Passage

*Henry Reed*, p. 30:

**Mom or Dad:** Please review nouns, verbs, and dashes. We highlight being verbs and homonyms on today’s Activity Sheet. For a review of concepts and examples, please consult the Grammar Guide found in the Section 3: Resources. Then read through today’s F.Y.I. and have your children answer the questions on the Activity Sheet.

**Note:** We will present lots of basic and advanced grammar information in the first few weeks of the year. Hopefully, most of this material will be both a review and a refresher. If not, just do what you can. Take your time. You have a whole year in which to “catch up” and move forward beyond what most students in any school will study.

> By the time we were kids, my folks—that’s your grandparents—had sold three lots here on this side of the road. All the present houses except that red brick one which you can see over the evergreens. That belongs to Mr. Apple.

**F.Y.I. Synopsis: Being Verbs**

- **being verbs** tell what a noun was, is or will be
- They require three parts:
  1. a noun
  2. a being verb
  3. one or more words to clarify the noun’s state of being.

For example:

> Bubba is strong.
> Lisa was laughing.
> Zachary will be awake soon.

**Exercises**

1. Circle the being verbs in the second sentence. Then rewrite the sentence so you don’t use any form of the verb be. *(were; Answers will vary: All the present houses existed except that red brick one which you can see over the evergreens.)*

2. Put check marks above the dashes in the passage above. Why did the author use dashes in this passage?

   - [ ] To indicate interrupted speech
   - [ ] For emphasis
   - [x] To set off parenthetical material
   - [ ] To indicate a sudden break

3. In the second sentence, use an **n** to label the nouns and an **v** to label the verbs. *(n: houses, evergreens; v: were, see)* When they are part of a sentence, nouns are often the: action word  person  subject of the sentence.

   **Note:** The word “can” is a helping verb, which we will discuss on Activity Sheet 4. Also note that in this context, one is a numerical pronoun whose antecedent is the noun houses.

4. **Homonyms** are words that sound the same, are spelled the same, but do not mean the same thing. Words such as “wave” (in the sea) and “wave” (to greet) are homonyms. Underline as many homonyms in the passage as you can. Then choose 3 homonyms and write another meaning for each one. *(kids—kids (baby goats), lots—lots (many), present—present (gift), can—can (of beans))*

5. **Homophones** are words that sound the same, but do not mean the same thing. Homophones may or may not have the same spelling. Words such as “for” and “four,” and “ant” and “aunt,” are homophones. Double underline as many homophones in the passage as you can. Then choose 3 homophones and write another meaning for each one. *(by—bye (goodbye) or buy (purchased), time—thyme, your—you’re (you are), here—hear (listen), road—rode (to ride), red—read (past tense of read), one—won (to win), which—witch (does magic), you—ewe (sheep), see—sea (ocean), to—two (number))*

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1. See the Grammar Guide in the Resource section for more information.
Passage
Homesick, p. 25:

Mom or Dad: Today we introduce adjectival and adverbial clauses and relative pronouns.

“Good-bye,” I said. “May the River God protect you.”

(For a moment) the boy stared.

When he spoke, it was as if he were trying out a new sound. “American friend,” he said slowly.

To which I had gone is an adjectival clause. Draw brackets around the clause and then draw an arrow from the clause to the noun or pronoun it modifies.

When I looked back, he was still there, looking soberly toward the foreign world to which I had gone.

F.Y.I.: Adjectival and Adverbial Clauses

Remember, a clause is a group of related words that includes a subject and a predicate. You also know that while both independent and dependent clauses contain both subjects and predicates, only independent clauses convey a complete thought and can stand alone as a complete sentence—dependent clauses do not, and cannot.

Did you know that clauses can serve different functions in a sentence? Adjectival clauses (also called adjective or relative clauses) usually begin with a relative pronoun and serve as an adjective. Relative pronouns connect phrases or clauses to nouns or pronouns. The most common relative pronouns are who, whoever, which and that. For example:

The child who left her shoes on the stairs should come and retrieve them.

In the sentence above, who left her shoes on the stairs is an adjectival clause because it describes the noun child.

Adverbial clauses may begin with a subordinating conjunction and serve as an adverb.

I filled the tank with gas before I went home.

The clause before I went home is an adverbial clause because it describes when I filled the tank and begins with the subordinating conjunction before.

Exercises
1. To which I had gone is an adjectival clause. Draw brackets around the clause and then draw an arrow from the clause to the noun or pronoun it modifies.

2. Draw brackets around each clause in the last sentence. Mark any independent clauses with ind and any dependent clauses with dep. (dep: [When I looked back]; ind: [he was still there, looking soberly toward the foreign world]; dep: [to which I had gone])

Based on your analysis, what is the structure of this sentence?

Simple  Compound  Complex  Compound-Complex

3. The word looking in the last sentence is a participle. Rewrite the sentence so that you replace the participle with a true verb. (Sample answer: When I looked back, he was still there. He looked soberly toward the foreign world to which I had gone.)

4. Write prep above all prepositions, op above all objects of prepositions, and draw parentheses around all prepositional phrases. (For a moment; toward the foreign world; to which)

5. The following words are homographs. Think of at least two meanings for each word. We gave you one of them. (May permission, blessing; name of month; spoke past tense of speak; part of a wheel; back adv: the direction behind; noun: part of anatomy; still adv: yet, continuing; adj: motionless; noun: liquor-making equipment)

6. Use the standard symbols (s, v, do, art, adj, etc.) to analyze the second and third sentences. (hv: May; art: the; s: River God; v: protect; do: you; prep: For; art: a; op: moment; art: the; s: boy; v: stared.)
Passage

*Star of Light*, pp. 161–162:

Mom or Dad: Please review semicolons.

“How does the light get into the empty lantern?” asked Rosemary.

“It’s just a matter of opening a door and placing a candle inside. Jesus is the Light, and He wants to come; and we, (by believing), open the door and ask Him in. Then, if the glass of the lantern is clean, the light shines out clearly; but if the glass is clouded and dirty the light will be very dim.”

Exercises

1. Why do we find semicolons in the middle of the third and fourth sentences? (Check all that apply.)
   - [ ] To help join two independent clauses in one sentence—especially when they are long or contain commas
   - [ ] To separate groups that contain commas
   - [X] To serve the kind of function that a period does when a comma would do; to provide a more substantial break than a comma would
   - [ ] It shouldn’t be there; the author should have used _____________ instead

   Mom or Dad: You may want to discuss how and why a comma can fulfill the same function as the semicolon when it helps to join two independent clauses.

2. What is the structure of the first sentence (including the attribution)?
   - *Simple*: Compound Complex Compound-Complex

   What is the structure of the second?
   - *Simple*: Compound Complex Compound-Complex

   What is the structure of the third?
   - *Simple*: Compound Complex Compound-Complex

   What is the structure of the fourth?
   - *Simple Compound Complex Compound-Complex*

3. What are the tenses of the following clauses?

   If the glass is clouded and dirty...
   - Past
   - Present
   - Future

   ...the light will be very dim...
   - Past
   - Present
   - Future

4. Double underline the interrogative sentence. (*How does the light get into the empty lantern?*)

5. Circle the antecedent to the pronoun It in the second sentence. (*How does the light get into the empty lantern?—the entire question)*

6. Think of two antonyms or, at least, contrastive expressions for each of the following words. Feel free to use prepositional phrases, clauses, or other longer means of expressing the opposite idea! (*Sample answers:*
   - empty: full, overflowing;
   - open: shut, close;
   - light: dark/darkness/darken, murk/murky/murkiness;
   - Aunt: Uncle, cousin, niece, nephew;
   - inside: outside, round about, away from;
   - him: her; it: clearly dimly, darkly, murkyly; clean: dirty, messy, filthy)

7. The last sentence includes a strong example of parallelism. Please underline the parallels and draw two-headed arrows that connect the parallel phrases. (*if the glass—if the glass; the light—the light)*

8. Analyze the third sentence. (*s: Jesus; lv: is; art: the; pn: Light; cc: and; s: He; v: wants; inf: to come; adv: in; cc: and; s: we; prep: by; op: believing; v: open; art: the; do: door; cc: and; v: ask; do: Him; adv: in)*

9. Rewrite the second sentence in such a way that you eliminate the gerunds opening and placing. (*Sample answer: You need to open a door and place a candle inside.*)
Grammar Guide

Abbreviations

Abbreviations are shortened versions of commonly used words.

Ex. Mr. (for Mister)
    St. (for Street or Saint)

TELL ME MORE!

One of the most common abbreviations is Mr. to stand for Mister and Mrs. which stands for Missus which, in itself, is a shortened version of Mistress. Normally, you indicate that you are using an abbreviation by putting a period after the abbreviation. Some more examples: Dr. for Drive or Doctor; Blvd. for Boulevard; etc. for etcetera.

An acronym is a special kind of abbreviation that does not need a period and is pronounced as one word.

Ex. NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)

An initialism is a special kind of abbreviation in which each letter used to form the abbreviation is pronounced separately. Like acronyms, initialisms do not need periods.

Ex. FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation)

Acronym (see Abbreviations)

Action Verb (see Verb)

Active Voice (see Voice)

Adjective

An adjective describes or modifies a noun.

Ex. Green book
    Sleepy girl
    Hot potato

TELL ME MORE!

Adjectives add to our understanding of nouns. If you have a box (noun), and then say it is soft, hot, dark, and wet, the words soft, hot, dark, and wet are all adjectives. If you are talking about a young man, young is an adjective; it describes the man. In yellow flower, yellow is an adjective; it describes the flower. If you are talking about his satin shirt, his and satin both serve as adjectives that describe the shirt.

Notice that some words—like soft, hot, and dark—are always and only adjectives. Other words—like satin and his—can serve as adjectives but are nouns (satin) and proper nouns (his) as well. Notice, too, that even verbs can serve as adjectives: the shining star, a crumpled sheet of paper.

You can string adjectives together.

Ex. The green men ate. The three green men ate.
    The three tall green men ate.
    The three strong tall green men ate.

Adjectives come in one of three forms: positive, comparative, or superlative. The positive form modifies a word without comparing it to anything else. For example: That dog is big. The comparative form modifies a word by comparing it to one other thing. Comparative adjectives often use the ending -er or the words more or less. For example: That dog is bigger than my dog. The superlative form modifies a word by comparing it to two or more other things. Superlative adjectives often use the ending -est or the words most or least.

Ex.: That dog is the biggest dog on my block.

For further information about special types of adjectives, see Article, Determiner, and Quantifier.

Adjective/Adjectival Clause (see Clause)

Adverb

An adverb adds to or modifies our understanding of a verb. Adverbs tell us how, when, or where the verb happened (or is happening or will yet happen). They can also describe or modify our understanding of an adjective or another adverb.

Ex: The green men ate quickly. (Quickly describes how the verb ate.)
    The woman walked slowly. (Slowly describes the verb walked.)
    Josh fell down. (Down is an adverb because it describes the verb fall. It tells us about Josh’s falling: He fell down)
    Emily will feel better tomorrow. (Tomorrow describes when Emily will feel better.)
    The deep green moss grew. (Deep describes the adjective green.)
    The green moss grew extremely quickly. (Quickly describes how the moss grew. Extremely describes the other adverb, quickly.)

TELL ME MORE!

Here’s a clue that will help you identify many adverbs: if you find a word that ends in -ly, it is almost assuredly an adverb.
In the phrase *talk loudly*, the verb *talk* is modified by the adverb *loudly*. How did he talk? He talked loudly. Loudly adds to our understanding of talk. How about the phrase *worked hard*? Which word is the verb that tells us what happened? (*worked* is the verb) And which is the adverb that tells us how the person or machine worked? (*hard* is the adverb) How about *suddenly remembered*? What is the verb and what is the adverb? (*remembered* is the verb; *suddenly* is the adverb)

You can find adverbs right next to the verbs they modify—either in front of or after the verb; and you can find them at distances from their verbs.

Ex. He *quickly* jumped on the horse.

He jumped *quickly* onto the horse.

*Quickly*, the large man jumped onto the horse.

He jumped onto the galloping horse *quickly*—before it got away.

Examples of adverbs that modify adjectives: in the phrase *the very bright light*, *very* is an adverb; it modifies the adjective *bright*. (Notice that very does not modify *light*! You can't have a very light!) In *tremendously loud engine*, *tremendously* is an adverb; it modifies the adjective *loud*; you can have a *loud* engine and a *tremendously* loud engine, but you can't have a *tremendously* engine.

Adverbs come in one of three forms: positive, comparative, or superlative. The **positive form** modifies a word without comparing it to anything else. For example: He runs fast. The **comparative form** modifies a word by comparing it to one other thing. Comparative adverbs often use the ending *-er* or the words *more* or *less*. For example: He runs faster than my dog. The **superlative form** modifies a word by comparing it to two or more other things. Superlative adverbs often use the ending *-est* or the words *most* or *least*. For example: He runs the fastest of all the dogs on my block.

Adverbs add power to your writing. Use them often.

**Adverb/Adverbial Clause (see Clause)**

**Agreement (see Subject-Verb Agreement)**

**Alphabetization**

Alphabetization is the process of placing a series of words in alphabetical order—in order from a to z beginning with the first letter of the word. When two words start with the same letter, then you compare their second letters. When two words share the same first and second letters, then you compare the third letters... and so on until you find a letter on which they disagree.

Ex. aardvark, adjective, adverb, amber, ambulance

**Analogy**

An analogy compares two (or more) things that, although otherwise dissimilar, are similar in some important way. Analogies are used to suggest that because two (or more) things are similar in some way they are also similar in some further way. For further information about special types of analogies, see Simile and Metaphor.

Ex. Phil hates receiving unsolicited “spam” e-mail because deleting it from his inbox wastes so much time. He insists there must be some solution to this problem on the horizon! Of course, he also used to think that, by now, he wouldn't need to continually pitch the “junk” mail that accumulates in his mailbox on a daily basis. (The analogy in this paragraph suggests that “spam” e-mail, like postal “junk” mail, may be here to stay!)

**Antecedent**

An antecedent is the noun that a pronoun refers to.

Ex. *Emily* cooked breakfast. She is a good cook. (*Emily* is the antecedent for the pronoun *she*.)

**TELL ME MORE!**

“Ante” means “before” or “in front of.” The noun to which the pronoun refers usually comes before or “ante” the pronoun.

When you say, He came, the person you’re talking to wants to know “Who is he? To whom are you referring when you talk about him or he?” If you answer, “Oh! I’m talking about John (or whoever),” John (or whoever) is the antecedent. That is the noun to which he refers.

Antecedents are extremely important, especially when you begin to use pronouns. For example, read the following sentences: Mike and Tim were talking. Tim said he could marry Sarah because he didn’t mind if Sarah didn’t like him. Every pronoun in the second sentence must have an antecedent or an implied antecedent. Tim is obviously the one who’s talking. Tim says he (who? Tim? Mike? Someone else?) could marry Sarah because he (who?) didn’t mind if Sarah didn’t like him (again, who is Tim talking about?). Never use a pronoun unless you know that its antecedent is obvious! Besides the pronouns where
it is very obvious that you need to know the antecedent, there are a few pronouns where you can usually figure out what the antecedent is . . . even if no one tells you.

Ex.  I/me/my
you/your/yours
we/us/our/ours

Antonym
An antonym is a word that means the opposite of another word.

Ex.  Up is the opposite of—or antonym for—down
Cold is the antonym for hot
Out is the antonym for in.

Apostrophe
An apostrophe (’) is a punctuation mark that can show possession, make contractions, or show when letters are left out. Apostrophes are also used to make letters, numbers, and signs plural.

Ex.  the kids’ cookbook (the cookbook belongs to the kids)
    didn’t (did not)
    I’m waitin’ for him. (shortened version of waiting)
    Z’s, 9’s, $’s

Appositive
An appositive is a noun or noun phrase (appositive phrase) that renames or describes the nouns or pronouns that come immediately before it. Appositives are usually surrounded—or set off by—commas.

Ex.  Mark, first baseman for the Rangers, had a strong season.
    Carmen, a mother of three, barely had time to make dinner.
    My guitar, an Ibanez, is a real beauty.

TELL ME MORE!
Use an appositive when you want to say something important about the subject, but you want the sentence itself to focus on something you consider even more important. So, for example, you want to say that Samson lost all his strength when he cut his hair. That is the main message you want to tell people. But in order for them to really understand what you are saying, you need to tell them that he was normally a strong man. So you insert the appositive: Samson, a strong man, lost all his strength when he cut his hair.

Appositive Phrase (see Appositive)

Article
An article is a special type of adjective. There are three articles—the, a, and an. Articles tell something about the nouns that follow them.

Ex.  The dogs fight
A plane flies
An apple falls.

TELL ME MORE!
The the is called a definite article, because it defines exactly which one: the specific apple that we’ve been talking about or the apple that we are about to talk about. The tells you that the noun that follows is a particular one.

Ex.  The apple (one specific apple)
An apple (any apple)

A and An are called indefinite articles, because you can’t be sure which particular item they are talking about. They just say that it is some item. A and an mean the same thing. A is used when the noun that follows it begins with a consonant sound. An is used when the noun that follows it begins with a vowel sound.

Ex.  a boa constrictor
    a one-dollar bill
    an ant
    an hour

Attribution
An attribution is the phrase that indicates who said whatever is being quoted.

Ex.  Eddie said
Josh yelled
Caitlyn laughed

TELL ME MORE!
An attribution can be placed before, in the middle of, or after the quotation. When the attribution is before the quotation, identify who is being quoted, follow that with a comma, and then begin the quotation.

Ex.  Michael said, “I sure am hungry.”
    Duane says, “I love to eat Italian food.”

When an attribution is in the middle of a quotation, attach the attribution to whatever comes before it. Then, follow the attribution with a comma and treat it and the quotation that follows as if the attribution were before the quotation.

Ex.  “I love that idea!” said Amber. “This will be so much fun.”
    “I’m not sure,” commented Chase, “if it will work.”