

# Adjectives and Articles

**2p.** An **adjective** is a word used to modify a noun or a pronoun.

An adjective modifies a word by telling *what kind, which one, how much, or how many*.

**EXAMPLES** Mr. Cruz collects **Egyptian** art. [What kind of art?]

Sara won **first** prize. [Which prize?]

Do you have **enough** money for the tickets? [How much money?]

Our computer club has **fifty-seven** members. [How many members?]

An adjective may come before or after the word it modifies.

**EXAMPLES** The **soccer** players, **confident** and **enthusiastic**, were **ready** to begin the game.

The most frequently used adjectives are the **articles** *a, an,* and *the*.

**EXERCISE A** In each sentence below, underline all of the adjectives, including the articles *a, an,* and *the*.

**Example 1.** Jenny Lind was a popular Swedish singer with a beautiful voice.

1. Jenny Lind starred in several operas and gained great renown in European cities.
2. At the absolute height of a brilliant career, she stopped performing in operas.
3. In 1849, the talented diva gave up an operatic career and began planning a concert tour.
4. From 1850 to 1851, Lind gave ninety-three concerts for the American public.
5. This extraordinary performer delighted audiences for fifty-three years.

**EXERCISE B** In each of the following sentences, underline all the adjectives except the articles *a, an,* and *the*. Then, draw an arrow from each adjective to the word it modifies.

**Example 1.** President Thomas Jefferson gave two American explorers a difficult assignment.

6. These bold explorers were Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.
7. They were to explore the uncharted lands to the west of the Mississippi River.
8. The long and arduous expedition began in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1804.
9. They made their winter camp in what is now North Dakota.
10. During that winter a Shoshone woman, Sacagawea, joined the expedition.
11. Her name translates into the English language as “Bird Woman.”
12. Sacagawea and her husband, a French-Canadian trader, accompanied the explorers through a large portion of the West.
13. As an interpreter of native languages, Sacagawea was helpful to the expedition.
14. The group, daring and resourceful, surmounted many obstacles.
15. The two-year journey was successful.

## Demonstrative Adjectives

*This, that, these, and those* can be used both as adjectives and as pronouns. When they modify nouns or pronouns, they are called **demonstrative adjectives**. When they take the place of nouns or pronouns, they are called **demonstrative pronouns**.

**EXAMPLES** Look at **that** pumpkin! [demonstrative adjective]

**That** is the biggest pumpkin I have ever seen! [demonstrative pronoun]

**EXERCISE** In the following sentences, underline the demonstrative adjectives once and the demonstrative pronouns twice.

**Example 1.** That building is much taller than this.

1. These stories are the best I've ever read.
2. Do you want this CD or that one?
3. That was the song Rashid has been humming all afternoon.
4. Those cats have been resting on the windowsill for two hours.
5. These are the funniest jokes I've ever heard!
6. This is the moment all those fans of the singer have been anticipating.
7. Joseph will be recycling those tomorrow, so he put them in the garage.
8. These parts will need to be cleaned before we can use them.
9. Wasn't that the worst movie you've ever seen?
10. Those grapes were tastier than these are.
11. I'll purchase this, and you can keep that one.
12. That is not what I meant to say.
13. Those comments of yours were right on target.
14. If you'll put away those toys, I'll take care of these.
15. Is that all you have to say?
16. That Norman Rockwell painting has always been Tera's favorite.
17. After reading descriptions of both books, Malcolm has decided to buy this.
18. Would you mind explaining how to solve this equation?
19. I have been needing a new pair of glasses, so I am happy to have these.
20. This photograph of Yvonne's fifth birthday party makes me laugh.

## Proper Adjectives

Unlike a common adjective, a *proper adjective* is formed from a proper noun and begins with a capital letter.

- EXAMPLES** Does **every** play by William Shakespeare have **five** acts? [common adjectives]  
Does every **Shakespearean** play have five acts? [proper adjective]

**EXERCISE** In the following sentences, underline each proper adjective once and underline twice the word it modifies.

**Example 1.** Mark Twain is one of the most popular American authors.

1. I have a CD of the singer Frank Sinatra performing Cole Porter songs.
2. The French novelist Jules Verne predicted such inventions as the submarine and the television.
3. A Norwegian expedition reached the South Pole a month before a British expedition arrived.
4. Akira Kurosawa, the Japanese filmmaker, directed many entertaining films.
5. Today, the prime minister issued a statement about the Northern Ireland peace talks.
6. I really enjoy the Spanish dish paella; my sister prefers the North African dish couscous.
7. I enjoy Georgia peaches almost as much as I like Michigan cherries.
8. Giuseppe Verdi, the composer of *Rigoletto*, was one of the leading figures of Italian opera.
9. Did you know that Mordecai Richler, who is a novelist, is Canadian?
10. The most famous British rock-and-roll songwriters may be John Lennon and Paul McCartney.
11. Candy skulls are a tradition during the Mexican holiday called the Day of the Dead.
12. My father, who likes spicy food, enjoys eating Indian curry and Thai green curry.
13. Ms. Henderson prefers Chinese food over Vietnamese cuisine.
14. Grandmother Adams was born during the Roosevelt administration.
15. The Inca ruins at Machu Picchu are located high in the Peruvian Andes.
16. Cassie will study Italian architecture at the University of Washington next semester.
17. Nicola's favorite restaurant in New Orleans often has Cajun music.
18. Uncle Shawn is bringing his specialty, chicken Caesar salad, to the picnic.
19. Joel's mother told us that the college years pass by in a New York minute.
20. What is Reverend Bowman's opinion of this Biblical passage?

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# Noun, Pronoun, or Adjective?

The way that a word is used in a sentence determines what part of speech the word is. Some words may be used as nouns or as adjectives. Other words may be used as pronouns or as adjectives.

**NOUN** May I have an **apple**?

**ADJECTIVE** May I have some **apple** juice?

**PRONOUN** **This** is a painting by Mary Cassatt.

**ADJECTIVE** **This** painting is by Mary Cassatt.

**EXERCISE** In each sentence below, identify the part of speech of the underlined word. Above each, write *N* for *noun*, *P* for *pronoun*, or *A* for *adjective*.

**Examples** 1. J. R. R. Tolkien is my favorite <sup>A</sup>fantasy writer.

2. John Crowley's novel *Little, Big* is an intriguing <sup>N</sup>fantasy.

1. Some people like their salsa hot.
2. Some prefer salsa that is mild.
3. The rookie hit the baseball over the outfield fence.
4. Did you see the baseball game on television last night?
5. Which way did the dog go?
6. Which of the cats is the oldest?
7. In astronomy class we learned which stars are likely to become supernovas.
8. Antonio plans to study astronomy in college.
9. The lighthouse remained in operation until 1983.
10. The morning after the storm, the lighthouse keeper slept in late.
11. That telephone is not working properly.
12. Is that a real duck or a decoy?
13. We heard the tornado warning on the radio.
14. Audra got a job as an intern at the local radio station.
15. Do you have any apples this morning?
16. Ted claimed he had not received any of my messages.
17. Are you happy with your Internet provider?
18. Let's see if we can find the information we need on the Internet.
19. Nicci saw a very enjoyable movie at the film festival.
20. The action film was three weeks behind its schedule.