Adjectives

1. Focus

Explain Adjectives

Say: Adjectives are words that describe, or modify, a noun. They tell what a person, place, animal, or thing is like. For example, let’s think about the sentence “I saw a big, gray whale.” The adjectives big and gray describe what the whale looks like.

Adjectives can also tell how many there are of something. For example, in the phrase six whales, the adjective six tells us how many whales there are. Adjectives are important parts of sentences when we want to describe how something or someone looks, acts, feels, sounds, or smells. Writers of informational reports use adjectives to make their information clear and precise.

Model Identifying Adjectives and Modified Nouns

Display the modeling text (without underlining) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read the text aloud to students.

Could you go for eight months without eating? If you were a gray whale you could. Gray whales do that every year when they migrate.

Modeling Text

Say: As I read this paragraph, I’m looking for adjectives, or words that describe a noun. I see the words eight months. The word months is the noun and the word eight tells us how many months, so it’s an adjective. In the next sentence, I see the words gray whale. The word gray is the adjective that tells what the whale looks like. In the last sentence, I see the adjective gray to describe whales. I also see the phrase every year. The adjective every tells me how many times or how often the whales migrate. The writer of this informational report uses adjectives to make the writing more interesting and informative. The adjectives help me understand specific information about the whales.
2. Rehearse

Practice Identifying Adjectives and Modified Nouns

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Read the text aloud to students.

Practice Text

In the fall, the first whales leave in a small group. These are the pregnant females. The babies will be born in the warm waters off the coast of Mexico. People think it’s a magnificent sight to see these huge whales swimming along the coast.

Invite students to work with a partner to read the practice text and identify the adjectives. Ask them to write down the adjectives and the nouns that the adjectives describe.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Adjectives and Modified Nouns

Invite students to share the adjectives and nouns they identified. Discuss their responses by asking the following questions:

• What adjectives did you find?
• What nouns do the adjectives describe?
• How did the adjectives help you to get a better picture of what the author was talking about?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that it’s important to use adjectives to describe things when we are writing informational reports. This makes our writing more interesting but it also makes the information more accurate for the reader.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and using adjectives, ask them to complete BLM 7.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud their answers to BLM 7. Use students’ answers to provide corrective feedback. Ask students to share what they learned about adjectives.

Strategies to Support ELs

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<tr>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Intermediate and Advanced</th>
<th>All Levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help beginning ELs understand how adjectives are used to describe a person, place, animal, or thing. Talk about a student, describing what the student looks like and what the student is wearing; for example, Louisa is tall; Louisa has dark hair; Louisa is wearing a red skirt, white blouse, etc. Ask students to describe what other students are wearing in any way they can, using gestures or words.</td>
<td>Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to complete the “Practice Identifying Adjectives and Modified Nouns” activity.</td>
<td>If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share this English/Spanish cognate: adjective/el adjetivo.</td>
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