

Gerund Phrases

- A gerund phrase consists of a gerund (an *-ing* form of a verb), its modifiers, and its complements. Like a gerund, a gerund phrase functions as a noun. In the first example, *writing* is a gerund used as the subject of the sentence. In the second sentence, *writing* begins a gerund phrase that is the subject of the sentence.

Gerund **Writing** became her passion when she young.

Gerund Phrase **Writing plays** became her passion when she young.

- Do not confuse a gerund with a present participle, which is also a verb form ending in *-ing*. A present participle functions as an adjective, not as a noun. In the following example, *writing* is a present participle that modifies *career*.

Present Participle In 1950 Lorraine Hansberry moved to New York to pursue a **writing** career.

Exercise: Recognizing Gerund Phrases

Underline the gerund phrases in the following sentences. If a sentence does not have a gerund phrase, write *None* after the sentence.

1. Reading "On Summer" was a delightful experience. _____
2. We enjoy the writing of Lorraine Hansberry. _____
3. Dressing sensibly in hot weather was important for her family. _____
4. She wrote that staying comfortable during the summers was nearly impossible. _____
5. Those sleeping in the park might find some relief from the heat. _____
6. Lorraine enjoyed driving slowly through Kentucky. _____
7. Her grandmother was always thinking about days gone by. _____
8. Spending time in Maine helped to change her notions about summer. _____
9. Her friend, fighting against cancer, showed great courage. _____
10. Meditating on that courage changed Hansberry's thinking. _____
11. Memories of spring became less important. _____
12. Recognizing the glories of summer represented a milestone in her life. _____
13. Autumn came to be regarded as a time for becoming melancholy. _____
14. The confining of people in their homes was blamed on the cold of winter. _____
15. Summer finally offered a time for living fully during the longest days of the year. _____