

Lesson 9

Recognizing Imagery

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Exercise A

Certain words can make your senses react more strongly than others. Here are some phrases that appeal to your senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch or feeling. Read each phrase and write which sense or senses it affects most.

1. tennis ball bouncing off a racket

2. freshly cut pine branches

3. last rays of the sun sinking over the horizon

4. a mouthful of Swiss cheese and wheat crackers

5. a leg cramp

Exercise B

Each pair of sentences below describes the same event. Put a check in front of the one in each pair that uses more vivid imagery.

1. _____ a. The oil-spattered mechanic tried to calm the outraged customer who yelled about the poor service and threatened to sue the garage.

_____ b. The garage mechanic talked to the upset customer who complained about the service.

2. _____ a. Suddenly the calf's eyes focused, its body shook, and it made a noise that could barely be heard.

_____ b. The calf's eyes looked at me clearly for a moment, its body trembled in the cool spring breeze, and it bleated softly.

3. _____ a. After putting his suitcase on the luggage rack, Oliver sat down on the leather seat.

_____ b. After tossing the battered suitcase onto the luggage rack, Oliver sank into the thickly cushioned leather seat.

4. _____ a. After a day of hiking everyone had hearty appetites and piled their plates high with golden-brown roasted chicken and rice.
- _____ b. Everyone was hungry after hiking all day and had second helpings of chicken and rice.
5. _____ a. The room was filled with a musty, damp odor that seemed to come from the foul-smelling water that flooded the floor.
- _____ b. There was a bad smell in the room that seemed to come from the water on the floor.

Exercise C

Read the passage that follows. Underline ten words or groups of words that create sharp, clear images.

I huddled closer to what was left of the fire and gloomily prepared myself to get through the night. In the dying light of the campfire, I opened a can of black bean soup and gulped it down in thick spoonfuls without water. Wrapped in flannel blankets and smeared with insect repellent, I tried to sleep. But without the comforting crackle of a fire, I began to hear the noises of the night. They forced their way to my attention. Some large creature was rustling through the bushes about two hundred feet away. A deer? A bear? Then a beaver slapped its tail out in the marshes. Could a canoe be coming? A Barred Owl began its screeching across the swamp. Its mate answered right above my head.

Mysterious soft murmurs, sighs, scufflings, squeaks, clawings, and scratchings filled the forest as mice, hares, owls, foxes, flying squirrels, moles, bats, and insects fled and fed upon each other in the eternal struggle for life.

Lesson 17

Combining Sentences with Modifiers

Short sentences that have adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases can sometimes be combined into a single, more interesting sentence.

Combining sentences can make your writing more interesting and your sentences more forceful. Study the three ways to combine the sentences that describe the lion. Notice where the adjectives are placed.

The lion was old.

The lion was toothless.

The lion was weary.

The lion was **old, toothless, and weary.**

The **weary old** lion was toothless.

The **toothless old** lion was weary.

Each combined sentence has a different emphasis. The first sentence presents the lion's traits equally. The second sentence emphasizes that the lion was toothless. The third sentence emphasizes that the lion was weary. What you wish to emphasize should determine the way you combine sentences.

Sentences can also be combined when they contain adverbs that describe the same verb. Study the following example. Notice the commas that separate the adverbs in the fourth sentence.

Andrea worked swiftly.

Andrea worked carefully.

Andrea worked accurately.

Andrea worked swiftly, carefully, and accurately.

Prepositional phrases in sentences can also often be combined.

The convict ran down the street.

The convict ran across the bridge.

The convict ran **down the street and across the bridge.**

Exercise A

Combine the following sentence groups.

Example: The boy was short. The boy was blond. The boy was freckled.

Answer: The boy was short, blond, and freckled.

1. He leaped high over the fence. He leaped onto the trampoline.

2. He jumped vigorously. He jumped expertly. He jumped intensely.

Exercise B

Combine each group of sentences below in two different ways.

Example: The iron fence was rusty. The iron fence was broken.

Answer: The iron fence was rusty and broken.

The rusty iron fence was broken.

1. The house was old. The house was empty. The house was on a hill.

2. The windows were dirty. They were cracked. They were partially open.

3. The living room was chilly. The living room was empty.

4. The noise he heard was dreadful. The noise was mysterious.

5. Derrard left without looking back. He left immediately. He left through the window.

Exercise C

Read the paragraph below carefully. Decide which sentences should be combined. Rewrite the paragraph with combined sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

Jan walked across the campus. She walked swiftly. She walked confidently. Her black hair shone in the sunlight. Her hair was curly. She walked up the steps. She walked into the principal's office. She placed her books on the counter. The secretary greeted Jan quickly. She greeted Jan cheerfully. Jan glanced thoughtfully at the principal's door. "Is Mrs. Ortez here?" Jan inquired.

Lesson 18

Improving Sentences

Make your sentences clear, smooth, and concise.

In writing sentences, keep modifiers close to the words that they modify, use balanced structures, and avoid wordiness. Here are some ways to improve your sentences.

1. Be careful not to use **misplaced modifiers**. Look at these sentence pairs. Each first sentence contains a modifier that seems to modify the wrong word because it is misplaced in the sentence. The modifier is placed correctly in each second sentence.

They could see the road **barely** ahead of them.

They could **barely** see the road ahead of them.

The shark swam in front of us **in the aquarium**.

The shark **in the aquarium** swam in front of us.

2. Make items of equal importance in a sentence balanced. This is called **parallel structure**. Compare these pairs of sentences.

His explanation was clear, concise, and **gave much information**.

His explanation was clear, concise, and **informative**.

She made her point carefully, precisely, and **with force**.

She made her point carefully, precisely, and **forcefully**.

3. Check your sentences for **wordiness**—the use of more words than necessary to express ideas clearly and accurately.

The statue seemed enormous **in size**.

Sue was often tardy **and not on time**.

In the event that it rains, the picnic will be rescheduled.

The words in dark type in the first two sentences should be deleted. The word *if* could replace the words in dark type in the third sentence.

Exercise 18

Rewrite the following sentences. Improve the sentences by making words parallel, by eliminating wordiness, or by repositioning misplaced modifiers.

Example: Last fall in October Uncle Phil took Art and me with him to the zoo.

Answer: Last October Uncle Phil took Art and me to the zoo.

1. We drove in my uncle's new car there.

2. We arrived at exactly 10:30 A.M. in the morning.

3. The day was sunny, warm and it was also windy.

4. One zoo visitor was studying the monkeys, with binoculars.

5. One monkey entertained its audience of onlookers with its antics.

6. We thought the large birds were beautiful at the lagoon.

7. Just as we passed, a gorilla screamed loudly and in a menacing manner.

8. The polar bears were sunning by their pool in the sun.

9. The giraffes moved slowly and with grace.

10. All the animals in the zoo fascinate me in one way or another.

Exercise B

Rewrite the following paragraph, correcting misplaced modifiers, making words parallel, and deleting wordiness. Use your own paper.

The house was old, shabby, and a desolate place. The original color of the house was recognizable hardly. Now the paint was faded and gray in color. The front porch sagged and slanted downward. The steps were wobbly and cracked on the side of the house. We entered the house slowly, hesitatingly, and in a reluctant way. Inside, we found the house needed even more work and repair.

Vocabulary Practice 7: Suffixes

Suffixes: -ary, -ery, -ory

A suffix is a word that is added to the end of a base word. A suffix changes the meaning of the word and how it is used in a sentence.

Example: The suffixes -ary, -ery, and -ory are added to base words and roots to make nouns and adjectives. Adding -ery to the base word *green*, which is an adjective naming a color, makes the noun *greenery*, which means "green leaves" or "green plants."

A. Write the adjective from the list that best completes each phrase below. Use each word only once.

voluntary	temporary	sensory	advisory	dietary
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1. _____ accommodations until the house is built
2. _____ assistance to senior citizens
3. _____ details that improve your writing
4. _____ council to the president
5. _____ changes related to vitamin C

B. Write the noun from the list that best completes each phrase below. Use each word only once.

category	laboratory	dormitory	forgery	flattery
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1. test tubes stored in the _____
2. students living in the _____
3. terms that belong in that _____
4. smiling at the words of _____
5. accused of passing off a _____

C. Write the word from the lists in Parts A and B that is either the noun form of the verb or the adjective form of the noun given.

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| 1. flatter (v.) _____ | 4. forge (v.) _____ |
| 2. diet (n.) _____ | 5. advise (v.) _____ |
| 3. sense (n.) _____ | |