

SPaG Exercises: Adverbials
Objective 1: To identify adverbials in a passage

1. Underline the adverbials (prepositional phrases or noun phrases used as adverbs) in this passage. The first 4 are done for you. There are 2 more.

A mech is a giant robot, about the same size as a bus. Mechs are always bigger than people since they carry a pilot in a small cabin. On rare occasions, they control themselves like Transformers do. Obviously, when mechs were first invented, this was totally impossible, because artificial intelligence was not around then. Most mechs walk slowly, but can fly fairly quickly. Mechs were invented in England. They were created below the workshop of a master mechanic. Mechs were invented by Johnny Steam. Johnny made the first mech in the year 3000, because he wanted to escape his life.

There are 6 adverbials: all prepositional phrases. Did you spot them?

2. Underline the adverbials (prepositional phrases or noun phrases used as adverbs) in this passage.

A pauper's son, Johnny Steam is a mechanic's apprentice. Johnny's master makes him work ridiculously hard. He regularly has to work more than 12 hours before his master will let him eat. Johnny's master makes him lift extremely heavy machinery with no assistance. After sunrise, he works in the basement and brings parts upstairs to the workshop when his master needs them. He also lives in the basement, because his master doesn't want anyone to see him. Johnny's face is always really greasy, his ears are big and red because his master shouts in them so much. With all this, Johnny works incredibly happily. Why?

There are 5 adverbials: all prepositional phrases.

3. Underline the adverbials (prepositional phrases or noun phrases used as adverbs) in this passage.

Mary-Ann, the master's daughter, always brings little Johnny Steam his meal at sunset. "Amazingly, his ears seem to get bigger and redder every day," she thinks, quietly and happily to herself as she climbs down the steep stairs. She goes into the dark basement where Johnny is working. Voice quivering, Mary-Ann sings softly as Johnny eats so that he can be happy for a bit. All of Mary-Ann's songs are quite silly, since she likes the sillier kind of songs. One day she sings a particularly funny song and, in a fit of mirth, Johnny accidentally spits his lunch everywhere. Mary-Ann runs hurriedly away when the master comes to shout at Johnny.

There are 8 adverbials: 6 prepositional phrases and 2 noun phrases.

4. Underline the adverbials (prepositional phrases or noun phrases used as adverbs) in this passage.

Between his massive and glowingly red ears, Johnny has a secret plan. Down in the dark basement, he is making something. Unbelievably, Johnny is actually building a giant person out of mechanical parts. A while ago, he had nearly finished but then, unfortunately, he had to wait for a year until the last part he needed finally arrived. Eventually, he got hold of it. At lunchtime he asked Mary-Ann if she wanted to escape with him inside a giant metal person, around tea-time. She said, "Sure." At tea-time Mary-Ann went down the stairs for the last time. The mech was waking up loudly. The master was shouting because he could hear a commotion. The mech, with Johnny and Mary-Ann on board, smashed through the basement and workshop easily, then flew off into the sky.

There are 13 adverbials, all prepositional phrases.