**Dangling or Misplaced Modifiers**

A modifier is a word or group of words meant to describe another word in a sentence. For clarity, the modifier or modifying phrase should be placed as close to the word it is modifying as possible.

**Placement of the adverbial modifier**

Some adverbial modifiers enjoy a loose placement order: only, nearly, almost, and hardly. However, placement of the modifier can change or confuse the meaning of the sentence.

**Ex:** Only I want to ride that horse.

(\textit{I am the only one who wants to ride that horse.})

**Ex:** I only want to ride that horse.

(\textit{Riding the horse is the only thing I want.})

**Ex:** I want to ride only that horse.

(\textit{I want to ride that horse and no other.})

Any of these sentences is grammatically correct. Nonetheless, the author should choose which meaning he actually intends and proceed accordingly for the clarity of the sentence.

**Ex:** The friend I have lunch with occasionally tells me about his past adventures.

(\textit{Do I have lunch with him occasionally, or does he tell me stories occasionally?})

**Better:** The friend I have lunch with tells me occasionally about his past adventures.

**Squinting modifier**

A squinting modifier is placed between two phrases; it might be describing either one.

**Ex:** Throw Mama from the train a kiss.

(\textit{In this sentence, someone is throwing Mama from the train.})

**Better:** Throw Mama a kiss from the train.

**Ex:** In our tent, eating the bacon, was a large racoon.

(Exactly who was eating the bacon.)

**Better:** A large racoon was in our tent, eating the bacon.
Dangling modifier 1
A dangling modifier is a descriptive phrase which is placed too far from the word it is describing for clarity.

Ex: As a child, her grandmother took her to various museums.
(This sentence sounds like her grandmother was a child when she took her to various museums which is, of course, impossible.)
Better: Her grandmother took her to various museums as a child.

Ex: Burned to the ground, I could not recognize the historic building.
(This sentence actually states that I was burned to the ground, not the building.)
Better: I could not recognize the historic building which was burned to the ground.

Dangling modifier 2
In the following examples, the modifier or modifying phrase has no clear connection to any word in the main phrase.

Ex: Looking into the car’s history, it was obviously much more harshly used than the dealer admitted.
(In this sentence, nobody is actually doing the looking. The modifying phrase should have a subject.)
Better: After looking into the car’s history, Rodney realized that it had been much more harshly used than the dealer admitted.

Ex: To become a candidate, nominations must be obtained.
(Again, with this sentence, the modifying phrase has no connection to any word in the main phrase. We do not know who is becoming a candidate or who is obtaining the nominations.)
Better: To become a candidate, Rob knows he must obtain nominations.

References: