

Name _____

Date _____

Participial Phrases

Definition

A **participial phrase** is a group of words beginning with a participle (a verb form ending in -ing or -ed/-en) and functioning as an adjective. It includes the participle and any modifiers or objects that complete its meaning.

Example

Example	Participle Type	Modifies
Running through the park, the dog chased a squirrel.	present (-ing)	dog
Exhausted from the long journey, the travelers rested.	past (-ed)	travelers
The student, carrying a heavy backpack, hurried to class.	present (-ing)	student
Broken during the move, the vase could not be repaired.	past (-en)	vase
She noticed the child sitting quietly in the corner.	present (-ing)	child

Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

1. Identify the participial phrase in the following sentence:

Retreating northward during the last ice age, massive glaciers carved out the basins that would become the Great Lakes.

- A. Massive glaciers carved out
- B. Retreating northward during the last ice age
- C. That would become the Great Lakes
- D. During the last ice age

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2. In the sentence "The Great Lakes, formed by glacial activity approximately 14,000 years ago, contain about 20% of Earth's fresh surface water," what does the participial phrase modify?

- A. Glacial activity
- B. The Great Lakes
- C. Earth's fresh surface water
- D. 14,000 years ago

3. Which sentence contains a present participial phrase?

- A. Lake Superior, measured as the largest freshwater lake by surface area, was formed by ancient glacial movements.
- B. Scientists studying the Great Lakes have discovered evidence of multiple glacial advances and retreats.
- C. The glaciers advanced slowly across North America during the Pleistocene epoch.
- D. Carved by ice sheets over one mile thick, the Great Lakes region features unique geological formations.

4. In the sentence "Moving like enormous bulldozers, ancient glaciers scraped away soil and rock, eventually creating the Great Lakes basin," what function does the participial phrase serve?

- A. It acts as the subject of the sentence
- B. It modifies "glaciers" by describing how they moved
- C. It serves as the direct object of the sentence
- D. It modifies "soil and rock" by explaining their origin

5. Which sentence contains a misplaced participial phrase?

- A. Melting gradually over thousands of years, the glaciers left behind five distinct lake basins.
- B. The scientists discovered ancient shorelines, revealing fluctuating water levels over time.
- C. Flowing between Lakes Huron and Erie, tourists often photograph the St. Clair River.
- D. Shaped by glacial forces, the Great Lakes coastlines feature diverse geological formations.

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Part 2: Fill in the Blank

Complete each sentence with an appropriate participial phrase about the glacial origins of the Great Lakes.

1. _____, Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are technically one continuous body of water.
2. The Great Lakes basin, _____, supports a diverse ecosystem of plants and animals.
3. _____, geologists have mapped the ancient boundaries of glacial lakes Agassiz and Iroquois.
4. Sediment cores from the lake bottom, _____, provide crucial climate data from the last ice age.
5. _____, sand dunes along Lake Michigan's eastern shore rank among the largest freshwater dune systems in the world.

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Participial Phrases – Answer Key

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. B. Retreating northward during the last ice age (This is the participial phrase beginning with the present participle "retreating")
2. B. The Great Lakes (The participial phrase "formed by glacial activity approximately 14,000 years ago" describes the Great Lakes)
3. B. Scientists studying the Great Lakes have discovered evidence of multiple glacial advances and retreats. ("Studying the Great Lakes" is a present participial phrase)
4. B. It modifies "glaciers" by describing how they moved (The participial phrase "Moving like enormous bulldozers" describes the glaciers)
5. C. Flowing between Lakes Huron and Erie, tourists often photograph the St. Clair River. (This is a dangling participial phrase; "flowing" appears to modify "tourists" but should modify "the St. Clair River")

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

1. Connected by the Straits of Mackinac (A past participial phrase describing the physical connection)
2. carved by massive ice sheets over 10,000 years ago (A past participial phrase describing the formation)
3. Using advanced mapping technologies (A present participial phrase describing how geologists conducted their work)
4. collected through carefully planned drilling operations (A past participial phrase describing how the cores were obtained)
5. Created by wind and wave action over thousands of years (A past participial phrase explaining the dunes' formation)