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### Student Samples Phrase Poetry

*Wild eyes glancing every which way  
Uncanny ears listening to every small squeak,  
Brain thinking of wondrous ways to catch its prey  
the owl hunted  
in the sky  
on the ground  
in the dark  
in the hope  
of catching his supper*

(Michael Delong, Grade 6)

*His cloak billowing in the biting wind,  
his eyes dry from the frigid temperature,  
his boots crunching over the new snow,  
he marched to the battlefield  
sword drawn,  
muscles tensed  
ears cocked  
focus narrowed  
with fire in his eyes.*

(Whit Shaw, Grade 6)

*His blue sail tightening in the wind,  
his mouth salty like the sea,  
his legs shivering like a person's bare hand on ice,  
the sailor watched  
in his boat  
in the harbor  
in the fear  
in the mind  
of the sailor.*

(Charlie Goodman, Grade 6)



*Her beautiful wings noiselessly flapping,  
her eyes shining brightly  
her feathers ruffling with the light wind,  
the dove slipped swiftly through the night sky  
in the dark  
with only the light of the moon to guide her  
the ground rushing by  
the clouds way up high  
on the way to her loved ones.*

(Andrew Pansick, Grade 6)

*The engine smoking with anxiety,  
its ports firing with might,  
its driveshaft ready for action  
the engine screamed  
on the track  
in the moonlight  
in the glory  
in the grief  
for the love of his owner  
for one last race.*

(Beau Falgout, Grade 6)

*Her burning dress tasting the air,  
Her feet jumping like cross country runners'  
Her arms tensed like after a fencing match  
She ran down the path  
in the woods  
in the sunset  
in the dark  
on the ground  
of her loneliness.*

(Andrew Harris, Grade 6)

*His head sweating  
His mouth dry  
His heart racing with every step he took,  
the gladiator walked  
into the arena  
to the tigers*

*to the lions  
to his adversaries  
to his death.*

(Brian Cummisky, Grade 6)

*His forest green cloak sticking to his fur,  
his sweat burning his eyes,  
his sword glistening in the moonlight,  
Matthias the Mouse struck  
with the sword  
of the warrior Martin  
in the dead of night  
in the rain  
for the love of his home.*

(Adam Genecov, Grade 6)

*His hands throbbing  
his legs shaking  
his fingers tingling,  
the boy walked into the castle  
on Halloween  
in the dark  
by himself  
with no protection  
from his fears.*

(Jeff Scovell, Grade 6)

*Her silky dog hair blowing in the wind,  
her bloodshot eyes burning like flames of a fire,  
her head bobbing like a ship at sea,  
the dog walked quickly  
in the woods  
in the dark  
in the light of the moon  
in the heat of the fire  
of her anger.*

(Justin Utay, Grade 6)



## The Poetry of Phrases Foundation Lesson

Using the “Phrase Toolbox” as a resource, try writing poems that have the following grammatical structures. Choose a different subject each time you write one.

### Pattern #1

absolute phrase  
absolute phrase  
absolute phrase

independent clause  
prepositional phrase  
prepositional phrase  
prepositional phrase  
prepositional phrase  
prepositional phrase

*Example:*

*His glowing fur ruffling in the breeze  
his eyes burning like coals  
his muscles rippling like ocean waves  
the tiger paced  
in the cage  
in the night  
in the gloom  
in the fire  
of his rage.*

### Pattern #2

gerund phrase as the subject  
finish the sentence with a rhyme.  
gerund phrase as the subject  
finish the sentence with a rhyme  
gerund phrase as the subject  
finish the sentence with a rhyme.  
gerund phrase as the subject  
finish the sentence with a rhyme.

Example:

*Toasting in the hot sun  
is a lot of fun.  
Dipping in the crystal fountain  
seems better than climbing a mountain.  
Sipping on an icy drink  
lets you hear the sound of a refreshing clink.  
Relaxing with good friends  
is the way a summer day ends.*

### Pattern #3

independent clause with an appositive phrase in it  
participial phrase  
participial phrase  
participial phrase  
participial phrase  
participial phrase

Example:

*The sky, a dark cauldron full of storm clouds, boils and bubbles,  
sparkling with lightening  
glittering with glimpses of stars  
shrouded in fog  
crackling with electricity  
waiting for the storm to burst.*

### Pattern #4

a subordinate clause  
an independent clause  
an infinitive phrase and a prepositional phrase  
an infinitive phrase and a prepositional phrase  
an infinitive phrase and a prepositional phrase  
an infinitive phrase and a prepositional phrase  
a final independent clause.

Example:

*When I grow up  
I want  
To dance over a rainbow  
To climb above the clouds  
To soar beside the birds  
To sail with the stars  
These are the dreams of my heart.*



## Phrase Toolbox

**Phrases** are groups of words that do not contain both a subject and a verb. Collectively, the words in the phrases function as a single part of speech.

### Prepositional phrase

A preposition plus its object and modifiers.

### Prepositions

To, around, under, over, like, as, behind, with, outside, etc.

**Prepositional phrases** may function as adjectives or as adverbs.

### Adjective prepositional phrase

Adjective prepositional phrases tell *which one*, *what kind*, *how many*, and *how much*, or give other information about a noun, a pronoun, a noun phrase or a noun clause.

*The store **around the corner** is painted green.* (Which store is it? The store around the corner.)

*The girl **with the blue hair** is angry.*

### Adverb prepositional phrase

Adverb prepositional phrases tell *how*, *when*, *where*, *why*, *to what extent*, or *under what condition* about a verb, an adjective, an adverb, an adverb phrase, or an adverb clause.

*Oscar is painting his house **with the help of his friends**.* (How is he painting his house? With the help of his friends.)

*Sally is coloring **outside the lines**.*

### Infinitive phrase

The word “to” plus a verb. Infinitive phrases can function as adjectives, adverbs, or nouns.

***To dance gracefully** is my ambition.* (subject of sentence)

*Her plan **to become a millionaire** fell through when the stock market crashed.* (modifies plan; functions as an adjective)

*She wanted **to become a veterinarian**.* (noun – direct object of “wanted”)

*John went to college **to study engineering**.* (tells why he went, so it’s an adverb)

### Appositive phrase

Renames, or identifies, a noun or pronoun. When it adds information that is nonessential, it is set off by commas.

*My teacher, **a woman with curly hair**, is very fat.*

*Bowser, **the dog with the sharp teeth**, is coming around the corner.*

### Participial phrase

A participle is a verb form (past or present) functioning like an adjective. The phrase is the participle plus its modifiers.

**Blinded by the light**, Sarah walked into the concert hall.

**Swimming for his life**, John crossed the English Channel.

A **gerund** is an “-ing” verb form functioning as a noun. The phrase is the gerund plus its complements and modifiers.

**Walking in the moonlight** is a romantic way to end a date. (subject of a sentence)

He particularly enjoyed **walking in the moonlight with his girlfriend**. (direct object)

He wrote a poem about **walking in the moonlight**. (object of the preposition)

**Walking the dog** is not my favorite task. (subject)

**An absolute phrase** (also called a *nominative absolute*) is a group of words consisting of a noun or pronoun, an “ing” or “ed” verb form, and any related modifiers. Absolute phrases modify the whole sentence rather than a particular part of it. They are always set off from the rest of the sentence with a comma or pair of commas (or dashes) because they are parenthetical elements. An absolute phrase, very simply put, contains a noun or pronoun followed by a participle. Absolute phrases are valuable in constructing concise, layered sentences.

**Their minds whirling from the avalanche of information provided by their teacher**, the students made their way thoughtfully to the parking lot.

**His head pounding, his hands shaking, his heart filled with trepidation**, the young man knelt and proposed marriage to his sweetheart.

The two lovers walked through the garden, **their faces reflecting the moonlight, their arms twined about each other, their footsteps echoing in the stillness of the night**.

**Note:** An independent clause has a subject and a verb and can stand alone as a sentence. A dependent, or subordinate, clause, has a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought. It often begins with a subordinating conjunction such as *when*, *because*, *although*, *while*, *since*, etc.





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