

The Adjective

Adjectives

1c. An **adjective** is a word that is used to modify a noun or a pronoun.

An adjective helps to define or describe a noun or pronoun by telling *what kind, which one, or how many* about that noun or pronoun.

WHAT KIND? clean room, brown hair, French pen pal, easy test

WHICH ONE? first choice, that calendar, this box, next class

HOW MANY? many fish, six songs, some ideas, few coins

NOTE *A, an, and the* are special adjectives that we call *articles*. *A* and *an* are *indefinite articles* because they refer to any member of a group. *The* is the *definite article* because it refers to a specific member of a group.

EXERCISE A Underline each adjective in the following sentences. Each sentence has more than one adjective. Do not underline the articles *a, an, and the*.

Example 1. Find a safe path around those four huge rocks. [*Safe* modifies *path*. *Those, four,* and *huge* modify *rocks*.]

1. There is a large family of healthy ducks by the lake. [Which word modifies *family*? Which word modifies *ducks*?]
2. During the hot afternoon, several deer crossed the grassy meadow.
3. Look at the small, brown rabbit near the trees.
4. A gray dove looked for tiny seeds beneath a leafy, green bush.
5. Did you see the beautiful fur on that fox?

Pronoun or Adjective?

Some words, such as *either, neither, which, this, these, or that*, may be used as either pronouns or adjectives. When these words take the place of nouns or other pronouns, they are pronouns. When they modify nouns or pronouns, they are adjectives.

PRONOUNS I wore **this**.

She knows **neither**.

Which won?

ADJECTIVES I wore **this** hat.

She knows **neither** boy.

Which team won?

NOTE When the *demonstrative pronouns this, that, these, and those* modify nouns or pronouns, they are called *demonstrative adjectives*.

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EXERCISE B Underline each adjective in the following sentences. Then, draw an arrow from each adjective to the noun or pronoun it modifies. Do not underline the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*.

Example 1. That young vine is dangling from this tree. [*That* and *young* modify *vine*. *This* modifies *tree*.]

6. Either coach can train the new team. [Which two words modify nouns?]
7. Which long table will seat the hungry students?
8. Those three rosebushes won't bloom for many weeks.
9. Recent graduates helped several teachers purchase those.
10. We realized that neither frog had been making that unusual noise.

NOTE Many words that can stand alone as nouns can also be used as adjectives. Adjectives formed from proper nouns are called *proper adjectives*.

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| NOUNS | stone | history | Maine |
| ADJECTIVES | stone fence | history lesson | Maine lobster |

Adjectives in Sentences

An adjective usually comes before the noun or pronoun it modifies. However, sometimes the adjective follows the word it modifies, and occasionally a word or words may come between the adjective and the word it modifies.

EXAMPLE The bus, large and yellow, carried us to school. [*Large* and *yellow* both modify and follow *bus*.]

EXERCISE C Decide whether each of the underlined words in the following sentences is used as an adjective, a noun, or a pronoun. If the word is used as an adjective, write *ADJ* on the line provided. If the word is used as a noun, write *N* on the line provided. If the word is used as a pronoun, write *PRO* on the line provided.

Example ADJ 1. We ate lunch at the kitchen table. [*Kitchen* modifies *table*.]

- _____ 11. Is this the homemade pickle relish? [Does *this* modify a noun, or does it refer to a noun?]
- _____ 12. The relish in this jar is delicious!
- _____ 13. The relish was made from California cucumbers.
- _____ 14. This is the relish from California.
- _____ 15. This sandwich, because it's dry and plain, needs relish.