

Activity Type

Reading, writing, matching, listening and speaking activity

Language Focus

Compound adjectives

Aim

To learn how to form and use compound adjectives.

Preparation

Make one copy of the two-page worksheet for each student.

Level

Intermediate (A2-B1)

Time

30 minutes

Introduction

This compound adjectives worksheet helps you to teach your students how to form and use compound adjectives.

Procedure

Give each student a copy of the two-page worksheet.

Read through the introduction and review the different ways to form compound adjectives together as a class.

Next, have the students describe the nouns in the first exercise using compound adjectives. Go through the first one as an example, i.e. a ten-minute walk.

When the students have finished, go through the correct answers with the class.

After that, students move on to match words together to form 12 compound adjectives and then use them to complete sentences.

The students then work with a partner and practice describing themselves and others using compound adjectives.

Finally, review the students' descriptions together as a class and give feedback.

(Answer key on the next page)

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Answer key**Exercise A**

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. a ten-minute walk | 11. a mouth-watering dessert |
| 2. a twelve-story building | 12. a strong-willed woman |
| 3. a five-year-old boy | 13. slow-moving traffic |
| 4. a thirty-page report | 14. a good-looking man |
| 5. high-spirited students | 15. long-lasting medicine |
| 6. well-behaved children | 16. an open-minded person |
| 7. a green-eyed monster | 17. a brightly-lit room |
| 8. a short-haired man | 18. a thought-provoking documentary |
| 9. a kind-hearted lady | 19. a world-famous museum |
| 10. a time-saving app | 20. fat-free cookies |

Exercise B

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 h. part-time | 7 i. five-star |
| 2 j. well-known | 8 a. far-reaching |
| 3 k. middle-aged | 9 g. forward-thinking |
| 4 f. English-speaking | 10 b. ice-cold |
| 5 l. narrow-minded | 11 e. last-minute |
| 6 d. old-fashioned | 12 c. home-made |

Exercise C

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. ice-cold | 7. home-made |
| 2. old-fashioned | 8. part-time |
| 3. far-reaching | 9. last-minute |
| 4. forward-thinking | 10. well-known |
| 5. middle-aged | 11. English-speaking |
| 6. narrow-minded | 12. five-star |

A compound adjective is an adjective that contains two or more words. Generally, we put a hyphen between the words when we want them to act as a single adjective before a noun.

Compound Adjectives	Examples:
Number + Noun	A break that takes ten minutes is a ten-minute break.
Adjective + Noun	A bike ride over a long distance is a long-distance bike ride.
Adjective + Present Participle	A person who works hard is a hard-working person.
Noun + Present Participle	An athlete who breaks records is a record-breaking athlete.
Noun + Adjective	A room that is free from smoke is a smoke-free room.
Noun + Past Participle	An engine cooled by water is a water-cooled engine.
Adjective + Past Participle	A man with a bad temper is a bad-tempered man.
Adverb + Past Participle	A city that has a dense population is a densely-populated city.

A. Describe the nouns using compound adjectives.

- 1. a walk that takes ten minutes _____ *a ten-minute walk*
- 2. a building that has twelve stories _____
- 3. a boy who is five years old _____
- 4. a report that is thirty pages long _____
- 5. students in high spirits _____
- 6. children who behave well _____
- 7. a monster with green eyes _____
- 8. a man who has short hair _____
- 9. a lady with a kind heart _____
- 10. an app that saves time _____
- 11. a dessert that makes your mouth water _____
- 12. a woman who has a strong will _____
- 13. traffic that moves slowly _____
- 14. a man who looks good _____
- 15. medicine that lasts a long time _____
- 16. a person who has an open mind _____
- 17. a room that has bright lights _____
- 18. a documentary that provokes thinking _____
- 19. a museum that is famous throughout the world _____
- 20. cookies that are free from fat _____

B. Match the words together to form 12 compound adjectives.


1. part
2. well
3. middle
4. English
5. narrow
6. old
7. five
8. far
9. forward
10. ice
11. last
12. home

- a. reaching
- b. cold
- c. made
- d. fashioned
- e. minute
- f. speaking
- g. thinking
- h. time
- i. star
- j. known
- k. aged
- l. minded


C. Use the compound adjectives in Exercise B to complete the sentences.

1. There's nothing better than drinking an _____ beer on a hot summer day.
2. There are some traditional farmers left who still make cheese the _____ way.
3. Tourism has had _____ effects on Thailand's economy.
4. Some _____ politicians are proposing reforms to the educational system.
5. A _____ person is between 45 and 65 years old.
6. I don't like _____ people who are intolerant of new ideas.
7. _____ jam is usually better than the kinds you buy in the shops.
8. Many students get a _____ job if they are not eligible for a loan.
9. A _____ goal by England put them through to the World Cup Final.
10. It's a _____ fact that smoking can cause lung cancer.
11. Lessons with _____ instructors can be booked in the language school.
12. Sydney has many _____ hotels and luxurious resorts.

D. Now, work with a partner. Talk about the following things:

1. Describe yourself using compound adjectives. Does your partner agree with you?
2. Use compound adjectives to describe someone in the class. Can your partner guess who it is?
3. Discuss which compound adjectives you would use to describe a good and bad friend.