

Dangling Modifiers

Pre-Test

A score of 90% or better on this test indicates mastery of the skills for which this test has been designed.

DIRECTIONS: In the blank to the left of the sentence, write **C** if the sentence is correct and **DM** if the sentence contains a dangling modifier.

EXAMPLE: DM Working on the car, the hood fell on my hand.

- 1. Studying the assignment carefully, several problems became obvious.
- 2. Written in secret code, Ted had to decipher the message before he could understand it.
- 3. Intended to provide relaxation, the music seemed to distract my attention when I took a test.
- 4. As a child, my parents gave me many elaborate and expensive gifts.
- 5. Hampered by strong winds, I was unable to row the boat to shore.
- 6. Walking home from the store, the grocery bag broke and slipped from my arms.
- 7. To prepare this meal, only a few ingredients are needed.
- 8. While driving down the highway, a deer jumped in front of the car.
- 9. My cat slept in my lap while writing my essay for English.
- 10. Having cleaned the kitchen, the house was in order again.

Answers on the last page

Dangling modifiers are phrases or clauses which do not clearly relate to the word or words modified. In most instances, the modifier appears at the beginning of the sentence, although it can also appear at the end of the sentence.

In the following examples, the dangling modifiers are underlined and arrows point to the words modified.

EXAMPLE:

1. As a child, my parents gave me many elaborate and expensive gifts.

The meaning of the sentence is inaccurate and ludicrous.

REVISONS:

- 1a. When I was a child, my parents gave me many elaborate and expensive gifts.

OR

- 1b. As a child, I received many elaborate and expensive gifts from my parents.

EXAMPLE:

2. Written in secret code, Ted had to decipher the message before he could understand it.

Was Ted written in code? Again, the meaning of the sentence is ludicrous.

REVISONS:

- 2a. Written in secret code, the message had to be deciphered before Ted could read it.

OR

- 2b. Before Ted could read the message written in secret code, he had to decipher it.

EXAMPLE:

3. My cat slept in my lap while writing my essay for English.

REVISION:

3a. My cat slept in my lap while I wrote my essay for English.

EXAMPLE:

4. To prepare this meal, only a few ingredients are needed.

Did the ingredients prepare the meal?

REVISION:

4a. To prepare this meal, a person needs only a few ingredients.

Post-Test

A score of 90% or better on this test indicates mastery of the skills for which this test has been designed.

DIRECTIONS: In the blank to the left of the sentence, write C if the sentence is correct and DM if the sentence contains a dangling modifier.

EXAMPLE: DM While playing the piano, my dog bowed to accompany me.

___ 1. Lost in a dense forest, my head began to ache, and I felt absolutely alone.

___ 2. Crouched to be the first runner out of the pack, the gun sounded, and the race had begun.

___ 3. To be hired for this job, an application must be submitted to Mr. J.B. Boomerang.

___ 4. Emily saw a policeman following her in the rear-view mirror.

- ___ 5. While placing the patient into the ambulance, the oil on the highway caused the medics to lose their footing.
- ___ 6. Tagging along behind me, the child cried all the way home.
- ___ 7. Destroyed in a raging fire, the wind whistled through the charred remains of the house.
- ___ 8. Speeding on the highway in a convertible with her top down, Mrs. Kelsey was oblivious to the wind blowing through her hair.
- ___ 9. While driving through Yosemite, the mountains seemed especially high.
- ___ 10. As the president of Cooney & Company, Responsibilities were overwhelming.

Answers on the last page

Pre-Test Answers

1. DM
2. DM
3. C
4. DM
5. C
6. DM
7. DM
8. DM
9. DM
10. DM

Post-Test Answers

1. DM
2. DM
3. DM
4. DM
5. DM
6. C
7. DM
8. DM
9. DM
10. DM