

Expanded Noun Phrases

What Is a Noun Phrase?

A simple **noun phrase** is a group of words, including a noun, that form part of a sentence. The noun is the main word in the phrase and other words give information about it. For example:

a cat

his toy

those shoes

the house

two children

The example **noun phrases** above all contain a determiner and a noun to make a noun phrase. Most noun phrases contain a determiner. In the sentence below, the noun phrase is bold.

Bring **your children** with you.

What Is an Expanded Noun Phrase?

In an **expanded noun phrase**, other words and phrases are used to give further information about the noun in the sentence. This is usually done by adding **adjectives** to describe the noun in the noun phrase, for example:

She walked through the **dark, mysterious** forest.

In the example above, the noun phrase is 'the forest' and the words 'dark' and 'mysterious' have been used to expand the noun phrase.

Another noun can also be used to create an expanded noun phrase by giving more detail about the noun, such as:

a teacher = a **maths** teacher

a house = a **country** house

two trees = two **pine** trees

a ship = a **pirate** ship

Another way to create an **expanded noun phrase** is to add a prepositional phrase to add further information about the noun and to enable the writing to be more efficient. For example, where it takes two sentences to say:

The man was sat on the bench. He was wearing a red hat.

This can be written more succinctly by expanding the noun phrase with:

The man **with the red hat** sat on the bench.

You can use the resources in this category and the suggested keyword searches to help your child with expanded noun phrases at home. A range of ideas for games and activities to help your child learn how to use expanded noun phrases at home, both in their spoken language and in their writing, are outlined below.

Thesaurus Hunt

Introduce your child to a thesaurus and what it is used for. Think of a word and ask your child to find synonyms (other words that mean the same) in the thesaurus. Then challenge them to use one of the synonyms five times throughout the day. This will help broaden their vocabulary for descriptive writing.

How Many Adjectives?

To play this game, both take a sheet of paper and pick a theme to describe – such as a person or place. Set a time limit and both players write down as many adjectives as they can to describe the theme. Once the time is up, share the adjectives and count how many appropriate describing words each player has. The one with the most adjectives is the winner.

Read, Read, Read!

Sharing books together is the most powerful way for children to learn about language, spelling, grammar and punctuation. As you read together, identify examples of adjectives the writer has used to describe things in the book. Talk about how they help paint a picture in the readers mind.

Opposites

The aim of this game is to say an opposite adjective (an antonym). For example, if you said 'big', your child would say 'small'. Other examples include: tall/short, wet/dry, near/far, hungry/full, hot/cold, tired/awake.

Step 1

Looking at Examples of Expanded Noun Phrases

It's important for children to see examples of expanded noun phrases being used in context.

You can help your child at home by asking them to identify examples of expanded noun phrases when reading together. Discuss what image the description creates in the reader's mind (this will help them to think about the impact of the words they choose when writing). This activity booklet contains a variety of activities that focus on identifying expanded noun phrases to help your child at home.



Expanding Noun Phrases with Adjectives

Children will now be introduced to expanded noun phrases (words and phrases used to give further information about the noun in the sentence), such as:

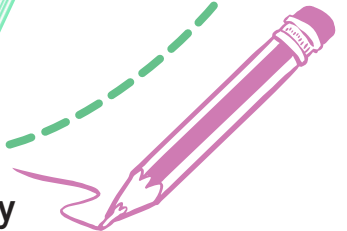
- the ferocious lion
- a small child
- a red apple

You could provide your child with a selection of adjectives and ask them to think of their own noun phrases to describe something in a picture – that could be a character, an item or a place. Alternatively, you could give your child an expanded noun phrase with the adjective missing and ask them to think of ideas for the missing adjective. You could use your child's storybooks for inspiration. For example:

The _____ witch soared through the sky.

In the above example, a space has been left for the adjective. Can your child think of suitable adjectives to fill in the gap? (Which adjective is most suitable could depend on the story – wicked, mischievous, happy, elated, etc.)

Step 2



Step 3

Writing Expanded Noun Phrases Independently

Once children have seen lots of examples of expanded noun phrases and have started adding appropriate adjectives to expanded noun phrases, the next step is to write some of their own. It can be helpful for children to write a plan before they start writing a piece of descriptive writing. In their plan, they could write down adjectives and expanded noun phrases that they would like to include in their story.

Read this exciting story starter together and discuss what could happen next with your child. Then, ask them to think of adjectives and expanded noun phrases they'd like to use when finishing the story and write them down. Discussing your child's ideas with them will really help them to think about their use of description and descriptive writing.

