

Unit 8: Verbals

Lesson 50

Participles and Participial Phrases

A **present participle** is formed by adding *-ing* to a verb. A **past participle** is usually formed by adding *-ed* to a verb. Sometimes a participle acts as the main verb in a verb phrase. As a verb, the present participle is used with forms of the helping verb *to be*, and the past participle is used with forms of the helping verb *to have*. A participle can also act as an adjective to describe, or modify, a noun or a pronoun.

The robin was **singing** in the tree. (present participle as a main verb)

Our cat stared at the **singing** robin. (present participle as an adjective)

Tammy has **tossed** the water balloon. (past participle as a main verb)

The **tossed** water balloon hit the sidewalk. (past participle as an adjective)

► **Exercise 1** Underline each participle. Write in the blank *pres.* if it is a present participle and *past* if it is a past participle.

- _____ pres. The running guard caught the pass from Troy.
- _____ 1. The nervous bird was pecking at the girl.
- _____ 2. A printout of the results has been taped to the door.
- _____ 3. The freezing lady put on her sweater.
- _____ 4. The spilled oil spread over the floor.
- _____ 5. By evening, they will have finished their assignment.
- _____ 6. Everyone has wondered what the great detective was thinking.
- _____ 7. Carol has rescued the trembling cat.
- _____ 8. The elected chairperson must work hard.
- _____ 9. David is throwing the rings at the milk bottles.
- _____ 10. They found out too late that they had entered by the wrong door.
- _____ 11. I made a running leap to clear the last hurdle.
- _____ 12. The engaging film star has smiled and posed for pictures.

Lesson 51**Gerunds and Gerund Phrases**

In addition to being used as an adjective (as in participles and participial phrases), a verb form ending in *-ing* may also serve as a noun. A **gerund** is a verb form that ends in *-ing* and is used as a noun. It can be the subject of a sentence, the direct object, or the object of a preposition.

Flying is a skill birds must learn. (subject)

Young birds practice **flying**. (direct object)

They can escape from dangers by **flying**. (object of a preposition)

A **gerund phrase** is a group of words that includes a gerund and other words that complete its meaning.

Flying in a storm takes practice. (subject)

Birds learn **flying in high winds** at a young age. (direct object)

Many birds owe their survival to **flying away from enemies**. (object of a preposition)

► **Exercise 1** Circle each gerund. Underline each gerund phrase.

One way people share good times is by observing holidays together.

1. Some people keep Valentine's Day by sending heart-shaped cards to friends.
2. Sharing valentines with others can brighten a wintry February day.
3. The custom of celebrating Valentine's Day stretches back a long way.
4. Many historians believe the holiday sprang from an ancient Roman custom of honoring two brothers by the name of Valentine.
5. Coloring eggs is an activity that belongs to another holiday.
6. Easter is often associated with the blooming of spring flowers.
7. In Christian traditions, Easter marks the rising of Jesus from the dead.
8. At the same time as Easter, Jews observe Passover by preparing a special meal, a *seder*.
9. By eating the special foods at the seder, Jews remember the flight of their ancestors from slavery in Egypt.

Lesson 52**Infinitives and Infinitive Phrases**

An **infinitive** is another verb form that may function as a noun. It may also function as an adjective or an adverb. An infinitive is formed from the word *to* followed by the base form of a verb. The word *to* is not a preposition when it is used immediately before a verb.

Jenny is always looking for a chance **to read**. (infinitive)

She goes **to the library** at least once a week. (not an infinitive; the word *to* is used as a preposition)

An infinitive used as a noun can be the subject of a sentence or the direct object of a verb.

To read is enjoyable. (subject) Jenny tries **to read** every day. (direct object)

An **infinitive phrase** is a group of words that includes an infinitive and other words that complete its meaning.

Jenny has decided **to read all of Sue Ellen Bridgers's books this summer**.

► **Exercise 1** Circle each infinitive. Underline each infinitive phrase.

My sister is teaching me to play chess.

1. Do you like to eat Chinese food?
2. It's hard to choose a video because the selection here is so large.
3. I'm lucky to go to such a good school.
4. My little brother finds it almost impossible to wait until his birthday.
5. To ignore a sore throat is not a very good idea.
6. We have to leave immediately to go to the meeting at the recreation center.
7. To win the last three games of the season will not be easy.
8. To get a *B* on the next test is her objective.
9. To grow a moustache in time for the play became my dad's plan.
10. Let's get together to watch old Laurel and Hardy movies.
11. I know how to fix the glitch in your computer program.
12. To take a cruise in the Caribbean would be wonderful.



Unit 8 Review

► **Exercise 1** Underline each participial, gerund, or infinitive phrase. Write in the blank what kind of phrase it is: *part.* for participial phrase, *ger.* for gerund phrase, or *inf.* for infinitive phrase. Write *none* if the sentence has none of these phrases.

- ger. _____ Lila greatly enjoys planting rose bushes.
- _____ 1. The news showed pictures of houses destroyed by the hurricane.
- _____ 2. Would you ever want to go on a two-week trip to Colorado?
- _____ 3. Taking it easy is my brother's idea of a good vacation.
- _____ 4. To eat too many desserts is not a very good idea.
- _____ 5. Rod is playing the piano in the school jazz band.
- _____ 6. Hearing my dad's voice on the phone, I answered quickly.
- _____ 7. She doesn't really enjoy working after school.
- _____ 8. Nicole was wondering which class would be better for her major.
- _____ 9. In soccer, players use their feet to do almost everything.
- _____ 10. Thomas prefers swimming in a pool rather than in the ocean.
- _____ 11. We opened the door for the carolers touring the neighborhood.
- _____ 12. We took the subway to Columbia Square.
- _____ 13. I have talked to almost everyone about the talent show.
- _____ 14. I love to watch the fireworks display on the Fourth of July.
- _____ 15. Accepted by every college she applied to, my sister must make a difficult decision.
- _____ 16. Deciding on one will be hard.
- _____ 17. Please take the laundry basket to the bedroom.
- _____ 18. Finishing all my homework by eight o'clock won't be easy.
- _____ 19. Do you want to go to the early movie or the late one?
- _____ 20. The dog lapping up water so fast must have been very thirsty.