Using Adjectives and Adverbs

**Modifiers** are words that describe or give more specific information about the meanings of other words. Modifiers may function as adjectives or adverbs.

**Adjectives** modify nouns and pronouns. They answer the questions which one (that, this), what kind (blue, cool), how many (three, several), and how much (some, none).

Words classified as other parts of speech can also function as adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>circus tent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possessive Nouns and Pronouns</td>
<td>Shawn's drums, our town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite Pronouns</td>
<td>every performer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative Pronouns</td>
<td>that elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participles</td>
<td>trained monkeys, cheering crowds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>three, 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adverbs** modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They answer the questions when, where, how, and to what extent.

- **When?** The circus train arrived **today**.
- **Where?** Look up to see the trapeze artists.
- **How?** The crowd gathered **expectantly**.
- **To what extent?** The animals were **extremely** well trained.

**Identifying Adjectives and Adverbs**

Identify the boldfaced word as an adjective or an adverb. Write **ADJ** or **ADV** on the line.

1. “Come one, come all to the greatest show on Earth!” shouts the **enthusiastic** announcer at the circus.

2. The spectacle **now** known as the circus began thousands of years ago.

3. Roman games, which were similar to today's circuses, focused **mainly** on animal acts and daring horseback riding.

4. During the Middle Ages, jugglers and tightrope walkers **skillfully** performed on street corners.

5. **Those** performers also performed before the royalty of Europe in organized shows.

6. Modern circuses began in England in the 1700s when Philip Astley began a show of trick **horseback** riding accompanied by live music, all within a circular structure.

7. American showmen **soon** began to imitate Astley's Circus, adding more acts.

8. In the late 1700s, circuses began exhibiting **exotic** animals.

9. One of these **traveling** circuses was owned by P. T. Barnum, a famous showman.

10. At first, horse-drawn wagons **slowly** carried the circus from town to town.
Using Adjectives and Adverbs

A. Identifying Adjectives and the Words They Modify
Underline the adjective once and the word it modifies twice in each of the following sentences. Ignore articles and proper nouns.
2. This daring family of tightrope walkers put on an amazing show for decades.
3. Their famous act was their seven-person pyramid.
4. In this act, four men walked on the wire with a steel rod connecting them.
5. On the connecting rod stood two more men; another steel rod connected them, too.
6. At the very top of the pyramid was a young woman on a chair that rested on the second rod.
7. Their act, which was always performed without a safety net, may have been the most dangerous stunt in the history of the circus.
8. Different members of the extended family took part in this incredible feat over the years.
9. Unfortunately, the act had more than its fair share of disastrous results.
10. For example, in 1962, in the middle of the act, one member of the famous troupe lost his balance, and the whole pyramid collapsed.
11. Two members were killed and one was paralyzed for life in that tragic fall.

B. Identifying Adverbs and the Words They Modify
Underline the word modified by each boldfaced adverb. Then in the blank after each sentence, identify the part of speech of the modified word. Write V for verb, ADJ for adjective, or ADV for adverb.

Never look directly at the sun during an eclipse. ___ V ___
1. An extremely strong wind overturned the park bench.

2. “I never could do that!” exclaimed Helen.

3. The firefighter moved very cautiously through the blackened building.

4. We searched everywhere for the missing photos.

5. Hank drove more slowly as we continued up the winding road.

6. As we reached the stadium, we gasped at the unusually large crowd of fans waiting in line.

7. The small, barely red strawberries were not ripe enough to pick.

8. Please go to the library now for the information you need.

9. After he completed the first problem, he worked the next one much faster.

10. Marta jogs two miles daily in any weather.
Using Adjectives and Adverbs

A. Writing Subjects and Predicates

Complete each of the following sentences by writing an adjective or an adverb in the blank. Then write ADJ or ADV on the line to identify your word.

1. Transporting an entire circus from city to city is a ____________ task. [ADJ]

2. Smaller circuses, which travel by truck, give ______________ performances within a certain area. [ADV]

3. They may perform in a different city ______________ every day. [ADJ]

4. _______________ performer and worker pitches in where needed. [ADJ]

5. Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey uses railroad cars to travel ______________ distances. [ADJ]

6. There are _______________ units, a Red and a Blue, which follow their own routes. [ADJ]

7. Each unit puts on _______________, performances with plenty of clowns, wild animals, and other acts. [ADV]

8. Behind the scenes, the performers live in a _______________ organized environment. [ADV]

9. The circus _______________ has a community kitchen, medical facilities, and a post office. [ADJ]

10. The circus workers and performers live together _______________ closely, and this closeness makes them feel more like a family than a business. [ADV]

B. Writing with Adjectives and Adverbs

Often, music concerts of today are as spectacular as the circus used to be. Performers still try to dazzle and amaze audiences with special effects and lighting. On the lines below, describe a live concert by a popular singer or band. You could choose to describe the audience, the hall, or the performers themselves. Use at least six adjectives and six adverbs in your description.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________