

Mastering Expanded Noun Phrases with Max the Monkey

Learning objective: To understand, identify, and construct expanded noun phrases to add detail and imagery to writing.

Read each card carefully. The front features a concept or a base noun, and the back provides the explanation or an example of how to expand it to improve your descriptive writing.

What is an expanded noun phrase?

A group of words containing a noun and at least one adjective or prepositional phrase to provide extra detail.

Expand the noun: 'The monkey'

The energetic, inquisitive monkey swinging through the leafy canopy.

What is the function of an adjective in an expanded noun phrase?

It modifies the noun by describing its qualities, such as size, colour, or personality.

Expand the noun: 'The book'

The ancient, leather-bound book hidden on the dusty library shelf.

What is a prepositional phrase?

A group of words beginning with a preposition (e.g., in, on, at, behind) that shows where or when something is.

Expand the noun: 'The owl'

The wise, nocturnal owl perched upon the silver branch under the moonlight.

Identify the expanded noun phrase in: 'The colourful, striped zebra grazed near the sparkling river.'

The colourful, striped zebra.

Why do writers use expanded noun phrases?

To create vivid mental images for the reader and to make their descriptions more specific and engaging.

Expand the noun: 'The apple'

The crisp, crimson apple sitting inside the woven basket.

Explain why adding an expanded noun phrase is more effective than using a single noun.

It transforms a simple, static image into a detailed, sensory experience for the reader.

Compare and contrast: 'The dog' vs 'The scruffy, golden dog waiting by the iron gate.'

'The dog' is a simple noun phrase, whereas the second is an expanded noun phrase that adds character, appearance, and location.

Justify your answer: Does 'The tall, elegant giraffe' count as an expanded noun phrase?

Yes, because it includes the noun 'giraffe' and two adjectives ('tall', 'elegant') to modify it.