ADJECTIVE

A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing or event; a verb is a word that indicates an action or a state-of-being. Adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. Adjectives answer the following questions about nouns and pronouns.

- What kind? Example: She is gentle.
- What height? Example: Ade is short.
- What colour? Example: His car is red.
- What size? Example: The baby finished a big bowl of cereal.
- What shape? Example: This is a round table.
- Which one? Example: Wole Soyinka won a very important award.
- How many? Example: Three women are talking.
- How much? Example: There is ample cloth to make three dresses.

Types of Adjectives

Qualitative Adjectives: tell something about a quality that someone or something has. They include: new, huge, honest, rich, stupid.

Examples:

- He has bought a new car.
- The man is huge.
- She is a rich woman.

Classifying Adjectives: tell something about the group that someone or something belongs to. Take the noun "family", for example, there are different kinds of family – nuclear family, extended family, monogamous family, polygamous family. The adjectives *monogamous*, *polygamous*, *extended* and *nuclear* are examples of classifying adjectives.

Quantifying Adjectives: tell something about the amount of a thing. They are usually used for describing things which cannot be counted. They include: *some*, *little* and *enough*.

Examples:

- I have had enough food.

- I ate some bread.
- They have little money.

Colour Adjectives: tell you the colour of something. They include: green, blue, yellow, brown, etc.

Examples:

- She is wearing a bright yellow dress.
- He is holding a green and white flag.
- Ayuba has many brown shoes.

Number Adjectives: tell the exact number of persons or things. They can be used only for things which are countable and they tell you the order of persons or things. They include: cardinal numbers: one, two, three, etc., and ordinal numbers: first, second, eighteenth, etc.

Examples:

- I saw only two people.
- She was the first person to arrive.
- This is her fiftieth birthday.

Emphatic Adjectives: are the adjectives you use to emphasize your feelings about something or to emphasize the degree of something. They include: complete, utter, pure, total, serious.

Examples.

- He is an utter fool.
- The experience was pure magic.
- She made a serious mistake.

Interrogative Adjectives: are the adjectives one use to ask questions about the nouns or pronouns they qualify. They include: *which* and *what*.

Examples.

- Which car would you like to buy?
- What school did you attend?

Demonstrative Adjectives: are the adjectives you use to point out the nouns which they qualify. Demonstrative adjectives are also known as demonstrative determiners. They include: this, that, those, these.

Example.

- This food is absolutely scrumptious.
- That woman is elegant.
- These children are peaceful.

Possessive Adjectives: are the adjectives you use to show that something belongs to someone. Possessive adjectives are also known as possessive determiners. They include: my, our, your, his, her, its, their, etc.

Example.

- These are my students.
- My sister let me borrow her dress.

Compound Adjectives: are adjectives which are made up of two or more words. They usually separated by a hyphen. They include: home-groom, part-time, first-class, and air-conditioned.

Examples.

- They are running a part-time programme.
- These are home-grown vegetables.

Position of Adjective

You can place adjectives before nouns or connect them to the nouns they qualify by using verbs. Adjectives which are placed immediately before nouns they qualify are known as *attributive adjectives*.

Examples.

- They live in a big house.
- The troublesome woman has arrived.
- He ruled for fifteen years.

Adjectives which are joined to the nouns they qualify by a linking verb are known as *predicative adjectives*.

Examples.

- The house is big.
- The man is troublesome.

Some adjectives can be found only in the attributive position or predicative position.

Examples.

- The scorching heat.
- The main road.
- A commanding lead.
- The man is asleep.
- The woman is afraid.
- The girl feels faint.