

TO THE TEACHER

LESSON 16 DESCRIBERS

You can spend as much time on describers as you want. The vocabulary is endless and fun. English describers don't have to "agree" with their subjects in person or number. We don't care if they're "feminine" or "masculine." We don't care if the nouns that they describe are singular, plural, or uncountable. ☺

Confusion:

Most people don't realize that there is an order to describers in English. Sometimes that's why something sounds odd. The Noun Box Game (see below) works on this.

The only other confusing thing for some students is that you can't add an "s" to a describer.

Two **millions** dollars, some **differents** books, her eight-**years**-old son.....

Prepositional phrases

It's worth mentioning at this point that lot's of noun boxes have prepositional phrases (post-modifiers), and that the job of the prepositional phrase is to describe the main subject. They're just big describers. They are the subject of Lesson 17. You can always underline them and tell the students who aren't there yet to ignore them, or you can set off the prepositions to help them identify the noun boxes that always come after them.

Dt Ds * VXS Ds
 The chicken soup on the stove smells delicious.

Dt Ds * pr Dt * VXS Ds
 The chicken soup <on | the stove> smells delicious.
 (*Chicken* is a pre-modifier; *on the stove* is a post-modifier. It's all about the SOUP)

Practice The NOUN BOX GAME - describer order

The noun box game is for vocabulary and to reinforce the word order of describers. There are two versions of the NOUN BOX GAME now. One was designed for students who are planning to be designers (Parsons hopefuls) and the vocabulary follows. The other is

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more generic. You can make your own set with words that are useful for your students. There's no need to do it on the computer, just write on different colors of card stock or index cards. You can find a link to the ones I made at [Additional Activities](#).

Practice Put any noun on the board or use something in the classroom as a subject (someone's shoes, a poster, a water bottle, the weather) and ask pairs to come up with describers.

Practice Have students read any writing assignment that they're working on. Their task is to add 3 appropriate describers.