

## Lesson: Correct Modifier Placement

### Learning Target

- Place phrases within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

A **phrase** is a word group that does NOT have both a subject and a verb and that functions as a part of speech, such as a noun or modifier (adjective or adverb). When writing, it is important to place modifying phrases as near as possible to the words they modify.

A **misplaced modifier** should be moved to avoid confusion.

**Misplaced:** My credit union offers loans to eligible account holders **of any size**.

**Better:** My credit union offers loans **of any size** to eligible account holders.

**Misplaced:** I read a book that Mark Twain wrote **during winter break**.

**Better:** **During winter break**, I read a book that Mark Twain wrote.

A **dangling modifier** occurs when a modifier has no word to modify in the sentence. You may need to reword the sentence to correct a dangling modifier.

**Dangling:** **Riding my bike**, a dog appeared out of nowhere. [The dog is not really riding a bike.]

**Better:** **As I was riding my bike**, a dog appeared out of nowhere.

**Dangling:** **After seeing the movie**, an argument broke out about what the ending meant. [The argument did not see the movie.]

**Better:** **After we saw the movie**, an argument broke out about what the ending meant.

## Check Your Understanding

Revise the following sentences to be sure each modifying phrase is placed correctly and that it modifies a word in the sentence. In your revision, underline the word that the phrase modifies.

**Answers will vary. Sample answers are given.**

1. In a hurry, a nest appeared overnight.  
In a hurry, the birds built a nest overnight.
2. I had heard the news about the test we will take before last Friday.  
Before last Friday, I had heard the news about the test we will take.
3. Before the holidays, I discussed how to stuff a turkey with my sister.  
Before the holidays, my sister and I discussed how to stuff a turkey.
4. Having left the gate unlocked, the dogs got out and ran loose in the neighborhood.  
Because we left the gate unlocked, the dogs got out and ran loose in the neighborhood.
5. The class will go to the library with research assignments due Thursday.  
The class with research assignments due Thursday will go to the library.