

10

Appositive Phrases

An appositive phrase consists of a predicate complement used alone without a subject or a form of the verb **be**. Its "subject" appears in another part of the sentence.

COMPLEMENTS FORMING THE GRAMMATICAL HEAD OF APPOSITIVE PHRASES

<i>A predicate noun</i>	He had asked Mr. Wilson, a prominent lawyer , to represent him in court.
<i>A predicate adjective</i>	The professor, unaware that many of his students were asleep , went right on lecturing.
<i>An adverb (or adverbial expression)</i>	The gentleman over there by the door is our accountant.
<i>A prepositional phrase</i>	Mr. Harris, in a hurry to get home , took a taxi from the airport.

10-1

CHANGING ADJECTIVE CLAUSES TO APPOSITIVE PHRASES

Adjective clauses containing a form of **be** may be reduced to appositive phrases by retaining only the complement after **be** (noun, adjective, adverb or prepositional phrase).

The young man, **who is now a lawyer in a large firm**, has lost much of his old ambition.
becomes The young man, **now a lawyer in a large firm**, has lost much of his old ambition.
The person **who is responsible for the damage** will have to pay for it.
becomes The person **responsible for the damage** will have to pay for it.

Change the adjective clauses to appositive phrases. Use the same punctuation as the adjective clauses have.

EXAMPLE: a. The young child, who was the only survivor of the plane crash, was rushed to the hospital at once.

The young child, the only survivor of the plane crash, was rushed to the hospital at once.

b. The convict, who was free after twenty years, came out to a world quite different from the one he had left.

The convict, free after twenty years, came out to a world quite different from the one he had left.

1. We want to see the man who is in charge of the purchasing department.

2. Jane, who is their eldest daughter, is finishing high school this year.

3. The lecturer on data processing is Professor Nelson, who is an expert in computer technology.

4. The volcano, which has been dormant for over a hundred years, erupted again with great violence.

5. The Browns, who were back from their long trip, began to call all their friends.

6. The old man, who was once a famous athlete, talks of nothing but his former accomplishments.

7. The young queen, who was proud of her royal blood, tried to be worthy of her heritage.

8. Mathematics, which was once his favorite subject, no longer interests him.

9. The deer, which was too frightened to move, looked at the hunter so piteously that he could not shoot.

10. We will hire anyone who is willing to work hard.

11. Rip Van Winkle, who had been asleep for many years, did not recognize his surroundings when he awoke.

12. Their mother, who was just out of the hospital, could not take care of the house for several weeks.

13. A student should always do his work in a place that is conducive to study.

10-2 "COMPLEMENTS" OF APPOSITIVE NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES

"Complements" of Appositive Nouns

Appositive nouns may be followed by the same types of "complements" as predicate nouns.

<i>Adjective clause</i>	New York, a city which has eight million people , has always fascinated me.
<i>Participial phrase</i>	New York, a city housing eight million people , has always fascinated me.
<i>Prepositional phrase</i>	New York, a city of eight million people , has always fascinated me.

Form an appositive noun phrase out of the words in parentheses. In some phrases there may be a choice of "complements."

EXAMPLE: a. One of Shakespeare's most powerful works is King Lear, a *play* (it, deals, ingratitude, a man's daughters).

One of Shakespeare's most powerful works is King Lear, a play which deals with (or dealing with) the ingratitude of a man's daughters.

b. Ten Main Street, the *address* (the envelope), proved to be incorrect.

Ten Main Street, the address on the envelope, proved to be incorrect.

1. The United States, a *country* (its frontiers, once kept expanding, westward) no longer has a western frontier.

2. Philadelphia, the *City* (Brotherly Love), is actually no more friendly than any other city.

3. Mr. Olson, the *man* (he, sold, her, car) is a very honest dealer.

4. Sally, the *girl* (she, sits, next, me, class) is very pretty.

5. The Bible tells the story of Adam and Eve, the first *people* (they, were created, God).

6. The best student, the *one* (he, gets, highest grades) will receive a prize.

7. My uncle, the only *man* (he, can do, this kind, work) is out of town now.

8. The picture, a *reproduction* (one, in Louvre) looks very attractive over the couch.

9. He will always revere the memory of his mother, a saintly *woman* (she, taught, him, love, his fellowmen).

“Complements” of Appositive Adjectives

Appositive adjectives may be followed by the same types of “complements” as predicate adjectives.

<i>That clause</i>	The man, aware that he had made a mistake , tried to correct it.
<i>Infinitive phrase</i>	The man, eager to correct his mistake , said he would send a revised bill.
<i>Prepositional phrase</i>	The man, aware of his mistake , tried to correct it.

Form an appositive adjective phrase out of the words in parentheses. In some phrases there may be more than one possible "complement."

EXAMPLE: a. The young girl, conscious (boy, was staring, her), felt very uncomfortable.

The young girl, conscious that the boy was staring at her, felt very uncomfortable.

b. The elderly couple, now free (do, they pleased), decided to enter a retirement home.

The elderly couple, now free to do as they pleased, decided to enter a retirement home.

c. The refugees, finally safe (their pursuers), knelt down to give thanks to God.

The refugees, finally safe from their pursuers, knelt down to give thanks to God.

1. Her father, unsuccessful (his business venture), decided to give it up.

2. Positive (he, was, right road), the driver refused to consult the map any further.

3. The young couple, delighted (they, find, home, last), made big plans for the future.

4. The customer, indignant (poor service), complained to the manager.

5. Happy (he, see, family, once more), he vowed never to take such a long trip again.

6. Ignorant (dishonesty, his business partner), he felt sure their business was doing well.

7. Always loyal (his company), the young executive never complained about the way he had been treated.

8. The victim of the hotel fire, lucky (he, be, alive, himself), mourned for those who had perished in the fire.

10-3

POSITION OF APPOSITIVE PHRASES

The most common position for appositive phrases is after the nouns they refer to.

His uncle, *a proud and unbending man*, refused all help that was offered him.
Charles, *eager to get ahead in his career*, worked hard day and night.

Appositive phrases that refer to the subject of the main verb may also occupy the two other adverbial positions that nonrestrictive participial phrases do.

<i>Initial position</i>	<p>A proud and unbending man, his uncle refused all help that was offered him. Eager to get ahead in his career, Charles worked hard day and night. (In this position, the appositive phrase often expresses cause, sometimes concession.)</p>
<i>Final position</i> (less common)	<p>His uncle refused all help that was offered him, a proud and unbending man. Charles worked hard day and night, eager to get ahead in his career.</p>

Nonrestrictive phrases require commas in whatever position they are used.

Change the italicized adjective or adverbial clauses to nonrestrictive appositive phrases. Be careful of the punctuation. Note all possible positions for these phrases.

EXAMPLE: a. The widow, *who was afraid to be seen crying*, dried her tears quickly.

The widow, afraid to be seen crying, dried her tears quickly.

or Afraid to be seen crying, the widow dried her tears quickly.

or The widow dried her tears quickly, afraid to be seen crying.

b. *Because he was happy to receive a promotion*, the young man worked very hard.

Happy to receive a promotion, the young man worked very hard.

or The young man, happy to receive a promotion, worked very hard.

c. *Although he was once calm and considerate of others*, he became eccentric and self-centered in his old age.

Once calm and considerate of others, he became eccentric and self-centered in his old age.

1. The town, *which was once a prosperous seaport*, is now completely deserted.

2. *Because he was seriously ill*, the boy had to be taken to the hospital at once.

3. The Johnsons, *who were curious about their new neighbors*, went to visit them at the first opportunity.

4. *Because they were desperate about the state of their finances*, the company decided to declare bankruptcy.

5. The young man, *who was bored with college*, decided to drop out and go to work.

6. *Although he was generally gruff and blunt in his behavior*, he was known to be very gentle with children.

7. *Because she was by far the best student in the class*, Jane was chosen to take part in a youth forum on television.

8. The Italian immigrant, *who was homesick for his native land*, saved enough money to go back for a long visit.

9. *Because he was deathly afraid of airplanes*, he took the train whenever he could.

10. *Although he was a tyrant in the office*, at home he was kind and gentle.

11. *Although they were once the best of friends*, the two men stopped speaking to each other because of a bitter quarrel.

10-4

REVIEW OF APPOSITIVE PHRASES

Combine the following sentences so that one sentence in each group becomes an appositive phrase.

A. Appositive Noun Phrases

1. My neighbor's son is a great collector of stamps.
He asks me for every foreign stamp that I get.

2. Uncle Bob is a veteran of World War Two.
He hopes he won't have to fight in World War Three.

3. This furnace is provided with a thermostat.
A thermostat is a device for controlling the temperature.

4. The leaves are falling from the trees.
This is an indication that winter is not far away.

5. My favorite composer is Beethoven.
He is a genius of great intensity and complexity.

6. Next month I leave for Texas.
This is the state where everything is bigger and better.

7. He has brains, looks and charm.
These are qualities which will help further his great ambition.
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8. He has gone back to San Francisco.
San Francisco is the town where he was born.
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9. The people who made the revolution had high hopes.
These hopes were dashed by subsequent events.
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10. Freedom of speech is one of our most cherished constitutional guarantees.
This guarantee has sometimes been disregarded by different groups in this country.
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B. Appositive Adjective Phrases

1. This is the story of a normal boy.
He is proud of his family, his friends, his community.
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2. Paul was constantly aware of the criticisms made of him.
He found it very hard to follow the dictates of his conscience.
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3. The harbor is now deserted.
It was once full of the constant hubbub of arriving and departing ships.
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4. A new generation has grown up since the war.
It is no more eager to fight than the previous generation.
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-

5. The speaker droned on and on.
He was unaware that many people in the audience were falling asleep.

6. Ahead of us appeared the desert.
It was silent and grand in the early morning sky.

7. Joan of Arc was content to become a martyr for the cause of France.
She was certain that history would vindicate her some day.

8. The ship finally arrived in the harbor.
It was much the worse for wear after its long journey.

9. Her husband is tired and hungry when he comes home from work.
He is always in a bad mood until he rests for a while.

10. Children are fond of excitement in any form.
They enjoy big fires as well as circuses.

10-5

USING APPOSITIVE PHRASES FOR SUMMARIZING

Study the following paragraphs carefully. Underline the parts of each paragraph that are required for completing the summary sentence. Use your own words as much as possible. (Do not write more than one sentence for each paragraph.)

To the human senses, the most obvious patterning of the surface waters is indicated by color. The deep blue water of the open sea far from land is the color of emptiness and barrenness; the green water of the coastal areas, with all its varying hues, is the color of life. The sea is blue because the sunlight is reflected back to our eyes from the water molecules or from very minute particles suspended in the sea. In the journey of the light rays

into deep water all the red rays and most of the yellow rays of the spectrum have been absorbed. so when the light returns to our eyes it is chiefly the cool blue rays that we see where the water is rich in plankton loses the glassy transparency that permits this deep penetration of the light rays. The yellow and brown and brown and green hues of the coastal waters are derived from the minute algae and other micro-organisms so abundant there. Seasonal abundance of certain forms containing reddish or brown pigments may cause the 'red water' known from ancient times in many parts of the world, and so common is this condition in some enclosed seas that they owe their names to it — the Red Sea and the vermillion Sea are examples.

Rachel L. carson, *The Sea around Us*, 1951.¹

Summary sentence - Blue, the color of the water _____
 _____, represents _____
 green, the color of the water _____
 represents _____

The founders of modern science - for instance, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton - were mostly pious men who did not doubt God's purposes. Nevertheless they took the revolutionary step of consciously and deliberately expelling the idea of purpose as controlling nature from their new science of nature. They did this on the ground that inquiry into purposes is useless for what science aims at: namely, the prediction and control of events. To predict an eclipse, what you have to know is not its purpose but its causes. Hence science from the seventeenth century onwards became exclusively an inquiry into causes. The conception of purpose in the world was ignored and frowned on. This, though silent and almost unnoticed, was the greatest revolution in human history, far outweighing in importance any of the political revolutions whose thunder has reverberated through the world.

W. T. Stace, "Man Against Darkness," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. 1940.²

Summary sentence—The modern scientist, no longer interested in _____
 _____, but rather _____
 has brought about a revolution far greater than any political revolution.

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