

# Misplaced Modifiers

A modifier is a word or phrase that provides description in a sentence. Modifiers should be positioned as closely as possible to the word they modify—if not, things get confusing:

**For example, the following have misplaced modifiers:**

I found a silver woman's ring in the cafeteria. *Is the woman silver or the ring?*

**Better:** I found a woman's silver ring in the cafeteria.

Attached to the email, my boss sent me a file to work on at home. *Is the boss attached to the email?*

**Better:** My boss attached a file to the email, so I could do my work at home.

We ate our lunch while we rode the bus quickly. *Did you ride quickly or eat quickly?*

**Better:** We quickly ate our lunch while we rode the bus.

I only paid five dollars for the lesson. *You only paid or the lesson was only five dollars?*

**Better:** I paid only five dollars for the lesson.

# Dangling Modifiers

Modifiers “dangle” when they have no clear reference. They usually appear at the beginning of a sentence, and cannot be fixed by just moving them to another place in the sentence. This is because they need a specific reference.

**For example, the following have dangling modifiers:**

With a cry of rage, the paper was torn in two. *Paper can't cry!*

**Better:** Julian, with a cry of rage, tore the paper in two.

When only two years old, my parents moved our family to a new town. *Your parents were two?*

**Better:** When I was only two years old, my parents moved to a new town.

With a loud yawn, the book was placed on the bed side table. *The book yawned?*

**Better:** With a loud yawn, Lacey placed the book on the bed side table.

# MISPLACED MODIFIERS I

**1** On your task sheet, fix the following sentence:

Zach showed his mother his report card with a huge smile on his face.

# MISPLACED MODIFIERS I

**2** On your task sheet, fix the following sentence:

Charlotte took the book to class, which had fallen into the bathtub the night before.

# MISPLACED MODIFIERS I

**3** On your task sheet, fix the following sentences:

I almost read the whole book in one day.

# MISPLACED MODIFIERS I

**4** On your task sheet, fix the following sentence:

Sticking out the the mailbox, Sam found a package from his grandmother.

# DANGLING MODIFIERS I

**1** On your task sheet, fix the following sentence:

Tired from a sleepless night, a cup of strong coffee was a must.

# DANGLING MODIFIERS I

**2** On your task sheet, fix the following sentence:

Having missed the test, a note was required.

# DANGLING MODIFIERS I

**3** On your task sheet, fix the following sentences:

After visiting New York, Paris is more impressive.

# DANGLING MODIFIERS I

**4** On your task sheet, fix the following sentence:

Hard working and dedicated, Maria's attitude is had to beat.