

# 14. ADVERBS

Underline the verb twice in each sentence below. Then, in the spaces following each sentence, write the two words from the sentence that tell you something *more* about the verb.

1. James quickly ran away. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Yesterday Sara played terribly. \_\_\_\_\_

If you have trouble finding the right words, look for those words that are neither nouns nor verbs. In the first sentence the words *quickly* and *away* give you two pieces of information about the verb: *quickly* tells **how** James ran and *away* tells **where** James ran. In the second sentence *yesterday* tells **when** Sara played and *terribly* tells **how** she played.

Now look at two more sentences. Which word gives you more information about the word *fast* in the first sentence? Which word tells you something more about the word *delicious* in the second sentence?

1. Kianga wanted to get to her grandmother's house very fast. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Her grandmother gave her some extremely delicious strawberry shortcake. \_\_\_\_\_

In the above sentences the word *very* modifies (describes) *fast* and the word *extremely* modifies *delicious*. Both words tell **to what extent** or **to what degree** an action is done or a quality is present. We know that Kianga runs, not simply *fast*, but *very fast* (or fast to an extreme extent). We also know that the shortcake was not just *delicious*, but *extremely delicious* (or delicious to an extreme degree).

## Definition

The words *quickly*, *away*, *yesterday*, *terribly*, *very*, and *extremely* in the above sentences are all examples of **adverbs**. An **adverb** is a word that describes or limits a verb, adjective, or other adverb and answers the questions **how**, **when**, **where**, or **to what extent**. Adverbs help you describe an action more precisely, more vividly, and more completely.

1. Kianga walked to her grandmother's house and knocked on the door.
2. **Today** Kianga walked **briskly** to her grandmother's house and knocked **excitedly** on the door.

You know much more after reading the second sentence than you do after reading the first. You know **when** Kianga walked to her grandmother's; you know **how** she walked there; and you know **how** she knocked on the door. The adverbs *today*, *briskly*, and *excitedly* give you these extra pieces of information.

### HINT

- A. An adverb usually appears next to the verb, adjective, or adverb that it describes.

Kianga walked *extremely hurriedly*, her *brilliantly* colorful dress billowing behind her.

- B. Although a word ending in *-ly* is usually an adverb, it can also be an adjective. Some adjectives ending in *-ly* are: ugly, womanly, lovely, stately, and lowly. A few words can function as both adverbs and adjectives:

1. The *fast* train crashed. (adjective)
2. The train went *fast*. (adverb)

- C. Nouns often function as adverbs:

Yesterday Sara fell down.

In the sentence above *yesterday* names a thing, a certain day. It also tells when an action took place, so it is a noun functioning as an adverb.

- D. *Not* and *never* are always adverbs. They both give negative information: *not* tells how something is done (not at all) and *never* tells when something is done (not ever).

Now that you've been introduced to the adverb, see if you can underline the adverbs in the sentences below:

1. Mary and Bill swiftly and correctly named the specimen.
2. The entire class recently went away.
3. Usually we go quietly to lunch.
4. Today we did not go quietly.

## ADVERB EXERCISES

A. *Directions:* Change the words listed below into adverbs. Write the adverbs in the spaces provided.

EXAMPLE: sure      surely

1. new \_\_\_\_\_
2. immediate \_\_\_\_\_
3. late \_\_\_\_\_
4. accident \_\_\_\_\_
5. able \_\_\_\_\_
6. beautiful \_\_\_\_\_
7. mystery \_\_\_\_\_
8. happy \_\_\_\_\_
9. admirable \_\_\_\_\_
10. noisy \_\_\_\_\_
11. irritable \_\_\_\_\_
12. sensible \_\_\_\_\_
13. ready \_\_\_\_\_
14. complete \_\_\_\_\_
15. shy \_\_\_\_\_
16. casual \_\_\_\_\_
17. heavy \_\_\_\_\_
18. necessary \_\_\_\_\_
19. true \_\_\_\_\_
20. intentional \_\_\_\_\_



C. *Directions:* In the following sentences underline each adverb and write *adv.* above it.

EXAMPLE: The events in this exercise really happened.

#### THE BLACK DEATH

1. Sometimes an event can unexpectedly change the course of history.
2. In the fourteenth century the Black Death dramatically changed European society.
3. This plague killed approximately one third of Europe's population in four years.
4. A tiny bacterium, always found in the stomach of fleas, caused this disease.
5. Small animals usually carried the fleas.
6. Black rats especially carried these small insects.
7. Italian merchants unknowingly brought the plague to Europe from Asia.
8. European merchants and travelers very quickly spread the disease everywhere.
9. City streets were almost deserted.
10. Prices soared, shops closed, and necessities became extremely scarce.
11. In Paris the plague, at its peak, supposedly killed eight hundred people daily.
12. Death was very common.
13. One witness said, ". . . a dead man was then of no more account than a dead goat would be today."
14. During the plague, doctors did not know the cause of the disease.
15. They even blamed the stars, infected winds, and bad smells.
16. After the plague, Europe was never the same.
17. European society was drastically changed.
18. Europeans related to each other differently.
19. The plague also changed European governments forever.
20. Many historians have always considered the Black Death a major turning point in Europe's history.

D. *Directions:* Write a sentence to follow each of the sentence patterns given below. Use articles (*a, an, the*) wherever you need them.

EXAMPLE: ADJ N V

*The little bird tweeted.*

1. N V ADV

---

2. ADJ N V ADV

---

3. ADJ N V ADV

---

4. ADJ N ADV V

---

5. ADJ N ADV V ADV

---

6. ADV ADJ N ADV V ADV

---