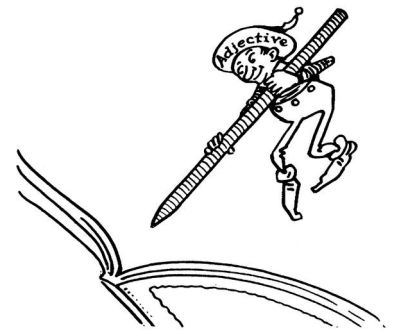


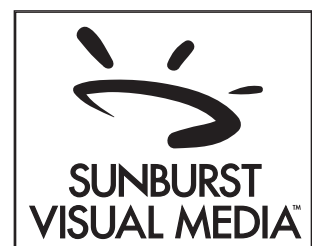
Great Grammar Adjectives

Grades 5-9



verbs
commas
spelling
style
poetry
grammar
metaphor
simile
punctuation
themes
plurals
adverbs

AGTV



CREDITS

Program Production

Sunburst Visual Media

Teacher's Guide

Beverly S. Elrod, M.Ed.

Print Material Design

Desktop Productions

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Hawthorne, NY 10532

Approximate running time: 26 minutes

Great Grammar: Adjectives

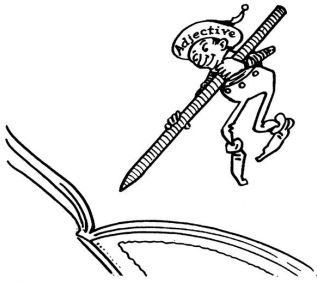


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About This Guide

Providing students with visual media is an excellent way to take them out of the classroom and into the real world. Our programs offer real-world footage, dynamic graphics, engaging dramatizations, and first-person testimonials that keep students interested and help them visualize difficult concepts. More importantly, they reinforce critical learning objectives shaped by state and national educational standards. However, the learning doesn't begin and end when the program does. You can make the learning experience even more effective by using the materials provided in this Teacher's Guide.

This guide is divided into the following sections:

- **Fast Facts** are designed to give your students a quick overview of the information presented within the video.
- **Before Viewing Activities** help identify what students already know about the subject, what they are curious about, and what they hope to learn.
- **During Viewing Activities** may be used during viewing to enhance students' understanding of the video.
- **After Viewing Activities** help students summarize and draw conclusions from the information that was presented.
- **After Viewing Quizzes** test students' retention of the information presented in the program and activity sheets.
- **Additional Resources** are designed to help you extend the information presented in the program into other areas of your curriculum.
- **Answer Keys** are provided for relevant activities or reproducible pages.
- **Script** content is provided in an unabridged version for future reference.

Program Overview

This **Great Grammar Video on Adjectives** invites students to imagine that they are wildlife biologists and take a journey to study animals around the world. The video brings adjectives alive to students by using the adjectives to describe various animals. Students are given many examples of adjectives in context.

Through the video students are shown the importance of adjectives to answer to the questions “what kind,” “which ones,” or “how many” to describe nouns and pronouns. Students are taught the difference between a comparative and a superlative adjective, and when they should be used. Proper adjectives are also discussed and used in context.

Viewing Objectives

After viewing the DVD/video and utilizing the activities provided in the teacher’s guide, the students will be able to:

- Define what an adjective is
- Demonstrate basic knowledge about adjectives
- Identify different types of adjectives and their uses
- Write correct sentences using adjectives
- Understand how to use proper adjectives correctly
- Understand the difference between a comparative and a superlative adjective
- Understand the difference between an adjective and an adverb



You can make your writing more interesting and meaningful using adjectives.

Adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. They tell us **WHAT KIND**, **WHICH ONES**, or **HOW MANY**?

Different rules for when and where to use adjectives in your writing:

- Adjectives that answer the question **WHAT KIND** can be placed before or after the noun.
- Most adjectives are not capitalized unless they come at the beginning of a sentence. But some adjectives are capitalized because they are formed from proper nouns.
- These, this, that, and those are all demonstrative adjectives: they all demonstrate which bears, or which apples, so they answer the question **WHICH ONE**.
- Adjectives of quantity or number, answer the question **HOW MANY**. (Examples of these are some, several, one, two, etc.)
- When two things are compared the comparative form of adjectives should be used. This means that -er should be added to the single syllable form of adjectives. (The comparative forms of big, tall, and small are bigger, taller, and smaller.)
- When more than two things are compared the superlative form of adjectives should be used. This means that -est should be added to the single syllable form of adjectives. (The superlative forms of big, tall, and small are biggest, tallest, and smallest.)
- Some adjectives — especially those with more than one syllable — do not use -er or -est to form the comparative or superlative. Instead the words **MORE** or **LESS** are used to form the comparative, and the words **MOST** and **LEAST** are used to form the superlative.

Common Proofreading Symbols

Use proofreading symbols to correct the sentences shown on the next page. You may need to use the insertion symbol to add adjectives where they are needed. Some proper adjectives may need to be capitalized. Rewrite the paragraph shown on the next page correctly. Notice what difference adjectives can make in your writing!

	Insert a comma here	After class [,] we went outside.
	Apostrophe or single quotation mark needed	I couldn't remember where I put the keys.
	Insert item here	I ^{eat} ice cream every night.
	Use double quotation marks	My favorite story is "Ruby."
	Use a period here	He ate everything on his plate.
	Delete	She has has beautiful clothes.
	Transpose elements	Sally only ate the green candies.
	Close up this space	I saw a butterfly.
	A space is needed here	I need to do my homework.
	Make letter lowercase	You should proofread all your work.
	Capitalize letter	My favorite month is April.
	Begin new paragraph	"I love it," I said. "I thought you would," she replied.

Common Proofreading Symbols

Last week my class took a field trip to the atlanta zoo. While we were there our teacher asked us to choose an animal to observe. I chose to observe the austrailian kangaroo. she was very busy eating. I sat for a while and noticed that she had feet and ears. Her feet helped her to hop. I also noticed that she had a pouch. I was surprised that it could hold her baby. I can't wait to go back to school to share this information with my classmates!



Where's the Adjective?

Read each sentence and underline the adjective(s).

1. The dirty pig is wallowing in the mud.
2. Horses have long, thick manes.
3. Giraffes use their long necks to reach the leaves on trees.
4. The African cheetah is a very fast runner.
5. Those ducks are following their mother across the pond.
6. That bear is a very large and ferocious creature!
7. The two beavers are working together to build a dam in the creek.
8. The Bengal tiger has large teeth and sharp claws.
9. That is the biggest snake I have ever seen!
10. Flamingos have longer legs than a crane.

Adjectives Correct/Incorrect

Read each sentence. Decide if the statement is true or false. Think about how you would explain your decision. After the video, decide if any of your original answers need to be changed.

Before Viewing

true false

Adjectives that answer the question "what kind" can be placed only after a noun.

Adjectives are not capitalized unless they come at the beginning of a sentence.

This, that, these, and those are all demonstrative adjectives.

When two things are compared, the superlative form of adjectives should be used.

When more than two things are compared, the comparative form of adjectives should be used.

-er should be added to the end of a single syllable adjective in the comparative form.

-est should be added to the end of a single syllable adjective in the superlative form.

Adjectives with more than one syllable also use -er and -est to form the comparative or superlative.

Adjectives of quantity answer the question "how many."

After Viewing

true false

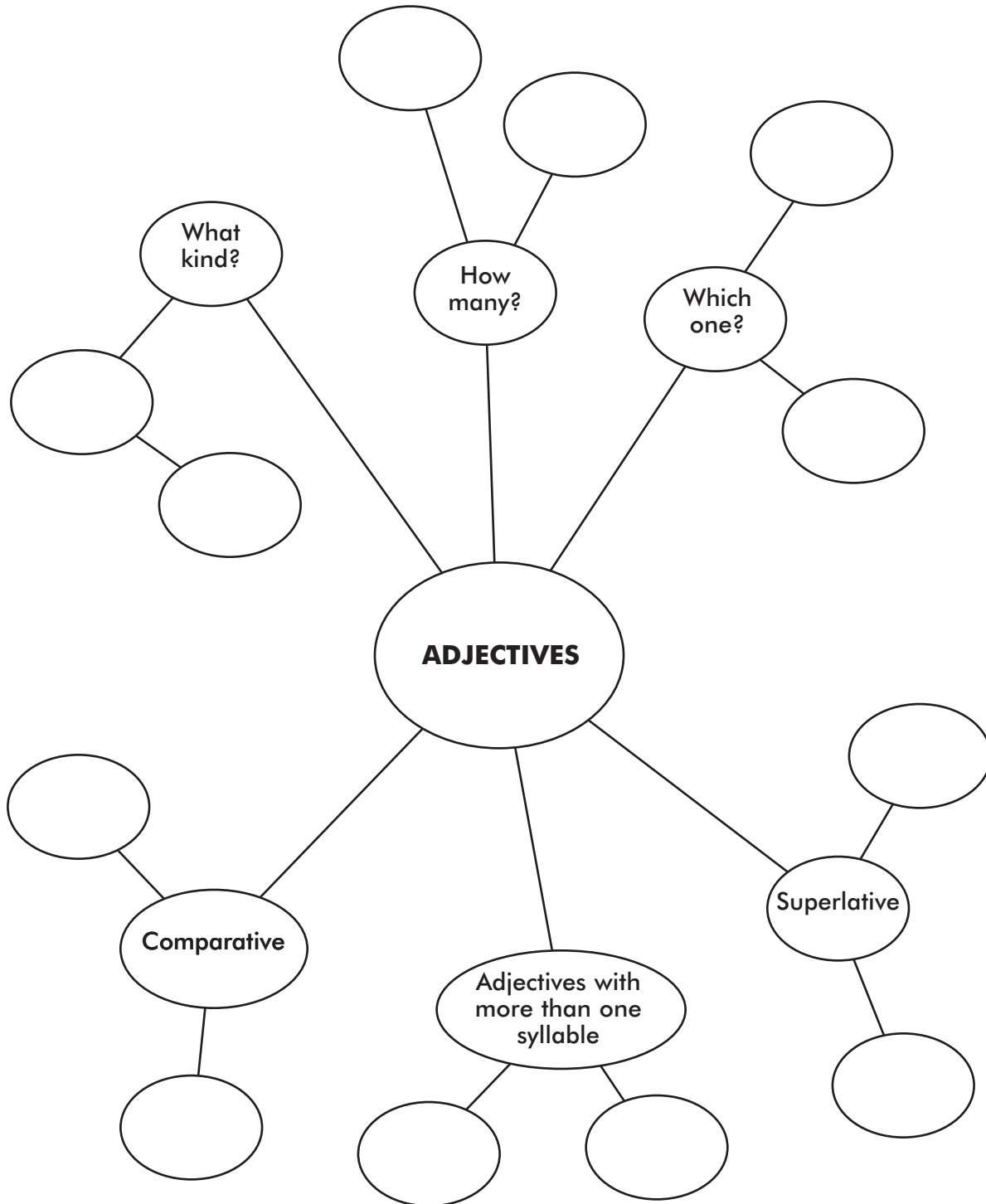
Adjectives Graphic Organizer

Use the graphic organizer table to record examples of the different types of adjectives used in the video.

TYPE OF ADJECTIVE	EXAMPLE FROM VIDEO	EXAMPLE FROM VIDEO
Answer the question WHAT KIND?		
Answer the question WHICH ONE(S)?		
Answer the question HOW MANY?		
Comparative Adjectives		
Superlative Adjectives		

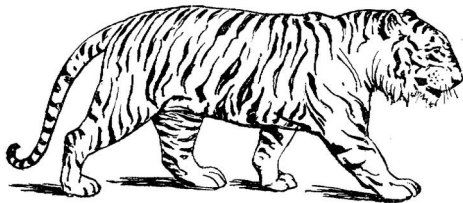
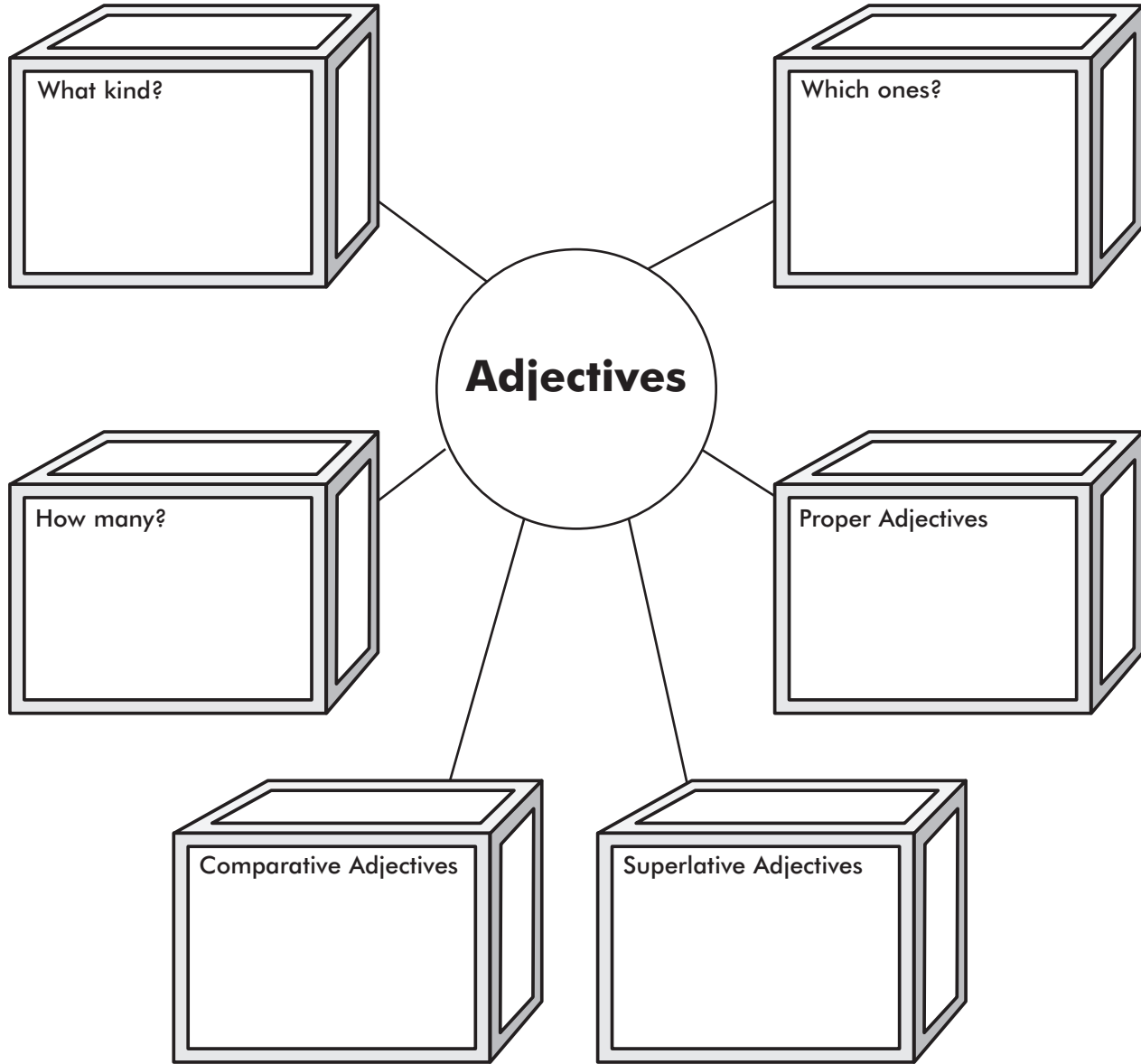
Adjectives Graphic Organizer

Use the web to fill in examples of the different types of adjectives described in the video.



Adjectives Note Taking

Use the guide words to record important and helpful information from the video.

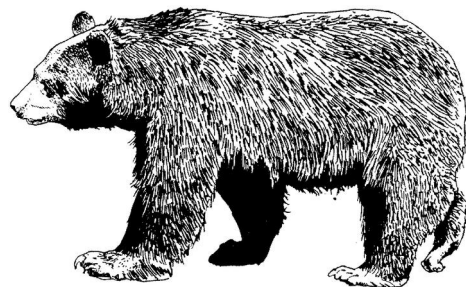
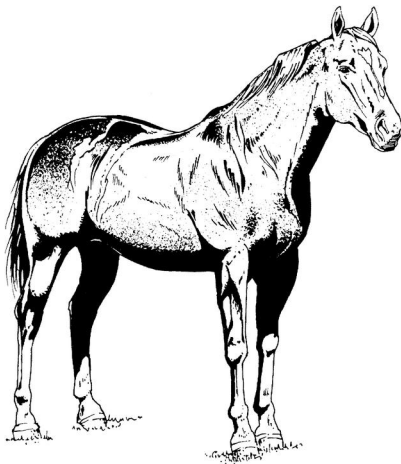


Adjectives

Match the sentence with the missing adjective.

**WORD
BANK:**Those
smallerbrown
Asianfive
thatfloppy
most beautiful

1. The _____ elephants have long trunks.
2. The _____ dog barks loudly.
3. _____ bears are taking a nap.
4. The bunny's ears are very _____.
5. Look at _____ bird!
6. The _____ ducklings are following their mother.
7. The otter is _____ than the beaver.
8. That is the _____ horse I have ever seen!

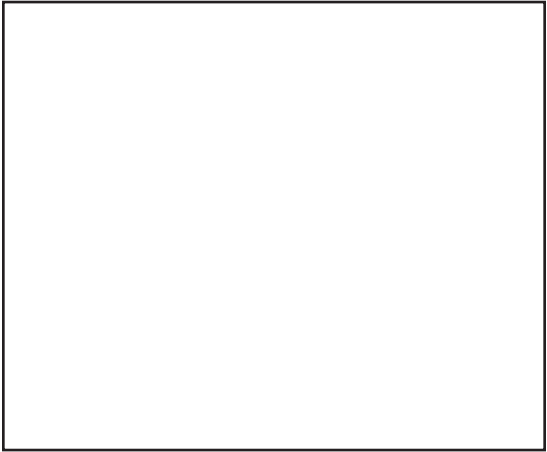
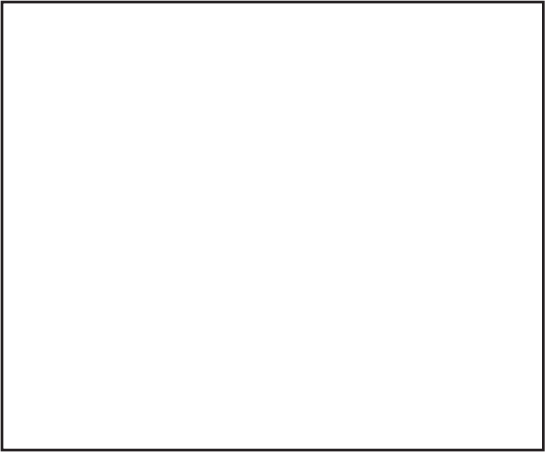


Adjectives

Write a paragraph about a place that you enjoy visiting. Your paragraph should be at least 5-7 sentences long and include at least 10 adjectives. Underline all of the adjectives in your story. Next, rewrite your story on the lines below and draw a blank line where the adjectives should go. Then have a friend make a list of ten adjectives on a separate sheet of paper. Finally, use the adjectives given to you by your friend and fill in the missing adjectives. Read the story together! Did the adjectives make sense in your story? Why or why not?

Adjectives

Now that you have taken a train ride and experienced the wonderful world of adverbs to make your writing more descriptive, imagine that you have been hired by a travel agent. The travel agent wants you to prepare a brochure to hand out to potential customers to advertise the next cruise to the Bahamas. Sketch and write a travel brochure to inform customers of arrival times, departure times, a trip itinerary, etc. Use the form below to help you plan your brochure.

	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Vocabulary Quiz

Fill in the blank with the correct definition.

___ adjective	C. an adjective that is derived from a proper noun
___ proper adjective	D. names who or what the sentence is about
___ subject	E. a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb
___ noun	F. a word that describe nouns and pronouns
___ adverb	
___ quantity	
A. a word that names a person, place, thing, or idea	
B. a number that tells how many of something there is	

Use the word bank to fill in the missing words.

WORD BANK:	adjective comparative adjectives superlative adjectives	stacked adjectives
-------------------	---	--------------------

1. _____ is a group of multiple adjectives that describe a noun or pronoun.
2. _____ compare two things by adding -er to the single syllable adjectives.
3. _____ is a word that modifies, or describes, a noun or pronoun.
4. _____ compare more than two things by adding -est to single syllable adjectives.

Content Quiz

Write the best answer to each of the following questions about adjectives.

1. What do adjectives describe? _____

2. Give an example of a question that an adjective can answer. _____

3. Should an adjective go before or after a noun or pronoun? _____

4. What is a proper adjective? _____

5. Should all adjectives be capitalized? _____

6. What is a demonstrative adjective? _____

7. What is an adjective of quantity? _____

8. How would you write the adjective "interesting" in the superlative form? _____

Interdisciplinary Ideas

Grammar

Have students write poems for specific parts of speech. Each poem should describe the job of the part of speech or include several examples of that part of speech.

Have students write riddles based on the functions of parts of speech. Students can read the riddles out loud while the other students guess the part of speech.

Play a grammar game. Give each team of students a set of cards that indicate the various parts of speech studied. Write a sentence on the board. Teams of students each send one player at a time to place a part of speech card below the corresponding word.

Have students color-code sentences. They choose sentences from literature books or content-area books. Teams or individual students copy sentences, using the following color code:

nouns — dark blue	pronouns — light blue	action verbs — dark green
linking verbs — light green	adjectives — purple	adverbs — orange
conjunctions — white	prepositions — tan	interjections — pink

Continue this activity in a different way. Randomly pass out cards to students on which you have written words using the code. Students then build a correct sentence together.

Have students do word sorting. They choose a paragraph from a piece of writing. Then they make a chart of the words of each type of speech they found in the paragraph. Students can then trade charts with another student and check each other's work.

Develop a magazine scavenger hunt. Students can scour magazines and cut out words that fit the parts of speech categories studied.

Play Scrabble on the bulletin board. Assign colors to specific parts of speech and have students add words to the board with each part of speech studied.

Do a poem search. How many of each part of speech can your students find in a poem?

Use the book *Jabberwocky*. What words can students use to replace the nonsense words used? Students can also make their own versions in picture books.

Give each part of speech a cents value. Who can find the sentence worth the most money in a literature book or content area book?

noun — 25 ¢	pronoun — 30¢	verb — 35¢	adjective — 40¢
adverb — 50¢	conjunction — 60¢	preposition — 75¢	interjection — \$1

Interdisciplinary Ideas

Make three dice. The first one says noun, noun, verb, verb, adjective, adjective. The second one says N, S, T, L, R, P. The third one says 15 seconds, 20 seconds, 30 seconds, 40 seconds, 50 seconds, 60 seconds. Team members take turns rolling the dice. During the rolled amount of time, each player is to name as many words of the part of speech and letter rolled as possible.

Use yarn to practice prepositions. Students stand in a circle with a loop of yarn being held by one finger of each student. Upon your instructions, students demonstrate being inside the yarn, outside the yarn, on the yarn, above the yarn, etc.

Punctuation

Have students make character creations. They create a character completely from punctuation marks. Then, they write sentences about their character, correctly using the punctuation marks in their sentences.

Listening for punctuation. Assign each punctuation mark that you have studied a specific action. For example, every time students hear a place where a period belongs, they can clap their hands. They might snap their fingers if they hear a place where a comma belongs. This might take some whole group practice with looking at a piece of writing on the overhead. Students will eventually recognize locations where the marks are required and understand the purposes of each mark.

Have students scan advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and junk mail for exclamation points. On their own or with their teammates, they decide on whether the exclamation points are effectively used or overused. Encourage them to rewrite these advertising sentences to convey the emphasis without using the exclamation point for effect.

Help students understand how commas affect understanding by playing court reporter. Ask one or two students to read a passage from their papers or some reading for the class while the other students write what they say. Then have the reporters prepare a transcript of what they heard, inserting punctuation where they think it is needed. Each team should compare the reporters' versions with the originals and solve any disputes over comma use by referring to the appropriate sections of this chapter.

The apostrophe is a messy punctuation mark and is frequently misused. Help students see how popular use is changing the perception of apostrophes by asking students in groups to examine sections of the Yellow Pages or the advertisements in the local newspaper to find examples where expected apostrophes are missing. They can also look for places where apostrophes are overused. Encourage them to notice such misuses and bring them to the attention of the class. Create a bulletin board of samples from the real world.

Interdisciplinary Ideas

Additional
Resources

The most troublesome possessive is *its*, which many students confuse with *it's*. Ask students to keep a list in their journals of places where they see these words confused, including published work and other students' writing. It's hunting makes students learn the its/it's rule and become more aware of how they use these words in their own writing.

Have students do a group editing exercise for punctuation. As a student's writing draft is displayed on the overhead, other students raise "road signs" to indicate the punctuation they suggest. For example, a stop sign for a period, a yield sign for a comma, and so on.

Classroom Discussion Prompts

Additional
Resources

1. What is an adjective?
2. Why do we use adjectives?
3. Give an example of a comparative adjective in a sentence.
4. Give an example of a superlative adjective in a sentence.
5. Why are adjectives so important in writing and talking?
6. Do you use adjectives in your writing or talking? If so, give an example.
7. How would our language be different if we did not have adjectives?



Suggested Reading List

Additional
Resources

Boynton, Sandra. *A is for Angry*. Workman Publishing, 1987. This book takes a fun approach to introduce an adjective for each letter of the alphabet. Though it was intended for young audiences, it would serve as an excellent springboard for intermediate writers.

Cleary, Brian P. *Hairy, Scary, Ordinary: What is an Adjective?* Caroirhoda Books, 2001. This book, although intended for students in grades two through four, would also be excellent to use with older students. Descriptive words are used to show adjectives in a variety of contexts.

Heller, Ruth. *Many Luscious Lollipops: A Book About Adjectives*. Putnam Publishing Group, 1998. This book is an excellent introduction to adjectives to both younger and older children. It gives an overview of adjectives and their uses in an interesting and colorful manner.

Katz, Bobbi. *25 Great Grammar Poems with Activities (Grades 3-6)*. Scholastic, 2000. This book helps teachers to teach grammar rules through poetry. It includes mini-lessons and practice sheets.

Karnowski, Lee. *Great Grammar Lessons That Work (Grades 3-6)*. Scholastic Professional Books, 2000. This book is a practical resource for teachers. The lessons and activities in the book encourage collaborative learning to teach grammar in a meaningful way.

Kellaher, Karen. *Grammar Puzzles & Games Kids Can't Resist! (Grades 3-6)*. Scholastic, 2000. This book is loaded with crosswords, codes, mazes and more that teach the parts of speech. Also, it supplies teachers with mini-lessons to help students learn the important grammar rules.

Pulver, Robin. *Punctuation Takes a Vacation*. Holiday House, 2003. A fun way to introduce the importance of punctuation. Humorous story that will entertain young students and also teach them a lesson. Students should appreciate why punctuation is necessary through the text and illustrations.

Sunley, Laura. *Fun With Grammar: 75 Quick Activities and Games That Help Kids Learn About Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, and More: Grades 4-8*. Scholastic, 2002. This book is full of ideas for teaching grammar to students. It includes Adjective Bingo, Hinky Pinky Adjectives and many more games, which involve students while making learning fun.

Below are a list of sites that you may use to find more information about adjectives. Due to routine web maintenance, not all of the links will be accurate at the time of access. If the link is not available, try to conduct a search on that topic from the main site or from a search engine.

Adjectives

This website offers a detailed description of the different types of adjectives, to serve as a reference tool for students and teachers. Also, it provides intermediate students the opportunity to take a quiz to test what they have learned.

webster.commnet.edu/grammar/adjectives.htm

Wacky Web Tales

This website is geared for grades three and above. It provides students with the opportunity to create funny stories by filling in the missing parts of speech including adjectives. It also provides help, for the different parts of speech, if students need it.

www.eduplace.com/tales/

Adjectives: A Vocabulary Quiz with Images

This website offers adjective vocabulary quizzes that include pictures, which would be an excellent tool to help students learning English as a second language practice their knowledge of adjectives.

www.manythings.org/vq/mc-adj.html

What is an Adjective?

This website gives excellent examples of how and when an adjective should be used. The text includes hyperlinks to explain other grammatical terms to students. In addition, the site also includes detailed information on the following types of adjectives: possessive, demonstrative, interrogative, and indefinite.

www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/adjective.html

The Teacher's Desk: Colorful Parts of Speech

This website offers a lesson plan idea for teachers, in order to teach the parts of speech and their different functions. It will engage students as they will think of the parts of speech as an art project.

<http://www.teachersdesk.org/engcolor.html>

The Grammar Gorillas

This website allows students to play an interactive game to identify the various parts of speech. This would be a great independent activity for intermediate learners.

www.funbrain.com/grammar

Activities for ESL Students

This website allows students to practice and check their knowledge of grammar skills. It would be a great site to recommend for students to use to practice at home reinforcing the skills they have been learning at school.

a4esl/q/h/grammar.html

School House Rock

This website will play a catchy rhyming tune to help students learn about the parts of speech and how they are used. (RealPlayer is needed for the audio and video files.)

www.school-house-rock.com/GrammarRock.html



Common Proofreading Symbols

Last week my class took a field trip to the atlanta zoo. While we were there our teacher asked us to choose an animal to observe. I chose to observe the austrailian kangaroo. she was very busy eating. I sat for a while and noticed that she had feet and ears. Her feet helped her to hop. I also noticed that she had a pouch. I was surprised that it could hold her baby. I can't wait to go back to school to share this information with my classmates!

Last week my second grade class took a field trip to the Atlanta zoo.

While we were there our teacher asked us to choose an interesting animal to observe. I chose to observe the Australian kangaroo. She was very busy eating crunchy leaves. I sat for a while and noticed that she had large feet and pointed ears. Her large feet helped her to hop. I also noticed that she had a built-in pouch. I was surprised that it could hold her tiny baby. I can't wait to go back to school to share this information with my classmates!

(Adjectives the students add may vary.)

Where's the Adjective?

Read each sentence and underline the adjective(s).

1. The dirty pig is wallowing in the mud.
2. Horses have long, thick manes.
3. Giraffes use their long necks to reach the leaves on trees.
4. The African cheetah is a very fast runner.
5. Those ducks are following their mother across the pond.
6. That bear is a very large and ferocious creature!
7. The two beavers are working together to build a dam in the creek.
8. The Bengal tiger has large teeth and sharp claws.
9. That is the biggest snake I have ever seen!
10. Flamingos have longer legs than a crane.

ANSWER KEY



Adjectives Correct/Incorrect

Read each sentence. Decide if the statement is true or false. Think about how you would explain your decision. After the video, decide if any of your original answers need to be changed.

Before Viewing

true false

Adjectives that answer the question "what kind" can be placed only after a noun.

Adjectives are not capitalized unless they come at the beginning of a sentence.

This, that, these, and those are all demonstrative adjectives.

When two things are compared, the superlative form of adjectives should be used.

When more than two things are compared, the comparative form of adjectives should be used.

-er should be added to the end of a single syllable adjective in the comparative form.

-est should be added to the end of a single syllable adjective in the superlative form.

Adjectives with more than one syllable also use -er and -est to form the comparative or superlative.

Adjectives of quantity answer the question "how many."

After Viewing

true false

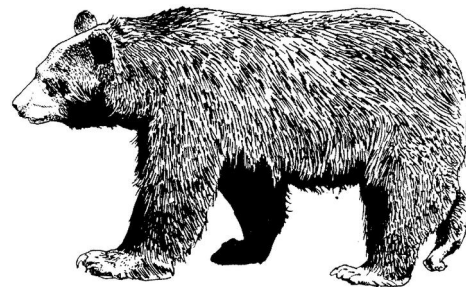
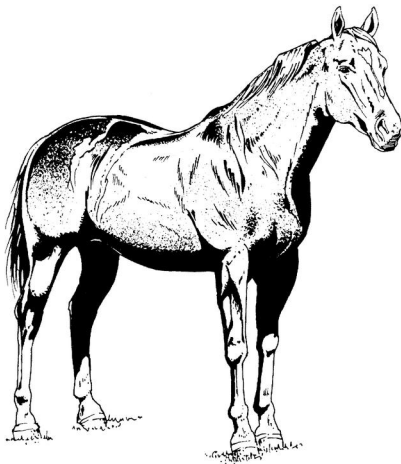
ANSWER KEY

Adjectives

Match the sentence with the missing adjective.

WORD BANK:	Those	brown	five	floppy
	smaller	Asian	that	most beautiful

1. The Asian elephants have long trunks.
2. The brown dog barks loudly.
3. Those bears are taking a nap.
4. The bunny's ears are very floppy.
5. Look at that bird!
6. The five ducklings are following their mother.
7. The otter is smaller than the beaver.
8. That is the most beautiful horse I have ever seen!



Vocabulary Quiz

Fill in the blank with the correct definition.

<u>F</u> adjective	C. an adjective that is derived from a proper noun
<u>C</u> proper adjective	D. names who or what the sentence is about
<u>D</u> subject	E. a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb
<u>A</u> noun	F. a word that describe nouns and pronouns
<u>E</u> adverb	
<u>B</u> quantity	

A. a word that names a person, place, thing, or idea
 B. a number that tells how many of something there is

Use the word bank to fill in the missing words.

WORD BANK:	adjective comparative adjectives superlative adjectives	stacked adjectives
-------------------	---	--------------------

1. stacked adjectives is a group of multiple adjectives that describe a noun or pronoun.
2. comparative adjectives compare two things by adding -er to the single syllable adjectives.
3. adjective is a word that modifies, or describes, a noun or pronoun.
4. superlative adjectives compare more than two things by adding -est to single syllable adjectives.

ANSWER KEY

Content Quiz

Write the best answer to each of the following questions about adjectives.

1. What do adjectives describe? _____
nouns and pronouns

2. Give an example of a question that an adjective can answer. _____
what kind, which ones, or how many

3. Should an adjective go before or after a noun or pronoun? _____
it can go in either place

4. What is a proper adjective? _____
an adjective that is derived from a proper noun

5. Should all adjectives be capitalized? _____
no, only if they come at the beginning of a sentence

6. What is a demonstrative adjective? _____
these, that, these, those, they answer the question which one

7. What is an adjective of quantity? _____
it tells how many, one, two, three, etc.

8. How would you write the adjective "interesting" in the superlative form? _____
most interesting

ANSWER KEY



Script

CAST	
Character	
Troy	Host
Child	Narrator

TEASE

Troy

Imagine that you're a wildlife biologist and that you study animals all around the world.

Your job is simply to observe the animals and describe what you see. Of course, you need to document your findings into a report. But that's pretty easy — IF you have a flair for good, descriptive language.

Hi, I'm Troy. Today I'll help you make your writing more vivid and colorful using adjectives. Together, we'll go on a wildlife expedition and you'll get a chance to improve your writing while you meet some of Earth's most interesting animals.

We're going to start our journey at a place you might've already been — the zoo — then we'll head to a horse ranch and a wild animal park. We'll wrap our journey by visiting California's mountains and coastlines, and the Great Plains!

Ready? Let's get started!

Script

INTRODUCTION

Troy

As wildlife biologists, we're going to study a variety of animals — some in their natural habitats and others in wildlife reserves and zoos. Our job will be to photograph each animal and document its behavior by writing a good descriptive sentence.

If you're a good wildlife biologist, you're probably pretty observant. When you see animals in the wild you might ask yourself:

What kind of animals are those?

Which ones are behaving in certain ways?

And how many are there?

These are all questions that ADJECTIVES can answer. Adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. They tell us WHAT KIND, WHICH ONES, or HOW MANY?

Let's look at an example.

Child

Those two Asian elephants have floppy ears.

Troy

THOSE TWO ASIAN and FLOPPY are all adjectives. Each word answers a question:

Which elephants? THOSE

How many elephants? TWO

What kind of elephants? ASIAN

What kind of ears? FLOPPY

Look how meaningless the sentence would be WITHOUT the adjectives:

Child

Elephants have ears.

Troy

We don't know which elephants, what kind of elephants, how many elephants, or what kind of ears they have! Without adjectives, we don't know very much about the elephants at all.

Script

So, you can see how adjectives help us make our writing more descriptive and meaningful. Whether you're writing a short story, an article, a report, or even just an email, you should know how to use adjectives effectively to answer those three questions.

WHAT KIND?

Troy

Adjectives that answer the question WHAT KIND can be placed before or after the noun. Take a look at this sentence:

Child

The **tall, thin** giraffe has a long neck.

Troy

This sentence could also be written:

Child

The giraffe, **tall** and **thin**, has a long neck.

Troy

In each of these sentences TALL and THIN describe the noun GIRAFFE — they answer the question WHAT KIND OF GIRAFFE? And as you can see, several adjectives can be used together to describe a single noun.

Troy

Now it's your turn. Let's visit the Phoenix Zoo and see if you can use ADJECTIVES to describe some of the animals you see.

Child

The **shaggy** baboon is being groomed.

Troy

The adjective SHAGGY describes the noun, baboon.

Child

Zebras' stripes, **black** and **white**, help to camouflage them.

Script

Troy

The adjectives black and white describe the stripes. They are behind the word stripes and set off by commas for emphasis.

Child

Rhinoceroses have **sharp, pointy** tusks.

Troy

Here two adjectives are “stacked” to describe the tusks: sharp and pointy. You can stack multiple adjectives, but using too many can make your sentences long and cumbersome.

Predicate Adjectives

Troy

In each of the sentences we’ve written so far, the adjective has come before the noun it describes... or immediately after it.

But sometimes adjectives follow a special group of verbs called linking verbs. For example, they may follow the state of being verb TO BE or other linking verbs like TO FEEL or TO LOOK.

Remember the sentence about the giraffe?

Child

The **tall, thin** giraffe has a long neck.

Troy

Well, we could have written:
The giraffe is **tall** and **thin** and it has a long neck.

Here, the words TALL and THIN still describe the giraffe because they’re linked to it by the linking verb IS.

Now, let’s head out to a horse ranch, Horses Help, to see if we can write sentences with adjectives that follow linking verbs.

Script

Child

The stables are **clean**.

Troy

In this sentence the verb ARE — a form of the verb TO BE — indicates that the adjective CLEAN describes the stables.

Child

The horse's short hair feels **rough**.

Troy

Here, the linking verb FEELS indicates that the adjective ROUGH describes the noun HAIR. The adjective SHORT also describes the hair.

Child

The rider looks **calm** and **happy**.

Troy

Here, the linking verb LOOKS tells us that the adjectives CALM and HAPPY describe the rider.

Proper Adjectives

Troy

Most adjectives aren't capitalized unless they come at the beginning of a sentence. But, some adjectives are capitalized because they're formed from proper nouns. For example in the sentence

These **African** lions are as playful as kittens.

African is an adjective that's derived from the proper noun Africa. So, it's capitalized.

Let's visit the Out of Africa Wildlife Park — home to animals from all over Africa and around the world — where we can practice using proper adjectives.

Child

The **African** warthog kneels to reach the ground.

The **African** antelope is different from the pronghorn antelope.

Script

Troy

In both of these sentences, African is also an adjective based on the proper noun Africa, so it's capitalized.

Child

The **Bengal** tigers snooze behind the fence.

Troy

In this sentence, Bengal is also an adjective based on a proper noun, so it, too, is capitalized.

WHICH ONES?

Troy

When we think of adjectives, we think of words like BIG or SMALL, right? These adjectives describe qualities of nouns. But there is another special category of adjectives that specify — or demonstrate — which noun is meant. For example:

These bears are brown. This one is itchy.
That one is eating those apples.

THESE, THIS, THAT, and THOSE are all demonstrative adjectives: they all demonstrate WHICH bears — or which apples — we're referring to. So, they answer the question: WHICH ONE?

Let's visit California's high country — the Sierra Nevada Wilderness — and see if we can put these demonstrative adjectives to use.

Child

This elk is huge!

Troy

Which elk is huge? **THIS** elk. The adjective **THIS** answers the question **WHICH ONE** about the elk.

Child

That elk is drinking from the river.

Script

Troy

Which elk is drinking? **THAT** elk.

Child

These ducks are in the water.

Troy

Which ducks are in the water? **THESE** ducks. Here the adjective **THESE** answers the question **WHICH ONES**.

Child

Those ducks are nesting on land.

Troy

Which ducks are nesting? **THOSE** ducks. **THOSE** is an adjective that answers the question: **WHICH ONES**.

How MANY?

Troy

One of the most common questions that wildlife biologists ask is: **HOW MANY?**

And in order to answer **THAT**, you need to use adjectives. For example, in the sentence...

Tarantulas have eight legs.

Eight is the adjective. It describes the noun legs by describing **HOW MANY** legs there are.

Sometimes we can't determine a specific number — only a general amount. In those cases, we use adjectives like some, several, few, or many.

Now, try your luck using adjectives of quantity. Let's visit the California Coastline and describe **HOW MANY** animals we see!

Child

One American avocet is standing in the water.

Script

Troy

The adjective **ONE** describes the avocet — it tells us **HOW MANY** avocets stood in the water. In this case, just **ONE**.

Child

Two otters share their food.

Troy

How many otters? **TWO**. The adjective **TWO** describes the noun **OTTERS**.

Child

Some cranes fly **several** miles.

Troy

This sentence has two adjectives. **SOME** and **SEVERAL** are both adjectives that tell us **HOW MANY** cranes fly **HOW MANY** miles.

ADJECTIVES OF COMPARISON

Troy

When wildlife biologists observe animals, they often end up making comparisons. They notice that one animal is faster than another, or that one animal is the biggest or the most colorful. These words: **FASTER**, **BIGGEST**, and **MOST COLORFUL** are all adjectives. They help us make comparisons.

When we compare two things, we use the comparative form of adjectives...which means that we add **ER** to single-syllable adjectives. The comparative forms of **big**, **tall**, and **small** are **bigger**, **taller**, and **smaller**.

When we compare more than two things, we use the superlative form of adjectives...which means that we add an **EST** to single-syllable adjectives. So the superlative forms of **big**, **tall**, and **small** are **biggest**, **tallest**, and **smallest**.

Let's visit the Great Plains and see how the animals that live there compare!

Script

Child

Blue herons are **taller** than most other birds!

Troy

In this sentence the comparative form of the adjective tall — TALLER — is used to describe the blue herons. It was made simply by adding ER to the word TALL.

Child

That's the **loudest** prairie dog!

Troy

In this sentence the adjective LOUDEST is used to describe the prairie dog. It is the superlative form of the adjective LOUD.

Child

Those are the **biggest** buffalo I've ever seen!

Troy

Here the superlative form of the adjective big is used: BIGGEST.

Some adjectives — especially those with more than one syllable — don't use ER or EST to form the comparative or superlative.

Instead, the words MORE or LESS are used with these adjectives to form the comparative and MOST and LEAST are used to form the superlative.

So, the adjective interesting doesn't become *interestinger* or *interestingest*, it becomes *more interesting*, *less interesting*, *most interesting* and *least interesting*.

Now it's your turn again. Try to make a few more comparisons using MORE and MOST and LESS and LEAST.

Child

Antelope are **more agile** than elk.

Troy

Because the adjective AGILE has more than one syllable, we add the word MORE to it to make it comparative.

Script

Child

Black footed ferrets are less abundant than ever before.

Troy

The adjective abundant also has more than one syllable, so we add the word less before it to make the comparative adjective: LESS ABUNDANT, which describes the ferrets.

Child

Badgers are my **least favorite** animals.

Troy

Here we have the superlative form of the adjective FAVORITE — LEAST FAVORITE — describing the noun ANIMALS.

REVIEW

Troy

Whew — we've seen a ton of animals AND we've learned a lot about adjectives. Let's review some of our field notes and double-check our adjectives.

Troy/Child

Rhinoceroses have **sharp, pointy** tusks.

The rider looks **calm** and **happy**.

The **Bengal** tigers snooze behind the fence.

That elk is drinking from the river.

These ducks are in the water.

One American Avocet stood in the water.

Some cranes fly **several** miles.

Blue herons are **taller** than most other birds!

Script

That's the **loudest** prairie dog!

Antelope are **more agile** than elk.

Black footed ferrets are **less abundant** than ever before.

Badgers are my **least favorite** animals.

Troy

We used adjectives to answer the questions WHAT KIND...WHICH ONE...and HOW MANY. And, we saw how the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives can be used to make comparisons.

What a GREAT experience. Oh there's another adjective: GREAT! See how easy they are to spot when you know what to look for? Anyway, I hope you've enjoyed our expedition into nature. If you want to jumpstart your own writing, try this!

Make a list of ten of your favorite animals. Now, write one sentence describing each animal. Make sure you use adjectives to answer the questions: WHAT KIND, WHICH ONE, and HOW MANY. Remember to make comparisons by adding ER and EST to adjectives or by using the words MORE, MOST, LESS and LEAST.

When you're finished, exchange your list with a classmate and try to make his or her sentences MORE descriptive by adding even more adjectives! Good luck!