**Study Guide: Linking Verbs, Helping Verbs,**

**Participial Phrases, Infinitive Phrases and**

**Dangling & Misplaced Modifiers**

**Linking and Helping Verbs**

*A LINKING VERB is a verb that connects a subject with a word that describes or identifies it*. *A LINKING VERB is typically a form of the verb TO BE, but can also include the following:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| appear  look  seem  become | feel  sound  taste  smell | grow  remain  stay  turn |

**Exercise 1:**

***Identify the linking verbs in the following sentences by circling the linking verb in each one. Also, underline the two words that it connects.***

1. The rover was under construction for about 10 years before it finally came to fruition.
2. The students were well prepared for their quiz next week.
3. The debate became controversial as soon as one candidate mentioned a very polarizing issue.
4. The movie seemed to convey a message, which highlighted the importance of frequent introspection.
5. The magician magically appeared beside the audience even though he was still on stage a split second.

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*A HELPING VERB are verbs that help other verbs to create verb phrases. The following verbs are some helping verbs: be, do, have, will, can, shall, may*

**Exercise 2:**

***Identify the helping verbs in the following sentences by circling the helping verb and underlying the main verb in each one.***

1. Success is determined by effort and attitude.
2. Shall I apply for the scholarship?
3. The parents have allowed their children to partake in the field trip to the volcano.
4. If Betelgeuse were the center of our solar system instead of our sun, it would destroy it altogether.
5. Californians have experienced a fairly warm winter this year.

**Exercise 3:**

***Circle the verb or verb phrase in each sentence. Identify whether the verb you circled is a linking or a helping verb on the line beside each sentence.***

1. The technology evolution may soon bring us human-like robots. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. The dark, gloomy sky, filled with heavy, grey clouds, seemed ominous and daunting. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Each class is going to partake in a service project together. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. The last chocolate chip muffin was sitting on the counter tempting each passer-by. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. The food was stale after its exposure to warm air. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Participial Phrases**

The **participial phrase** is always used as an adjective phrase to modify a noun or pronoun. It includes the participle together with its modifiers, objects, or predicate words.

The present participle form a*lways* ends in *-ing*, but the endings for past perfect and passive perfect participles may vary.

ex. *Walking rapidly*, we reached the town in fifteen minutes.

*Annoyed by the noise*, the teacher spoke sharply to the class.

Tom, *having won the chess game*, looked up happily.

*Having won every game but one*, Ohio State now led the Big Ten.

**Exercise 4: Identifying Participial Phrases**.

***Underline the participial phrase in each of the following sentences. Watch for past and present participles.***

*Example: Mr. Flynn, annoyed by Joe's question, answered him impatiently.*

1. Having been on the road for four days, the Todds were exhausted.

2. That hymn, sung by many generations of churchgoers, is my favorite.

3. Climbing slowly, we approached the top of the hill.

4. Surprised by my question, Mrs. Osmond blushed.

5. Phil, worn out by his long trip, slept for twelve hours.

6. Watching me closely, the dog came toward me.

7. Staring out the window at the rain, Bob became more and more impatient.

8. Having been hurt in the first game, Al sat on the bench for the rest of the season.

9. The plates, brought from Denmark by my grandmother, are on display in the dining room.

10. The cookies, baked this morning, were all gone by five o'clock.

**Infinitive Phrases**

The **infinitive phrase** begins with the word *to*. The phrase consists of *to*, the infinitive (always a verb), its complements, and its modifiers.

Ex:

Tim wants *to be a lawyer*. (The infinitive phrase is the object of *wants*.)

*To win at chess* requires much concentration. (The infinitive phrase is the subject.)

Mary was glad *to be invited to the party*. (The infinitive phrase modifies the adjective *glad*.)

**Exercise 5: Identifying Infinitive Phrases.**

***Underline the infinitive phrase in each of the following sentences.***

Example: Joe intends to work hard.

1. To be objective in my decision is hard.

2. Does Joan have enough change to make a phone call?

3. Always try to proofread your paper before you turn it in.

4. Ellen is able to swim six lengths of the pool.

5. The Harlow twins came to play with my little brother.

6. Would you like to warn me if anyone comes?

7. I was happy to give you a ride home.

8. To move to a larger house would be unwise for us now.

9. Fred was frightened to be alone in the old house.

10. Megan is trying to practice the piano an hour a day.

**Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers**

A modifier should be placed as close as possible to the word it modifies. Often prepositional phrases, verbal phrases or adjective clauses are too far away from the word they are meant to modify.

**Misplaced Modifiers**: A misplaced modifier appears to modify the wrong word in a sentence. They often distort the meaning of the sentence or make it impossible for the reader to understand the meaning. To correct misplaced modifiers, move it closer to the word it modifies.

Ex: *Slithering through the wet grass,* we watched the garden snake.

* “we” are doing the slithering here, not the snake
* We watched the garden **snake** *slithering through the wet grass*.

**Dangling Modifiers**: A dangling modifier appears to modify either the wrong word or no word at all because the word it should logically modify is missing from the sentence. To correct a dangling modifier, add the missing word and rewrite the rest of the sentence as necessary.

Ex:- *Pausing briefly to congratulate Barbara*, the conversation continued.

* the conversation paused to congratulate Barbara?
  + *Pausing briefly to congratulate Barbara*, **we continued** the conversation.

*Driving through the desert at night*, the cactuses looked eerie*.*

* Cactuses that can drive are eerie!
  + *Driving through the desert at night*, we thought the cactuses looked eerie.

**Exercise 6: Recognizing and Correcting Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers.**

***Each of the following sentences contains an underlined phrase or clause. On the line beside each sentence, indicate whether the modifier is misplaced, dangling, or correct. Then, correct the sentence if it needs correcting.***

1. Flying over the countryside, the cars and houses looked like toys. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. The messenger spoke to the receptionist who delivered the package. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. The golfer made a hole-in-one with the green-and-white umbrella. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. At camp, home seemed very far away. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. A man leaped into the water over the ship’s rail. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. To get to town quickly, the highway is best. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. While jogging one morning, the solution was suddenly obvious. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. Smashed beyond repair, Rob saw his watch lying on the court. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. A banana split was served to each guest, dripping with chocolate sauce. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. Wandering aimlessly in the woods, the first sight of camp was welcome. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 7:** **Correcting Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers Exercise.**

***ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER, REWRITE the following paragraph to correct any misplaced or dangling modifiers.***

Stan is a successful architect and interior designer whose custom-built homes stagger the imagination. Priced beyond what the average person can afford, his unique inspiration can be seen in the house on the corner. The front of the house is made entirely of glass. Extended outward from the second floor, eight vertical steel pillars support a balcony. Within the center of the house, a huge tropical aquarium rests on a marble floor five feet in diameter. A wrought iron staircase winds its way around the aquarium connecting the first and second stories. Recessed in the ceilings, each room is softly lit by fluorescent lights. To enjoy music in any location, there is a dial on the wall next to the thermostat. In the winter, fireplaces provide warmth; in the summer, cool air is circulated by fans. By closing your eyes and dreaming, the house can become yours.