



Grammar Basics:
**The Harold Syntax
Guide to Modifiers**

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THE HAROLD SYNTAX GUIDE TO MODIFIERS

From the
Grammar Basics Series
Grades 7-12

Viewing Time: 17:45

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Harold Syntax Guide to Modifiers is the fifth program in the *Grammar Basics* series. The program's target audience is language arts/grammar students in grades 7-12. The program's goal is to significantly enhance student comprehension of the main topics almost always covered when adjectives and adverbs are studied at the middle school and high school levels: (a) the functions of adjectives, (b) the functions of adverbs, (c) article and demonstrative adjectives, (d) adjective degrees of comparison and (e) adverbial degrees of comparison.

Curriculum Correlation

This video helps students meet Standard Six of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), which states, "Students (should be able to) *apply knowledge of language structure...*"

Moreover, the program's topics closely parallel those of almost all major language arts texts. An online review of school district scope and sequence charts also indicates that the program's teaching points correspond to grammar concepts currently taught in middle school and high school language arts programs.

Program Summary

Professor Syntax's favorite tome, a book on modifiers, is the victim of a book-napping. Two detectives are dispatched to the scene of the crime, Syntax's library. But they cannot solve the crime because neither knows anything about modifiers – specifically, adjectives. To help them solve the crime, the world's foremost authority on the English language uses a mug book to explain the various functions of adjectives. Later, in the line-up room, the professor shows how adjectives form the three degrees of comparison. Back home, one of the detectives discovers a clue – a page of adverbs. Again, the officers do not know anything about this kind of modifier. So Prof. Syntax explains how adverbs tell *where, how, when* and *to what extent*. He also discusses adverbial degrees of comparison. Finally, one of the detectives catches the booknapper, who, it turns out, is Nemesis. The professor's assistant borrowed the book without permission.

Preparation and Pretest

Before presenting the lessons suggested below, we encourage you to preview the program, as well as review this guide and the accompanying blackline master activities in order to familiarize yourself with their content.

In addition, you may wish to give the *Pre-Test* before starting your instruction. This brief quiz is an assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the program's key concepts. If you give the *Pre-Test*, explain

to your students that they are not expected to answer all the questions correctly, but they are expected to do their best. You can remind them that the questions point to key concepts they should focus on while watching the program. After you evaluate your students' answers, as well as review the materials presented in this guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, additions or deletions to meet the specific needs of your class. We encourage you to do so; for only by tailoring this program to your students will they obtain the maximum instructional benefits afforded by the material.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After viewing this video and participating in the suggested activities, viewers should be able to do the following:

1. Define and tell the five functions of adjectives.
2. Define and tell the four functions of adverbs.
3. Form the positive, comparative and superlative degrees of both regular and irregular adjectives.
4. Form the positive, comparative and superlative degrees of both regular and irregular adverbs.

PREPARATION

Materials Needed

Students will need a pencil for the handout material. If possible, duplicate all handout material before beginning the unit.

Viewing Strategies

Several viewing strategies may be employed. You may find it useful to show the program in its entirety, then play it segment by segment, using each segment as a basis for a single lesson or multiple lessons, depending on the level of student comprehension. A final review screening, fast-

forwarding through stop points, undoubtedly will help reinforce student understandings.

On-Screen Type

Main words are capitalized when used as titles or headings. This capitalization improves readability and follows commonly accepted rules of grammar.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

Introduce the Program

Write the following sentences on the chalkboard or overhead projector: Persons read newspapers. Documentary featured trees. Ask the class to add descriptive words to the sentences. (*Examples: Most informed persons read newspapers daily. The nature documentary prominently featured forest trees.*) Do the sentences with descriptive words give more information? Are they more accurate?

Alternately, if your class has seen the first four programs in this series, you may pick up the conceptual thread by mentioning that they will now see a program that gives more information on words – this time, on the two kinds of modifiers, adjectives and adverbs.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 1: Adjectives

Tell the class they will see the first part of the program, which talks about adjectives and their functions. Ask if anyone knows what functions this part of speech perform. List answers on the chalkboard or overhead projector and ask the class to determine whether the answers are correct. Is anything missing? Now show the first segment.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 1

Ask the class why adjectives would be so important in any real crime investigation. Then have everyone write a description of the person next to him or her. Include as many descriptive words as possible. Underline the adjectives in the description. Hand out *Adjectives*. This handout may be assigned as homework, or the class may complete it as seat work or in small groups. Or it may be done orally, as a class exercise. When completed, go over the answers.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 2: Adjective Degrees of Comparison

Review the first section of the program if you feel it will help your students. Then tell the class that besides telling *which one, what kind, how many, what color and what size*, adjectives perform another function. Ask, “Does anyone know what that function is?” If the class is having difficulty with this question, help them by asking, “Does anyone know what *degrees of comparison* means?” If the class is still stumped, give several examples, such as *big, bigger, biggest* or *tall, taller, tallest*. Now show the second segment.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 2

Have each member of the class write five positive degree adjectives on a piece of paper. Then call individuals to the board to write the comparative and superlative degrees of the adjectives as each positive degree adjective is read aloud. Discuss how each follows the rules mentioned in the program. Are there any irregulars? After this class exercise has been finished, hand out *Adjective Degrees of Comparison*. This handout may be assigned as homework, or the class may complete it as seatwork or in small

groups. Or it may be done orally, as a class exercise. When completed, go over the answers.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 3: The Functions of Adverbs

Briefly review the first and second segments if you feel it will be beneficial to your class. Write the following sentence on the board: The red sports car sped quickly down the highway. What are the four adjectives in the sentence? (*The, red, sports, the*) What do they tell? Which words do they modify? What part of speech are those words? (*noun*) Is there another modifier in the sentence? If so, what is it? (*quickly*) What word does it modify? (*sped*) What part of speech is the word, “sped?” (*verb*) Tell the class the next part of the program discusses modifiers that modify verbs. Now show the third segment.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 3

Ask the class to write the following: two sentences that have adverbs that modify verbs; two sentences containing adverbs that modify adjectives; two sentences that have adverbs that modify other adverbs. After everyone has had a chance to write the sentences, ask for volunteers to write their sentences on the board. Discuss the sentences. Then hand out *Adverbs*. This handout may be assigned as homework, or the class may complete it as seatwork or in small groups. Or it may be done orally, as a class exercise. When completed, go over the answers.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 4: Adverbial Degrees of Comparison

Write the following sentences on the chalkboard or overhead projector: *John runs lethargically. Bill runs _____ than John. Bob is the _____*

runner of all three. Be sure everyone knows that “lethargically” is an adverb, then have someone volunteer to fill in the blanks. Tell the class that adverbs obviously have degrees of comparison, also. Are they the same degrees of comparison as those used for adjectives? Do they differ in any ways? Show the fourth part of the program.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 4

Ask the class if there are any differences between adjective and adverbial degrees of comparison. (In the regular form, most adverbs use *more* or *most*, while most adjectives use *-er* and *-est* endings.) Ask the class to compose several sentences with positive, comparative and superlative forms of any adverb. Discuss their sentences. Finally, hand out ***Adverbial Degrees of Comparison***. This handout may be assigned as homework, or the class may complete it as seat work or in small groups. Or it may be done orally, as a class exercise. When completed, go over the answers.

After all the handouts have been completed, conduct a final review of the concepts covered in the program. Then show the program one more time, in its entirety, before giving the ***Post-Test***. After the Post-Test has been graded, go over the answers with the class and clear up any misunderstandings that have been revealed.

DESCRIPTION OF BLACKLINE MASTERS

MODIFIERS PRE-TEST – An assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the objectives prior to viewing the program.

ADJECTIVES – An activity designed to reinforce the concept that adjectives modify nouns and pronouns and tell *which one, what kind, how many, what color* and *what size*.

ADJECTIVE DEGREES OF COMPARISON – An exercise that gives students practice forming and identifying positive, comparative and superlative degree adjectives.

ADVERBS – An activity designed to reinforce the concept that adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs and tell *where, when, how, why* and *to what extent*.

ADVERBIAL DEGREES OF COMPARISON – An exercise that gives students practice forming and identifying positive, comparative and superlative degree adverbs.

MODIFIERS POST-TEST – An assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the program’s concepts after completing the unit.

MODIFIERS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – Provides questions to be asked after each segment of the program.

ANSWER KEY

Video Quiz

1. False
2. Which? What kind? How many? What size? What color?
3. b
4. more, less
5. c.
6. c.
7. Where? How? When? To what extent?
8. a
9. “more mean” should be “meaner”
10. False

Modifiers Pre-Test

1. F
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. T
6. T
7. T
8. F
9. T
10. F
11. T
12. F
13. T
14. F
15. T

Adjectives

1. (Answers given.)
2. That (D); black (what color); the (A); little (what size)
3. Tired (what kind or which one); hungry (what kind or which one); edible (what kind)
4. That (D); a (A); flat (what kind)
5. the (A); large (what size); white (what color)
6. cotton (what kind); wrinkled (what kind)
7. The (A); old (which one); mahogany (what kind)
8. The (A); brick (what kind);

green (what color) 9. Confused (what kind); the (A);
valuable (what kind)

Adjective Degrees of Comparison

All answers listed in order. Best, most intelligent, most baffling, taller, brightest, cleverer, smarter

Adverbs

1. (Answers given) 2. yesterday, tells when, modifies
“cut,” a verb; 3. promptly, tells when, modifies
“answer,” a verb 4. very, tells to what extent, modifies
handsome, an adjective 5. completely, tells to what
extent, modifies “misunderstood,” a verb 6. inside,
tells where, modifies “take,” a verb 7. rapidly, tells
how, modifies, “read,” a verb 8. too, tells to what
extent, modifies “late,” an adverb; late, tells when,
modifies “removed,” a verb 9. exceptionally, tells to
what extent, modifies “pretty,” an adjective 10. very,
tells to what extent, modifies “soon,” an adverb; soon, tells
when, modifies “start,” a verb 11. quickly, tells how,
modifies “decided,” a verb 12. awkwardly, tells how,
modifies “ran,” a verb 13. Tuesday, tells when,
modifies “discussed,” a verb 14. very, tells to what
extent, modifies “good,” an adjective 15. brightly, tells
how, modifies “glowed,” a verb

Adverbial Degrees of Comparison

Listed in order: quiet, quietest, more angrily, most angrily,
bad, worse, more rapidly, most rapidly. Sentences will
vary.

Modifiers Post-Test

Part I. 1. F 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. T

- Part II
1. Underlined words: The, large, the; circled words: horse, plains; double underlined word: gracefully; Arrow points from “gracefully” to “galloped.” Words labeled “A:” The, the
 2. Underlined words: Old, exciting; circled word: movies; double underlined word: very; arrow points from “very” to “exciting.”
 3. Underlined words: two, the, vicious; circled words: policemen, criminal; double underlined words: successfully, yesterday; arrow points from “successfully” to “captured,” and from “yesterday” to captured; Word labeled “A:” the
 4. Underlined words: Hungry, scrawny, the; circled words: children, dogs; double underlined word: eagerly; arrow points from “eagerly” to “surrounded.” Word labeled “A:” the
 5. Underlined word: bad; circled word: grades; double underlined word: slightly; arrow points from “slightly” to “improved.”
 6. Underlined word: difficult; circled word: assignments; double underlined words: almost, always; arrow points from “almost” to “always” and from “always” to “complete.”
 7. Underlined words: Famous, movie, curious; circled words: stars, bystanders; double underlined word: often; arrow points from “often” to “mobbed.”
 8. Underlined words: That, black, six; circled word: dog, puppies; double underlined word: recently; arrow points from “recently” to “had;” word labeled “D:” That
 9. Underlined words: the, yellow; circled word: paper; double underlined word: quickly; arrow points from “quickly” to “wrote;” word labeled “A:” the
 10. Underlined words: These, ripe, delicious; circled word: peaches double underlined word: extremely; arrow points from “extremely” to “delicious; word labeled “D:” These

Part III 1. Cross out laziest. lazier 2. Cross out
thoughtfulest. most thoughtful 3. Cross out worse.
Worst

4. Cross out more brilliant most brilliant 5. Cross out
most favorite. favorite 6. Should be left blank
7. Should be left blank. 8. Should be left blank.
9. Cross out more fat. fatter 10. Should be left blank.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

Syntax: So, there I was, you see, just sitting in my armchair, thinking about nouns, pronouns, verbs; things like that – when all of a sudden I looked up and I discovered it was gone!

1st Officer: All right, Professor, now will you tell us again what it was that was gone?

Syntax: Why, my book of modifiers, one of the most valuable in my entire collection!

Oh, my! I'm so upset by all this because modifiers – adjectives and adverbs, that is – are terribly important. You see, they help us form an exact mental image of whatever we're talking about.

Take adjectives, for example. They modify nouns and pronouns by giving descriptive information about them.

Now, if you'll hand me that mug book, I'll show you how.

First, adjectives answer the question *which?* For example, the word "left" is an adjective in the sentence, "Suspect parts hair on left side" because it answers the question, "On which side does the suspect part his hair?" The left.

Adjectives also answer the question *what kind?* In the sentence, "Suspect was last seen wearing ridiculous costume," "ridiculous" tells what kind of costume the suspect wore...and so it is an adjective.

Adjectives also answer the question *how many?* How many years are Fanny and Cloyd serving? The adjective "five" tells us.

And adjectives answer the inquiry *what color?* What color were the suspect's lips? The adjective "orange" provides the answer.

Finally, if one asks, "*What size?*" adjectives provide the answers to that, too. What size is the mole? The adjective, large, tells us.

Mmm, no. I'm terribly sorry. There's no one here that looks even remotely familiar. I suppose we'll have to go downtown to dig further into this deplorable state of affairs.

While we're on our way, I suppose I should also mention that there is a group of adjectives called articles. **The**, **a**, and **an** are examples. Articles simply point out or separate one thing from another.

There are also demonstrative adjectives such as **these**, **this**, **that** and **those**. Demonstrative adjectives, when standing alone, might be confused with pronouns. But when they appear in sentences, it's easy to tell the difference between the two.

In the first sentence, the word **this** modifies **car** by answering the question, "*which one?*" This one! And so it's an adjective.

In the second sentence, the word **this** takes the place of the noun **car**, and so it's a pronoun.

Anyway, I'm sure you understand now why I'm so upset. All those adjectives in my book of modifiers are terribly important because adjectives tell which one, what kind, how many, what color and what size – not even to mention the articles and demonstratives.

STOP ONE

In addition to telling which one, what kind, how many, what color and what size adjectives do something else: They help us compare persons, places, things – or abstractions.

For example, one might say, "Suspect A is mean, suspect B is meaner than A, and suspect C is the meanest one of all."

As you can see, the form of the adjective changes when one

compares two, and when one compares three or more persons or objects.

Most adjectives do change their basic form as they express what are called degrees of comparison.

The first, called the positive degree, is simply the adjective itself. The positive degree is used when no comparison is being made.

The second level of comparison, called the comparative degree, is used when two things or persons are being compared.

Most comparative degree adjectives are formed in one of two ways. The first is by adding an “- er” ending to the positive degree form, as in mean — meaner.

The second way is by placing the words “less” or “more” in front of the positive form. Adjectives with three or more syllables — “ornery” is an example — almost always form their comparatives this way.

Finally, we have the superlative degree. Superlative degree adjectives are used when comparing three or more persons or things. The suspect on the far right is the meanest of all three.

Most superlative degree adjectives, as with comparative degree adjectives, are formed one of two possible ways. One is by adding an “-est” ending, as in meanest.

The other is by using the words “least” or “most” in front of the positive form, as in “least cantankerous” and “most cantankerous.”

“Most” and “least” are normally used when the adjective has three or more syllables.

No, none of these characters look familiar, and I must be getting back.

And now we come to something...well, I don't quite know how to talk about it, actually. But there are some adjectives that just don't follow the rules.

1st and 2nd officers: “NO!”

Syntax: Yes, it's quite true. We call them irregular adjectives because they form their comparative and superlative degrees irregularly. Two examples are "many," "more" and "most," and "little," "less" and "least."

Of course, you expect that sort of thing from "bad," "worse" and "worst." But from "good," "better," "best?" Hm?

The only thing one can do is learn what the irregulars are and memorize their comparative and superlative forms. That way, they won't give you any trouble.

Well, now, does everyone understand what we mean by the degrees of comparison of adjectives?

1st and 2nd Officers: Yes, Professor!

Syntax: Good, because I've prepared a little quiz to make certain that you do.

Just fill in the blanks with the comparative and superlative degrees of these four adjectives.

Well, there you are. The only tricky one here is "perfect" because if something's already perfect, it can't be made more perfect, or most perfect. Adjectives such as "perfect" and "worthless" can't be compared because they already express an absolute state or quality.

STOP TWO

2nd Officer: Hey, Professor! I think I found a clue!

Syntax: A clue, eh? Well then, let's take a look.

Hmmm...looks as if the book-napper dropped a page of adverbs. Oh, you do know what adverbs are, don't you?

2nd Officer: I...uh...

Syntax: Well, I'll just have to tell you, then. A clue can't help you much unless you know what it is. Hm?

An adverb is a word that modifies, or gives information about, verbs, adjectives – and even other adverbs.

They do it by answering specific questions, such as *where*? In the sentence, “The revelers are here,” the adverb “here” answers the question, “Where are the revelers?” They’re here.

Adverbs also answer the question, *how*? Or, “How is an action performed?” In “Speak softly and carry a big stick,” “softly” is an adverb because it tells how the verb “speak” is performed. How? Softly.

Adverbs also answer the inquiry, *when*? For example, if one said, “He wound the clock yesterday,” the adverb “yesterday” tells *when* the clock was wound.

Finally, adverbs answer the question, *to what extent*? In the sentence, “Nemesis is always punctual,” the adverb “always” tells to what extent he is punctual – always.

Speaking of Nemesis, where is that lad? I think it’s time for tea. While we’re waiting for Nemesis, we’ll take a small break so you can review what we’ve said about adverbs.

STOP THREE

As you may know, adverbs (as with adjectives) change their form when used for comparative purposes.

For example, I move hesitantly when the wind blows; *more* hesitantly when it’s hot; and *most* hesitantly when I have to get out of bed in the morning.

We use the same degrees of comparison for adverbs as we use for adjectives: *positive*, *comparative* and *superlative*.

The positive degree consists simply of the basic form of the adverb: hesitantly.

The comparative degree – in this example, “more hesitantly,” – is used for comparisons involving two possibilities. For example, I move more hesitantly when it’s hot than when the wind blows.

Most comparatives consist of the adverb and the words “more” or “less,” although some comparative degree adverbs are formed with “-er” endings, such as “fast” in “I run fast, but she runs faster.”

Finally, superlative degree adverbs are used for comparisons involving three or more: I move *most* hesitantly when I get out of bed in the morning – when I compare that action to walking in the wind and when it’s hot outside.

Most superlative degree adverbs are formed with the adverb plus “most” or “least” in front of it, although some such as “fastest” have an “-est” ending.

And now, oh, my! We come to the rule breakers again, those irregular adverbs whose comparatives and superlatives are, well, irregularly formed.

Examples are “badly,” “worse,” and “worst;” “well,” “better,” “best;” and “much,” “more,” “most.”

As with irregular adjectives, one should know what the irregular adverbs are and memorize their forms, so one can use them properly whenever one has to.

2nd Officer: Hey, Professor! I caught him! I caught the book-napper!

Syntax: Caught the book-napper, eh?

Syntax: Well, let’s have a look at that scoundrel! Nemesis! Oh, I should have known it was you from the very first – always mixing up adjectives and adverbs, never knowing when to use one or the other.

You realized you needed some help and took the book without permission.

But it’s all so simple, really. As I was telling these officers, adjectives modify nouns and pronouns. They give descriptive information that helps us form an accurate mental picture about persons, places, things, or abstractions.

The adverb, on the other hand, modifies verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They help provide precise information about actions or qualities.

Both adjectives and adverbs can change their form to express different degrees of comparison. The basic form of the adjective or adverb – such as “lethargic” and “quick” or “lethargically” and “quickly” – is known as the positive degree.

Positive degree modifiers don’t compare. Manuel is a quick learner. Joan is a lethargic runner. Neither is compared to anyone else.

The comparative degree is used for comparing two possibilities. Nemesis is a more lethargic runner than I; or “He moves more lethargically in the morning than in the afternoon.”

The superlative degree is used for comparing three or more: Nemesis is the most lethargic person in the room. He moves the most lethargically among all of us here.

And finally, we have those rule-breaking irregulars – adjectives, adverbs and assistants, like mine.

1st Officer: Should I throw the book at him, Professor?

Syntax: Oh, my, no! I’d say he’s already had enough book trouble for one day. Besides, I think he’s learned something here.

And I hope you have, too. Until next time, then...cheerio! Say goodbye, Nemesis.

Nemesis: Goodbye, Nemesis.

Web Resource

<http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/modifier.html>

Other Programs in the *Grammar Basics Series*

The Harold Syntax Guide to Words

The Harold Syntax Guide to Nouns

The Harold Syntax Guide to Pronouns

The Harold Syntax Guide to Verbs

**The Harold Syntax Guide to Interjections,
Conjunctions and Prepositions**

The Harold Syntax Guide to Sentences, Part I

The Harold Syntax Guide to Sentences, Part II

Name _____

Modifiers Pre-Test

Directions: In the blank space, write a "T" if the statement is true and an "F" if the statement is false.

- ___ 1. Modifiers are adjectives, adverbs and sometimes prepositions.
- ___ 2. Modifiers help us form an exact mental image of what we're talking about.
- ___ 3. Adverbs modify nouns and pronouns.
- ___ 4. Adjectives modify verbs and other adjectives.
- ___ 5. Adjectives tell which, what kind, how many, what color and what size.
- ___ 6. Examples of article adjectives are "a," "an," "the," "this," and "that."
- ___ 7. Examples of demonstrative adjectives are "these" and "those".
- ___ 8. Comparative degree adjectives compare three or more.
- ___ 9. Adjectives with three or more syllables almost always form their comparative degrees with the words "less" or "more" placed in front of the positive form.
- ___ 10. The comparative degree of "perfect" is "more perfect."
- ___ 11. Adverbs tell where, how, why, when and to what extent.
- ___ 12. The word "fast" forms its degrees of comparison as fast, more fast, most fast.
- ___ 13. Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs.
- ___ 14. Positive degree modifiers compare two, but never more than two.
- ___ 15. Most superlative degree adverbs are formed with "most" or "least" in front of the positive form.

Adjectives

☞ **Prof. Syntax reminder: An adjective gives descriptive information about nouns and pronouns by telling *which, what kind, how many, what color and what size*. Article adjectives are a, an and the. Demonstrative adjectives, always followed by a noun, are this, that, these and those.**

Directions: Underline the adjectives in the sentences below. If it is a demonstrative, write a “D” above it. If it is an article, write an “A” above it. For all other adjectives, write what kind of descriptive information is given. The first one is done for you.


D

1. Those girls are noisy.

what kind
2. That black dog barked at the little girl.
3. Tired and hungry, he searched for edible food.
4. That car had a flat tire.
5. Geraldo painted the large house with white paint.
6. May-Ling’s cotton dress was wrinkled.
7. The old, mahogany clock chimed at midnight.
8. The brick wall was covered with green vines.
9. Confused, Nemesis borrowed the valuable book of modifiers.

Name _____


Adjective Degrees of Comparison

 Prof. Syntax reminder: The positive degree is used when no comparisons are made. The comparative degree, which has an “-er” added to the adjective, or “more” or “less” placed in front of the positive form, is used when comparing two things or persons. The superlative degree, which has an “-est” added to the adjective, or “most” or “least” placed in front of the positive form, is used when comparing three or more persons or things. Irregulars do not follow these rules.

Directions: Write appropriate adjective in the blank spaces. The first one is done for you.

Professor Syntax, the world’s (great) greatest authority on the English language, was extremely upset when he discovered that his (good) _____ volume on modifiers was missing from his library. He called the police, who dispatched two of their (intelligent) _____ detectives to solve what was called the (baffling) _____ crime in twenty years. One of the detectives was (tall) _____ than the other. The buttons on their uniforms were among the (bright) _____ in the entire police department. “I want to solve this crime,” said the (clever) _____ officer. “No more than I,” said the second one, who was even (smart) _____ than the first one.

Adverbs

 **Prof. Syntax reminder: Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs. They tell where, how, when and to what extent.**

Directions: Underline the adverbs and below them tell how they modify. Also tell which word each adverb modifies, and its part of speech. The first one is done for you.

1. The sun sank slowly on the horizon. *modifies sank, a verb*
how
2. Jim cut the grass yesterday.
3. She will answer your letter promptly.
4. He is very handsome.
5. Sue completely misunderstood the directions.
6. Take the baby inside.
7. Steve read the book rapidly.
8. She removed the cake from the oven too late.
9. The actress was exceptionally pretty.
10. School will start very soon.
11. Pedro quickly decided to write the report.
12. Gregg ran awkwardly.
13. Ellen discussed the book Tuesday.
14. "John is a very good student," said the French teacher.
15. The moon glowed brightly in the dark sky.

Name _____

Adverbial Degrees of Comparison

☞ Prof. Syntax reminder: The positive degree is used when no comparisons are made. The comparative degree, which normally has “more” or “less” placed in front of the positive form, is used when comparing two verbs, adjectives or other adverbs. The superlative degree, which normally has “most” or “least” placed in front of the positive form, is used when comparing three or more. Irregulars do not follow these rules.

Directions: Write the appropriate adverbs on the lines in the chart. In the space below the chart, write a sentence with each adverb you've written. The first one is done for you. You may use the back of this paper if you need additional room.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
fast	<i>faster</i>	fastest
_____	quieter	_____
angrily	_____	_____
_____	_____	worst
rapidly	_____	_____

Jennifer worked faster than her sister, Marisol.

Modifiers Post-Test

Part I

Directions: In the blank space, write a "T" if the statement is true and an "F" if the statement is false.

- ___ 1. Modifiers are adjectives, adverbs and sometimes interjections.
- ___ 2. Modifiers help us form an exact mental image of what we're talking about.
- ___ 3. Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs.
- ___ 4. Adjectives modify noun, pronouns and other adjectives.
- ___ 5. Examples of demonstrative adjectives are "these" and "those."

Part II

Directions: Underline the adjectives. Put an "A" above each article adjective, and a "D" above each demonstrative adjective. Circle the word the adjective modifies. Double underline all adverbs and draw an arrow to the words they modify.

1. The large horse galloped gracefully across the plains.
2. Old movies can be very exciting.
3. Two policemen successfully captured the vicious criminal yesterday.
4. Hungry children and scrawny dogs eagerly surrounded the tourists.
5. Her bad grades improved slightly.
6. Joe almost always completes difficult assignments.
7. Famous movie stars are often mobbed by curious bystanders.
8. That black dog had six puppies recently.
9. He quickly wrote his answers on the yellow paper.
10. These ripe peaches are extremely delicious.

Name _____

Modifiers Post-Test, Page 2

Part III

Directions: Cross out the incorrect modifiers. Then, on the lines provided, write in the correct word. Leave the space blank if the modifier is correct.

1. He is the laziest of the two brothers. _____
2. George is the thoughtfulest person I've ever met. _____
3. Mandy has the worse case of flu the doctor has seen this year. _____
4. Levar is the more brilliant of the three French students.._____
5. French toast is my most favorite breakfast. _____
6. Among the attendees, Margaret was the quieter. _____
7. He is happier now that he passed the test. _____
8. Many people received the tickets. _____
9. Children who don't exercise tend to be more fat than those who do. _____.
10. Genetics is the most rapidly developing science. _____

Modifiers Discussion Questions

Part I: Adjectives

1. What words do adjectives modify? (nouns and pronouns)
2. What do adjectives tell? (which, what kind, how many, what color, what size)
3. Name three article adjectives. (the, a, an)
4. Name four demonstrative adjectives. (this, that, these, those)
5. How can you tell the difference between demonstratives and pronouns? (demonstratives always precede a noun)

Part II: Adjective Degrees of Comparison

1. What are the three degrees of comparison? (positive, comparative, superlative)
2. When does one use the positive degree? (when no comparison is made)
3. When does one use the comparative degree? (when one compares two persons or things)
4. When does one use the superlative degree? (when comparing three or more persons or things)
5. What are irregular adjectives? (those that don't follow the normal rules for forming comparative and superlative degrees)
6. What are the rules for creating comparative and superlative degree adjectives? (The comparative degree has an "-er" added to the positive form, or "more" or "less" placed in front of the positive form. The superlative degree, has an "-est" added to the positive, or "most" or "least" placed in front of the positive form.)

Part III: Adverbs

1. What words do adverbs modify? (verbs, adjectives and other adverbs)
2. What do adverbs tell? (where, when, how, to what extent)
3. Name the adverb in the sentence, "Robert walked rapidly to the store." (rapidly)
4. Name the adverbs in the sentence, "Sung Lee acts very well." (very well)

Part IV: Adverbial Degrees of Comparison

1. Do adverbs have the same degree of comparison as adjectives? (yes)
2. What are those degrees of comparison? (positive, comparative, superlative)
3. What are the comparative and superlative degrees for "badly," "well" and "much?" (worse, worst; better, best; more, most)