiest); otherwise we use more and most when an adjective has more than one syllable.

Positive Comparative Superlative - rich richer richest, lovely lovelier loveliest, beautiful more beautiful most beautiful.

Certain adjectives have irregular forms in the comparative and superlative degrees:

Irregular Comparative and Superlative Forms – good better best, bad worse worst, little less least, much many, some more most, far further furthest.

(C) The Order of Adjectives in a Series: It would take a linguistic philosopher to explain why we say "little brown house" and not "brown little house" or why we say "red Italian sports car" and not "Italian red sports car." The order in which adjectives in a series sort themselves out is perplexing for people learning English as a second language. It takes a lot of practice with a language before this order becomes instinctive, because the order often seems quite arbitrary. There is, however, a pattern. You will find many exceptions to the pattern in the table below, but it is definitely important to learn the pattern of adjective order if it is not part of what you naturally bring to the language.

Observation: Post of determiners and limiter adjectives (e.g., a real hero, a perfect idiot) and adjectives subject to subjective measure (e.g., beautiful, interesting).
Size and Shape: adjectives subject to objective measure (e.g., wealthy, large, round).
Age: adjectives denoting age (e.g., young old, new, ancient).
Colour: adjectives denoting colour (e.g., red, black, pale).
Origin: denominal adjectives denoting source of noun (e.g., French, American, Canadian).
Material: denominal adjectives denoting what something is made of (e.g., woollen, metallic, wooden).
Qualifier: final limiter often regarded as part of the noun (e.g., rocking chair, hunting cabin, passenger car, book cover).

TAKE ROYAL ORDER OF ADJECTIVES

Determiner, Observation, Physical Description, Origin, Material, Qualifier Noun, Size, Shape, Age, Colour

(a) a beautiful old Italian touring car

(b) an expensive antique silver mirror

(c) four gorgeous long-stemmed red silk roses

(d) her short black hair

(e) our big old English sheepdog

(f) those square wooden hat boxes

that dilapidated little hunting cabin

(g) several enormous young American

basketball players

(h) some delicious Thai food

Articles, determiners, and quantifiers are those little words that precede and modify nouns:

(D) Articles: The teacher, a college, a bit of honey, that person, those people, whatever purpose, either way, your choice. Sometimes these words will tell the reader or listener whether we're referring to a specific or general thing (the garage out back; A horse! My kingdom for a horse!): sometimes they tell how much or how many (lots of trees, several books, a great deal of confusion). The choice of the proper article or determiner to precede a noun or noun phrase is usually not a problem for writers who have grown up speaking English, nor is it a serious problem for non-native writers, where their native language has either no articles or an altogether different system of choosing articles and determiners find that these "little words" can create problems long after every other aspect of English has been mastered.

(E) Determiners are said to "mark" nouns: That is to say, you know a determiner will be followed by a noun. Some categories of determiners are limited (there are only three articles, a handful of possessive pronouns, etc.), but the possessive nouns are as limitless as nouns themselves. This limited nature of most determiner categories, however, explains why determiners are grouped apart from adjectives even though both serve a modifying function. We can imagine that the language will never tire of inventing new adjectives; the determiners (except for those possessive nouns), on the other hand, are well established, and this class of words is not going to grow in number. These categories of determiners are as follows: the articles (a, an, the — see below: possessive nouns (Joe's, the priest's, my mother's etc.): possessive pronouns, (his, your, their, whose, etc.); numbers (one, two, etc.); indefinite pronouns (few, more, each. every. either, all, both, some, any, etc.); and demonstrative pronouns. The demonstratives (this, that, these, those, such) are discussed in the section on Demonstrative Pronouns. Notice that the possessive nouns differ from the other determiners in that they, themselves, are often accompanied by other determiners; "my mother's rug," "the priests's collar." "a dog's life."

(F) Quantifiers: These are words that precede and modify nouns. They tell us how many or how much. Selecting the correct quantifier depends on your understanding the distinction between Count and Non-Count Nouns. For our purposes, we will choose the count noun "trees" and the non-count noun "dancing":

The following quantifiers will work with count nouns: many trees, a few trees, few trees, several trees, and a couple of trees, none of the trees.

The following quantifiers will work with non-count nouns; not much dancing, a little dancing, little dancing, a bit of dancing, a good deal of dancing, a great deal of dancing, no dancing.

The following quantifiers will work with both count and non-count nouns; all of the trees/ dancing, some trees/dancing, most of the trees/dancing, enough trees/dancing, a lot of trees/ dancing, lots of trees/dancing, plenty of trees/dancing, a lack of trees/dancing..

In formal academic writing, it is usually better to use many and much rather than phrases such as a lot of, lots of and plenty of.