

The Noun Phrase

Recognize a *noun phrase* when you see one.

A noun phrase includes a noun—a person, place, or thing—and the modifiers which distinguish it.

You can find the noun **dog** in a sentence, for example, but you don't know which canine the writer means until you consider the entire noun phrase: **that dog, Aunt Audrey's dog, the dog on the sofa, the neighbor's dog that chases our cat, the dog digging in the new flower bed.**

Modifiers can come before or after the noun. Ones that come before might include articles, possessive nouns, possessive pronouns, adjectives, and/or participles.

Articles: *a* dog, *the* dog

Possessive nouns: *Aunt Audrey's* dog, the *neighbor's* dog, the police *officer's* dog

Possessive pronouns: *our* dog, *her* dog, *their* dog

Adjectives: *that* dog, the *big* dog, the *spotted* dog

Participles: the *drooling* dog, the *barking* dog, the well *trained* dog

Modifiers that come after the noun might include prepositional phrases, adjective clauses, participle phrases, and/or infinitives.

Prepositional phrases: a dog *on the loose*, the dog *in the front seat*, the dog *behind the fence*

Adjective clauses: The dog *that chases cats*, the dog *that looks lost*, the dog *that won the championship*

Participle phrases: The dog *whining for a treat*, the dog *clipped at the grooming salon*, the dog *walked daily*

Infinitives: The dog *to catch*, the dog *to train*, the dog *to adopt*

Less frequently, a noun phrase will have a pronoun as its base—a word like **we**, **everybody**, etc.—and the modifiers which distinguish it. Read these examples:

We who were green with envy

We = subject pronoun; **who were green with envy** = modifier.

Someone intelligent

Someone = indefinite pronoun; **intelligent** = modifier.

No one important

No one = indefinite pronoun; **important** = modifier.



chompchomp.com

©1997 - 2014 by Robin L. Simmons
All Rights Reserved.