

Name _____

Date _____

Absolute Phrases

Definition

Absolute phrases are groups of words that include a noun/pronoun and a participle but don't connect grammatically to the rest of the sentence. They modify the entire sentence by providing details about time, cause, condition, or circumstance.

Example

Example	Noun/ Pronoun	Participle	Information Added
Her work finished, she left the office.	work	finished	circumstance/time
The rain pouring down, we cancelled the picnic.	rain	pouring	cause
His eyes focused on the target, the archer released the arrow.	eyes	focused	circumstance
Their vacation plans ruined, the family stayed home.	plans	ruined	reason/cause

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Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

1. Identify the absolute phrase in the following sentence:
The ancient glacier slowly retreating, the U-shaped valley began to fill with seawater, forming what we now call a fjord.

- A. The ancient glacier slowly retreating
- B. The U-shaped valley began to fill
- C. With seawater, forming what we now call
- D. What we now call a fjord

2. In the sentence "Its massive weight compressing the rock beneath, the glacier carved away at the mountainside for thousands of years," what relationship does the absolute phrase establish?

- A. Time sequence
- B. Cause and effect
- C. Condition
- D. Contrast

3. Which sentence contains a correctly formed absolute phrase?

- A. The fjord's steep walls stand dramatically above the water line.
- B. Glaciers moved through the valley and carved the deep basin.
- C. The hikers walked carefully on the slippery rocks.
- D. The water reaching depths of over 1,000 meters, Norway's Sognefjord ranks among the deepest fjords in the world.

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Part 2: Fill in the Blank

Complete each sentence with an appropriate absolute phrase related to fjord formation through glacial erosion. Each blank requires a different absolute phrase.

1. _____, the narrow inlet displays the classic U-shaped profile characteristic of fjords worldwide.

2. The fjord extends inland for over 200 kilometers, _____.

3. _____, scientists can estimate the former thickness of the ice sheet that created Norway's famous fjords.

4. The tributary glaciers carved smaller valleys along the main fjord, _____.

5. _____, the retreating glacier left behind a terminal moraine that now forms a threshold at the fjord's entrance.

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Absolute Phrases – Answer Key

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. A. The ancient glacier slowly retreating (This is the absolute phrase with the noun "glacier" and participle "retreating")
2. B. Cause and effect (The absolute phrase explains how/why the glacier carved the mountainside)
3. D. The water reaching depths of over 1,000 meters, Norway's Sognefjord ranks among the deepest fjords in the world. (Contains proper absolute phrase structure with noun "water" and participle "reaching")
4. C. The fjord's waters reflect the surrounding mountains, their surfaces perfectly calm in the early morning. (The absolute phrase "their surfaces perfectly calm in the early morning" appears at the end)
5. C. The fjord stretched for kilometers into the mainland (This is a complete clause with subject and verb, not an absolute phrase)

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

1. Possible answer: Its walls carved by ancient ice movement (or) The original valley deepened by glacial processes
2. Possible answer: its dramatic cliffs rising vertically from the water (or) its depth reaching more than 1,300 meters in some sections
3. Possible answer: The striations clearly visible on the rock faces (or) The depth of erosion calculated from surrounding plateaus
4. Possible answer: their mouths hanging high above the main valley floor (or) their distinctive shapes revealing different rates of erosion
5. Possible answer: Its erosive power finally diminished (or) Tons of rock and sediment deposited at its terminus