# Expanding the Basic Patterns: Adding variety to your phrases

## Participial phrases, Gerunds, Infinitives and Appositives

Participial phrases: Phrases that start with words that *look like verbs* – aka., they have –en or –ing endings- but ACT AS ADJECTIVES: THEY MODIFY NOUNS.

Karen, ***having studied all night****,* felt confident.

Gerunds: Phrases that *look like* verbs – they start with what looks like a verb with an –ing ending – but ACT AS NOUNS.

***Skiing*** is an awesome hobby. ***Winning*** isn’t everything, it’s the only thing. His hobby is ***fishing***.

Infinitives: Phrases where the infinitive form of the verb – *to run, to jump, to + \_\_\_\_\_ -* ACTS AS THE NOUN or as the post-noun modifier, aka the ADJECTIVE.

***To err*** is human; to forgive, devine. The way ***to serve lobster*** is with drawn butter and lemon.

That was a nice thing ***to do.*** The party ***to honor senior athletes*** will be this Friday.

Appositives: Noun phrases that ACT AS ADJECTIVES, since they rename/ modify the subject or object noun.

My best friend***, Renee,*** competes in Figure. He gave it to the security guard***, an ex-Marine.***

**Exercises: Write correct versions of each exercise on another piece of paper.**

1. Add participial phrases correctly to the following sentences:

Ex: The man took my wallet.

The man ***wearing green pants*** took my wallet.

Or ***Sneaking behind me,*** the man took my wallet.

1. The students were nervous.
2. The hunter carefully stalked the leopard.
3. Fans lined up at the ticket counters.
4. A huge crowd watched the parade.
5. Joseph will someday be an engineer.

Wrong: Exhausted by the hot weather, there was nothing to do but lie in the shade.

Right: Exhausted by the hot weather, **we** couldn’t do anything but lie in the shade.

1. Fix the “dangling participals” – make sure the noun following the participial phrase and comma is the noun the participial is supposed to be modifying!
2. Having endured rain all week, the miserable weather didn’t surprise us.
3. Hiking five miles uphill, my backpack weighed a ton.
4. Guarding his bone like his last meal, it was fascinating to watch the dog react to strangers.
5. Waltzing gracefully, the band played as if we were the only couple on the floor.
6. Working ten hours a day, John’s novel was done in no time.
7. Replace the gerunds in the following sentences with nouns or noun phrases that complete the same sense.

Ex: Living in Manhattan is expensive.

Answer: The cost of rent and food in Manhattan is high.

1. His being angry surprised Mary.
2. Studying math gives me a headache.
3. Being an actor seems glamorous to many people outside the profession.
4. Jogging five miles a day is a boring but effective way of staying healthy.
5. Painting those cupboards purple was a big mistake.
6. Write three sentences where the subject noun is an infinitive phrase. Write two sentences where an infinitive phrase modifies a noun in the predicate.
7. Fix the sentences below by setting off the appositives with commas.
8. My husband Jack has been making wine for years .
9. John Barth’s first novel *The Floating Opera* is easy to read compared to his last one an exercise in mental gymnastics.
10. All the way across Kansas we followed a pack of highway monsters sixteen-wheelers carrying strange machinery.
11. The president’s last proposal an insult to the elderly was rejected by Congress.
12. Black lung an incurable respiratory disease affects countless Pennsylvanian coal miners.