

Name _____ Date _____ Per _____

Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

When modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) are out of place or too far away from the word they modify, the sentence will be awkward or confusing. These misplaced modifiers may be single words, phrases, or clauses.

MISPLACED WORDS:

The following words are often misplaced: almost, only, just, even, hardly, not, nearly, merely. Look at the following example to see the difference however slight.

Misplaced: My sister only has two children.

Correct: My sister has only two children.

Look at the following sentence pairs and underline the correct one.

1. My brother just listens to one radio station.
My brother listens to just one radio station.
2. Unfortunately, I can only take three students to the concert.
Unfortunately, I can take only three students to the concert.
3. I saw almost the whole movie, but I fell asleep around midnight.
I almost saw the whole movie, but I fell asleep around midnight.
4. There are only two parking spaces left in the lot.
There only are two parking spaces left in the lot.
5. I ate hardly any breakfast.
I hardly ate any breakfast.
6. I earn scarcely fifty dollars a week.
I earn fifty dollars a week scarcely.
7. We've almost found all the pieces to the puzzle.
We've found almost all the pieces to the puzzle.
8. She just went to the edge of the cliff to look over.
She went just to the edge of the cliff to look over.
9. Even more, not only is the young girl and her family's country battling . . .
Even more, the young girl and her family's country is not only battling . . .

A **dangling modifier** is an introductory word group that does not refer logically to the noun or pronoun that follows it. An example:

Misplaced: After watching the game, the snacks were put away.

Correct: After watching the game, we put away the snacks.

Look at the following sentences and correct the reference on the line following.

1. Swimming out into the sea, the current grew stronger.

2. When only a baby, Mom took me scuba diving.

3. The Honda was stalled on the road out of oil.

4. While taking a nap, the volcano erupted.

5. The tall boy led the parade with red hair.

6. Kathy donated a television to the Youth Center that she no longer used.

7. Driving in heavy traffic, my head started to ache.

8. Crossing the border, my bags were searched.

9. Planting vegetables, her knees got dirty.

10. Reaching the finals, the game was won by Fisher.
