

Understanding Appositives



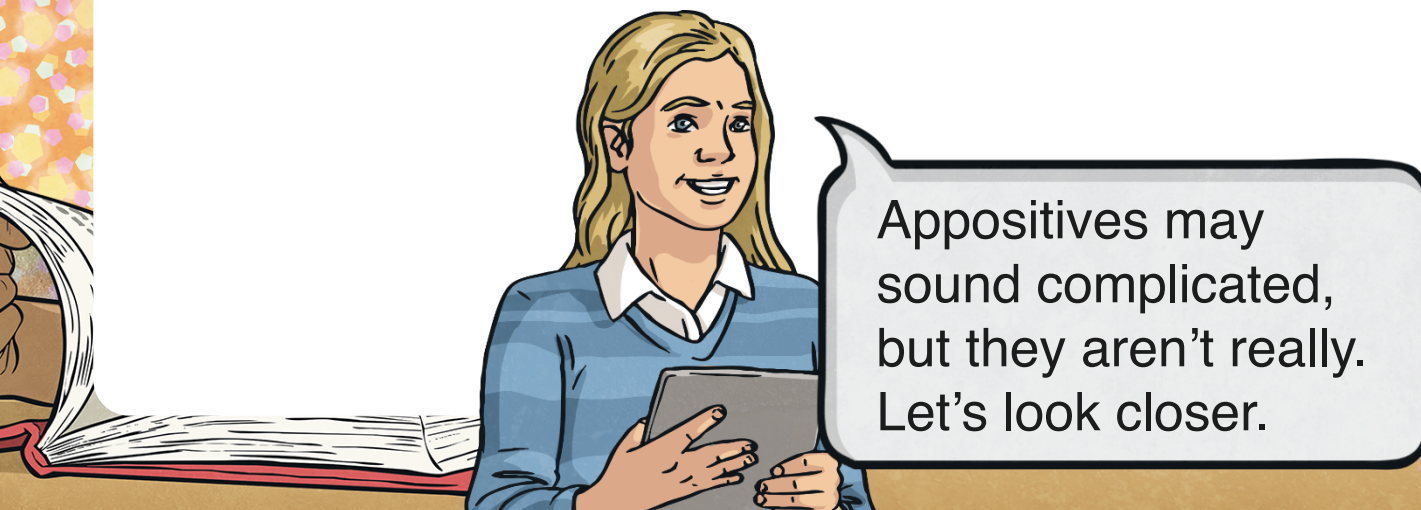
Definition

An appositive is a **noun** or **noun phrase** that gives extra information about another noun right beside it. Appositives can be one word or more.

Appositive is a latin term that means **to put near**.

Using appositives is a handy way to add bonus information to a sentence without ruining its structure.

Appositives come in two forms, **Restrictive** and **Non-restrictive**.



Appositives may sound complicated, but they aren't really. Let's look closer.

Restrictive Appositives

When you use an appositive that is essential to understanding it's called a **Restrictive Appositive**.

Let's look at some examples.

My friend Jane is coming for a sleepover.

Restrictive Appositive

Noun Phrase



Jane is an essential description of **My friend**. We can assume that the person writing this sentence has lots of friends but the one coming for a sleepover is Jane.

Restrictive Appositives

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Let's look at some examples.

Restrictive
Appositive

Have you watched the **movie** **Lost in Space**?

Noun



Lost in Space is essential to the meaning of the sentence. Without it, we wouldn't know which movie the speaker is asking about.



Activity

Read the sentences on the next five slides.
See if you can identify the **noun/noun phrase**
and **Restrictive Appositive**. Click on the slide
to see if you were correct.



Sentence One

My cousin Thomas likes video games.

Noun Phrase

Restrictive
Appositive

This appositive is restrictive because the speaker could have many cousins and the appositive identifies which one the speaker means. We need this information to understand the sentence properly.



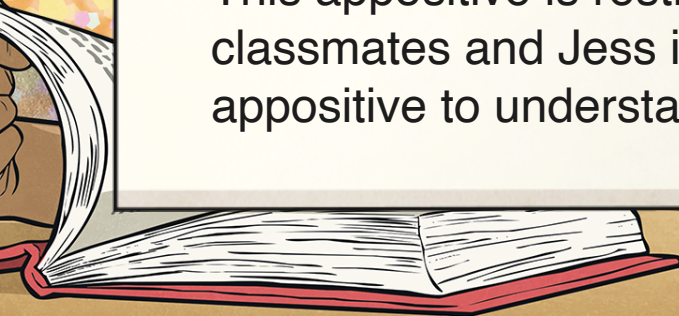
Sentence Two

My classmate Jess has a wheat allergy.

Noun Phrase

Restrictive
Appositive

This appositive is restrictive because the speaker has many classmates and Jess is the one with the wheat allergy. We need this appositive to understand the sentence.



Sentence Three

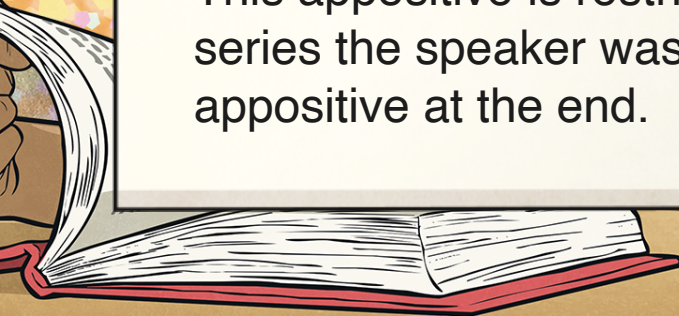


Have you read the first book in the Harry Potter series?

Noun Phrase

Restrictive
Appositive

This appositive is restrictive because we wouldn't know which series the speaker was asking us about if he didn't add the appositive at the end.



Sentence Four

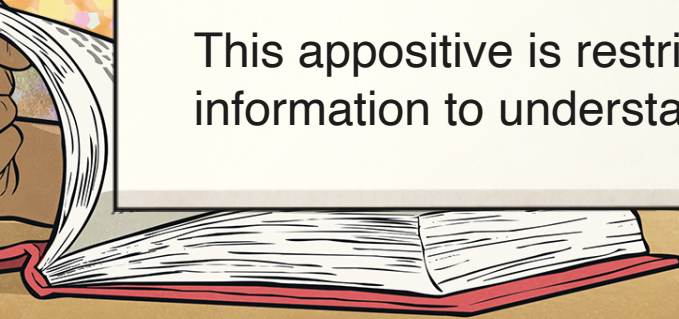


I'll meet you on the corner of Main Street.

Noun Phrase

Restrictive
Appositive

This appositive is restrictive because we need the Main Street information to understand which corner the speaker means.



Sentence Five

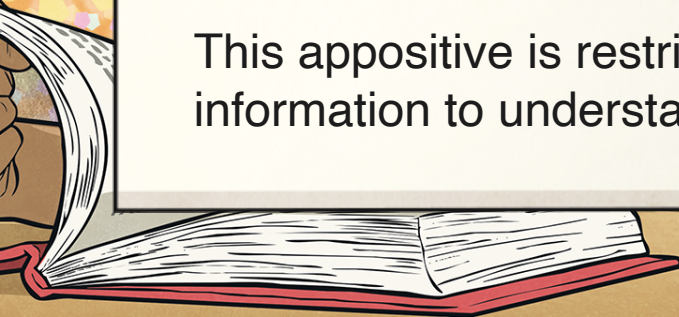


I only like to eat **Granny Smith** **apples.**

Restrictive
Appositive

Noun Phrase

This appositive is restrictive because we need the Granny Smith information to understand which kind of apples the speaker likes to eat.



Non-restrictive Appositives

Non-restrictive (or non-essential) appositives provide extra information about the noun or noun phrase that we don't need to understand the sentence properly.

Non-restrictive
Appositive

My friend Jane, who is nearly eleven, is coming for a sleepover.

Noun Phrase

We could remove the non-restrictive appositive used here and still understand the meaning of the sentence: **My friend Jane is coming for a sleepover.** This is a great way to test if the appositive is restrictive or non-restrictive.



Non-restrictive Appositives

Non-restrictive (or non-essential) appositives provide extra information about the noun or noun phrase that we don't need to understand the sentence properly.

Non-restrictive
Appositive ↘

Janet's dalmation puppy, who is so spotty and cute, came home today.

↙ Noun Phrase

We could remove the non-restrictive appositive used here and still understand the meaning of the sentence: **Janet's dalmation puppy came home today.** The non-restrictive appositive in this sentence gives us bonus information.



Punctuating Non-restrictive Appositives

Non-restrictive appositives can be anywhere in a sentence as long as it is adding information to the noun or noun phrase **right beside it**.

When the non-restrictive appositive is in the middle of a sentence it needs to be bookended with commas.

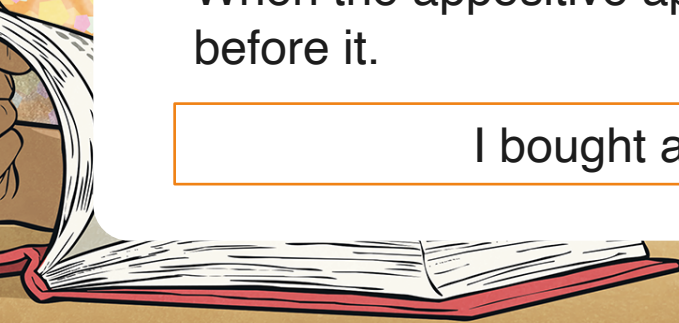
This kitten, **a purebred ragdoll**, is my favourite pet.

When the appositive appears at the beginning of a sentence it needs a comma after it.

A strong man, Henry was able to move the bookcase by himself.

When the appositive appears at the end of a sentence it needs a comma before it.

I bought a new shirt today, **a light cotton one**.



Activity

Read the sentences on the next five slides.
See if you can identify the **noun/noun phrase** and **Non-restrictive Appositive**.
Click on the slide to see if you were correct.



Sentence One

I saw a pirate ship, big and dark, on the movie screen.

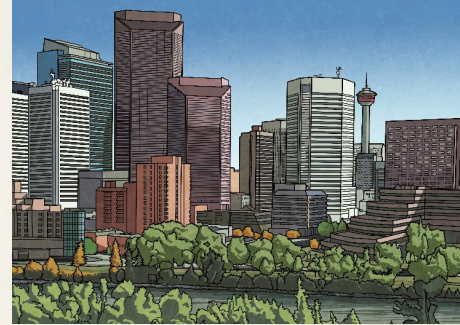
Noun

Non-restrictive
Appositive



The appositive in this sentence is just giving us extra details about the pirate ship. We can remove it and the sentence still makes perfect sense.

Sentence Two



A country girl, Molly didn't like travelling to the city.

Non-restrictive
Appositive

Proper
Noun

The main idea in this sentence is that Molly doesn't like travelling to the city. The non-restrictive appositive A country girl just gives us bonus information. We could remove it and still make sense of the sentence.

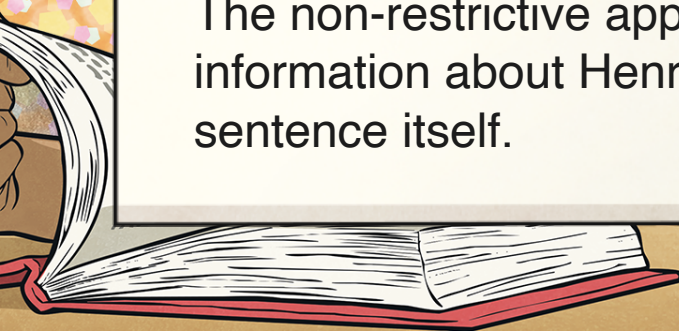
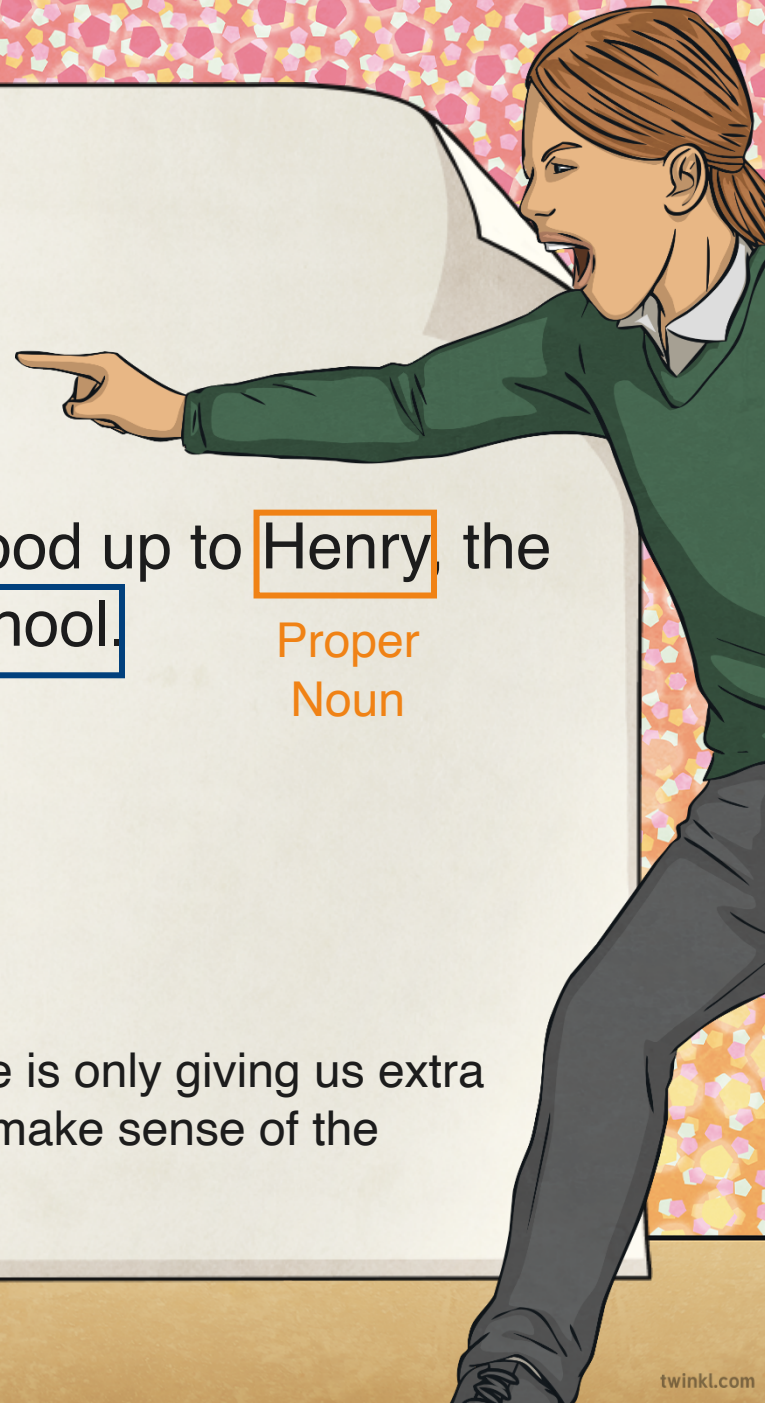
Sentence Three

She couldn't believe that Alice stood up to **Henry**, the **biggest bully in school.**

Non-restrictive
Appositive

Proper
Noun

The non-restrictive appositive in this sentence is only giving us extra information about Henry. We don't need it to make sense of the sentence itself.



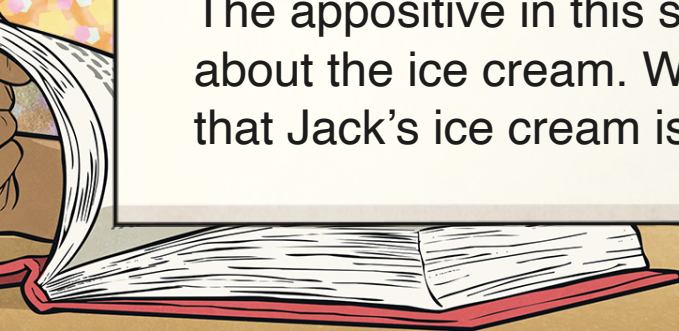
Sentence Four

Jack's ice cream, a huge mound of chocolate, started to melt.

Noun

Non-restrictive
Appositive

The appositive in this sentence is just giving us extra details about the ice cream. We can remove it and still understand that Jack's ice cream is melting.



Sentence Five



Silky

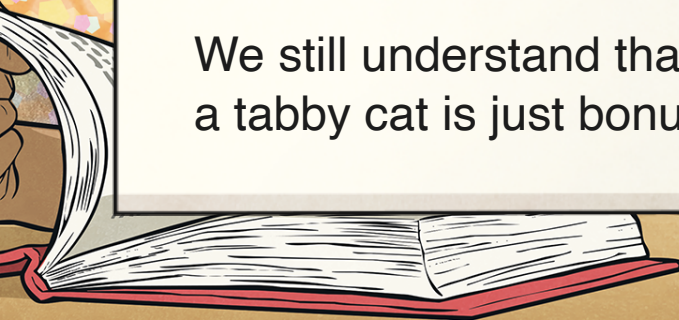
Proper
Noun

Naomi's tabby cat,

Non-restrictive
Appositive

loves to eat tuna.

We still understand that Silky loves to eat tuna. The fact that she is a tabby cat is just bonus information.



Conclusion

Appositives are a great way to add extra information and detail to your sentences. They help make writing interesting and give the reader lots of extra details so they can understand what you're trying to say.

You probably use appositives in your writing and conversations without even realising it!

