

Name: _____

Miss Crossley

__ LA Period: _____

Date: _____

Confusion Due to Misplaced Modifiers

Sometimes the position of a single word may cause confusion or change the intended meaning of a sentence. The chief errors occur in using such common adverbs such as <i>not</i> , <i>only</i> , <i>nearly</i> , <i>almost</i> , <i>etc.</i> Sometimes phrases or clauses that are misplaced may confuse or amuse the reader.	<i>Correction</i> To avoid misleading the reader or listener, make sure you place the word, phrase, or clause near the expression it modifies.
---	---

CONFUSING: One night when I was sleeping in the jungle, I heard a noise and shot an elephant in my pajamas.

CLEAR: One night when I was sleeping in my pajamas in the jungle, I heard a noise and shot an elephant.

CONFUSING: Everybody can't do this trick. (This means that *nobody* can do this trick.)

CLEAR: Not everybody can do this trick. (This means that some people, but not all, can do this trick.)

CONFUSING: The dealer nearly made \$200 on the sale of the car. (This suggests that the sale may not have been made.)

CLEAR: The dealer made nearly \$200 on the sale of the car. (Here the dealer made almost \$200 on the sale of the car.)

CONFUSING: I saw the circus passing through my front window. (Here the circus went through the window.)

CLEAR: Through my front window, I saw the circus passing. (Now it is clear that I looked through the window.)

Exercise – Placing Modifiers Correctly

Directions: Rewrite the following sentences, putting the misplaced modifiers in the correct position in the sentence.

1. She put her lunch on the shelf which she ate later.

2. I saw you shoveling snow through my window.

3. We rented a cottage for a family of four with a fireplace.

4. Let's buy something after the ball game at the lunch counter.

5. He was as happy as a lark laughing and joking.

6. There is a place where you can watch the boats sailing on the back porch.

7. I ordered a suitcase in a department store that is made of canvas.

8. Put the broom in the corner with the broken handle.

9. This plant is of great medicinal value with a peculiar odor.

10. Mr. Johnson advertised to hire for people to deliver groceries that have cars.

11. Take the dog to an animal hospital with a broken leg.

12. The google-eyed fish amused the boy in the glass bowl.

13. The man tipped his hat while passing us with his right hand.

14. The meat came in a can which we immediately cooked for lunch.

15. The woman climbed the ladder with a broken arm.

16. The fruit had been carefully wrapped in paper which we ate.

17. Take one of these powders on going to bed with a little hot water.

18. It is said that Lincoln wrote his most famous speech while he was riding to Gettysbury on a scrap of brown paper.

19. A wise person only knows that.

20. A baby grand piano was requested by a woman with three legs.
