
Learning Target

- Use various types of phrases to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.
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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). There are many different kinds of phrases. You can enliven your writing by using phrases to vary your syntax and add detail.

A **verbal** is a verb form that is used as a noun, adjective, or adverb. A **verbal phrase** is a word group that contains a verbal and its modifiers and complements and that acts as a noun, adjective, or adverb.

- A **participle** is a verb form, often ending in *-ing*, that can be used as an adjective. A **participial phrase** includes a participle and any modifiers or objects of the participle.

The skunk, **frightened by the dog**, sprayed him with foul-smelling musk. [*The phrase modifies skunk.*]

Smelling like a skunk, the distressed dog rolled and rolled in the grass. [*The phrase modifies dog.*]

- A **gerund** is a verb form ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun. A **gerund phrase** includes a gerund and any modifiers or objects of the gerund.

Spraying the dog made the dog and the shed and the yard smell bad. [*The phrase is a noun functioning as the subject.*]

The dog will never try **frightening a skunk again**. [*The phrase is a noun that is the direct object of will try.*]

- An **infinitive** is a verb form preceded by *to* that can be used as a noun, adjective, or adverb. An **infinitive phrase** includes an infinitive and any modifiers or objects of the infinitive.

You do not want **to smell that dog**. [*The phrase is a noun that is the direct object of do want.*]

I read that bathing the dog in tomato juice is one way **to remove the odor**. [*The phrase is an adjective modifying way.*]

Are you willing **to help me try that?** [*The phrase is an adverb modifying the adjective willing.*]

Check Your Understanding

A. Identify each boldface word group below as a *participial phrase*, a *gerund phrase*, or an *infinitive phrase*. Then say whether it functions as a noun, adjective, or adverb.

1. Do you like **to make stop-motion animations**?
2. I made one about a huge sea-creature **living in the ocean**.
3. **Scaring sharks** was its favorite pastime.
4. It also startled passengers on a boat **heading for Alcatraz**.
5. **To take enough photos for a three-minute clip** took a long time.

B. Revise each of the following sentences by adding at least two verbal phrases to add detail and make the sentences more interesting. You may have to reword the sentences to add some phrases. Underline the verbal phrases.

1. The children are going outside.
2. Are you excited?
3. The snake was slithering.
4. That building is ninety stories high.
5. My hard drive crashed.