

The Gerund and the Present Participle

Grammar Lesson

Uses of the gerund and the present participle

Study these examples and complete the table that follows

1. I usually go **shopping** at the weekend.
2. Jane spends a lot of time in the kitchen because she likes **cooking**.
3. **Swimming** is my favorite sport.
4. **Flying** fascinates me very much.
5. Anne was talking to her friend by the **swimming** pool.
6. I need to buy all the **cooking** equipment for the restaurant.
7. **Singing** makes me feel relieved.
8. I can't believe that tomorrow I will be **swimming** in the Mediterranean.
9. Liz was **singing** when she was taking a shower.
10. I am entering the next **singing** contest at our school.
11. I have been **cooking** all day and I still haven't finished.
12. I dreamed of **flying** pigs yesterday.
13. The birds are **flying** in the sky.

Nouns	Adjectives	Part of a continuous tense

Now complete the following grammar rules:

Gerunds are words in the –ing form that take the place of _____, which means that gerunds can be subjects and objects.

Present participles are words in the —ing form that are either _____ or _____.

Other uses of –ing words

Reduced relative clause

The present participle can substitute a complete relative clause. This is possible when the relative clause starts by which (is/are) or that (is/are).

- The man standing by the shop is my friend.

Instead of

- The man who is standing by the shop is my friend.

Another example:

- The decision giving more authorities to the government officials is wrong.

Instead of

- The decision that gives more authorities to government officials is wrong.

Object of the preposition

Some prepositions in English take –ing words after them. The –ing form that comes after a preposition is object of the preposition.

- He is interested in watching documentaries.
- Databases are used for storing information.

Practice

A. State whether the underlined words in the following sentences are gerunds, adjectives, progressive tense or reduced relative clauses.

1. Learning is not specific to human beings alone. 2. Interesting Debate about the capacity of animals of 3. learning new gestures and practices has been 4. going on for quite some time now and many discoveries related to this issue have been made. 5. Studying human behavior has revealed the abilities of monkeys to communicate with humans. One of the scientists 6. studying the possibility of learning sign language by monkeys says that there are signs 7. revealing that this could be possible; however, results are yet to be reached. In a similar context, many researchers have been 8. conducting studies on parrots and their possible capacity of 9. learning to speak like humans. Since parrots can produce human-like sounds, there might be some possibility of having a mechanism of 10. learning communication in addition to 11. imitating sounds. There is a 12. growing belief among researchers that the mechanism 13. monitoring sound production in the brain of a parrot might have some link with a brain area responsible for learning language.

B. Rewrite the following sentences using the –ing form whenever possible. You may change the structure of the sentence.

1. The woman who is talking to my daughter is my co-worker.
2. It is very important to understand the rules of English grammar.
3. After you read the story, you will become interested in it.
4. I read books. It is my favorite pastime.
5. Don't watch TV a lot; it can be harmful to your eyes.
6. My cousin and I go out a lot. It is almost all we do when we go on holiday.
7. The teacher told us to do our homework regularly in order for us to learn.
8. I have to write too many emails, which makes me feel tired.

C. Write six sentences in which you use the –ing form as a gerund, an adjective, and part of a progressive tense.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Key to Exercises

A. State whether the underlined words in the following sentences are gerunds, adjectives, progressive tense or reduced relative clauses.

1. Gerund
2. Adjective
3. Gerund (object of the preposition)
4. Progressive tense
5. Gerund
6. Reduced relative clause
7. Reduced relative clause
8. Present perfect progressive
9. Gerund (object of preposition)
10. Gerund (object of preposition)
11. Gerund (object of preposition)
12. Adjective
13. Reduced relative clause

B. Rewrite the following sentences using the –ing form whenever possible. You may change the structure of the sentence.

1. The woman talking to my daughter is my co-worker.
2. Understanding the rules of English grammar is very important.
3. You will become interested in the story after reading it.
4. Reading books is my favorite pastime.
5. Watching TV a lot can be harmful to your eyes.
6. Going out a lot is almost all we do when we go on holiday.
7. Doing our homework regularly is what the teacher told us to do in order for us to learn.
8. Having to write too many emails makes me feel tired.

C. Write six sentences in which you use the –ing form as a gerund, an adjective, and part of a progressive tense.

Different sentences are possible here.