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**Adjective Phrase:**

An adjective phrase is a phrase with an adjective as head. An adjective phrase is a group of words that modifies a noun or pronoun in a sentence. It can be placed before or after the noun or pronoun it modifies or describes. It normally indicates quality, size, shape, duration, feelings, contents, and more about a noun or pronoun. (Barany, p, 207)

He was **so happy**

He was **happy.**

1. **The Internal Structure of Adjective Phrases**

An adjective phrase always has an adjective acting as the head. The adjective phrase may also have dependents before and/or after the head.

The instructions seem fairly **straightforward**.

The car is **economical** for its size.

They were well **aware** that the company was losing money.

Adjective phrases usually have the following structure:

Premodifier Adjective (HEAD) Postmodifier

too much **anxious**  to go

very **sorry**  to say that

so **eager**  -

- **fond**  of reading

- important to know

- wise enough

The premodifier in an adjective phrase is most commonly

1. an adverb (intensifier): **extremely very fairly quite rather so**
2. another adjective: ; **wonderful surprising angry**

Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English Workbook. (p: 48-49)

**2.Types of Adjectives: (Barany, p,142)**

**1. Central adjectives:** are those that take inflections for degree, can have both attributive and predicative functions, and are descriptive and gradable. Peripheral adjectives lack one or more of these characteristics.

1. Can occur **predicatively** as the subject or object complement after a copular verb such as , **be, seem, grow, appear etc.** For example:

He seemed happy.  
They grew defensive.

They made me unhappy.

They called her stupid.

2. Can occur **attributively** (i.e., directly before or after the noun phrase) They come in between the determiner and the noun.

He is a **happy** man.  
the **old** woman.  
The meeting **proper** started late.  
The people **responsible** were arrested.

3. Are gradable so can be modified with amplifiers, limiters and downtoners like very, extremely, not quite, marginally

He was very **unhappy**.  
She was **extremely** frightened.

I was **marginally** satisfied.

A **mostly** satisfied customer.

4. Take comparative and superlative forms

the **wisest** man  
the **most** interesting man

The **cleverer** man  
That vine tree is the **oldest.**

5. Form adverbs with the addition of a suffix (not necessarily but usually -ly).

wise → wisely

happy → happily

2. **Peripheral adjectives:** These include any which do not match one of the five things that the central adjectives do such as **asleep**, **bottom**, **alphabetic**, **proper** etc. Examples of how peripheral adjectives cannot perform the five functions above are:

**1. Cannot occur predicatively**:  
\*The figure appeared particular.

\*The excuse seemed main.

\*A teacher was former.

\*A stranger was total.

**2. Cannot occur attributively:**

\*The asleep dog.

\*The ready man.

\*An ill child.

**3 Are not gradable with very**:  
\*He was very unconscious.

\*The restaurant was very deserted.

\*I was very freezing.  
**4. Do not take comparative and superlative forms**.

\*The people were more asleep.

\*The situation was perfecter.

\*The most boiling water.

**5. Do not form adverbs.**

asleep → \*asleeply

devoid → \*devoidly  
hand made → \*hand madely

**Syntactic Functions of Adjectives:**

Adjectives function syntactically only in adjective phrases, but since it is the adjective that generally determines the function of the adjective phrase, it is often found convenient to use adjectives alone to illustrate the functions of adjective phrases and it has often referred to adjectives as a shorter way of referring to adjective phrases. (Quirk, et.al p, 108)

**Attributive Adjectives:** The major syntactic functions of adjectives are **attributive** and **predicative**. Adjectives are attributive when they:

**(a)premodify noun heads** *ie:* appear between the determiner and the head of the noun phrase:

the ***beautiful***painting.

his ***main***argument.

an extremely **attractive** family

a reasonably **early** hour.

**(b)post modify noun heads:**

**the syntax proper**

the students **present**

the court **martial**

attorney **general**

no one **specific**

something **interesting**

someone **brave**

**2. Predicative adjectives:**

**(a) Subject Complement:**

Your daughter is **pretty*.***Whether he will resign is **uncertain***.*

Driving a bus isn’t **easy***.*

The instructions seem **fairly straightforward.**

Her new friend is **really good-looking.**

(**b) Object Complement:**Adjectives can be object complement to clauses. The adjective functioning as object complement often expresses the result of the process denoted by the verb:

He pulled his belt ***tight****.* (As a result, his belt was then tight)  
He pushed the window ***open****.* (As a result, the window was then open)

He made his wife ***happy.***

They painted their room ***sky-blue***.

**Q/** For each adjective phrase, 1) Identify the syntactic function and 2) the internal structure.

That soup is pretty cold.

I am scared of heights.

She was a very proficient skier.

This study sounds very ambitious.

**Study pages 108,109,110, 111 from Quirk’s book**

**Adverb Phrases: (Quirk, et.al, p118- 135)**

Adverb phrases are used to modify verbs. The most common characteristics of the adverb is morphological: the majority of adverbs have the derivational suffix *-ly.*

She slapped him **extremely** playfully.

Children grow up **really** quickly.

Adverb phrases are used with ***be***. This is especially typical of adverbs of **place**.

Have you been **here**?

They’re **right there**.

**Syntactic Functions of Adverbs:** There are **two** types of syntactic functions that characterize adverbs:

**(1) adverbial**  
**(2) modifier of adjective and adverb**

**(1) Adverbs as adverbial:** An adverb may function as adverbial, a constituent distinct from subject, verb, object, and complement. There are three classes of adverbials: **adjuncts, disjuncts, conjuncts.**

**(a)Adjuncts**: They are integrated within the structure of the clause to, at least, some extent. **Disjuncts** and **Conjuncts**, on the other hand, are not integrated within the clause.

Adjuncts indicate **time, place** and **manner**

They are waiting **outside***.*

I can **now**understand it

He spoke to me about it **briefly.**

**Disjuncts** and **Conjuncts**, on the other hand, are not integrated within the clause. Semantically,

**(b) Disjuncts:** Semantically, these express an evaluation of what is being said either with respect to the form of the communication or to its content.

***Frankly****,* I am tired

***Fortunately****,* no one complained.

***Probably,*** they are at home.

**(c) Conjuncts:**  Semantically, have a connective function. They indicate the connection between what is being said and what was said before.

We have complained several times about the noise, and **yet**he does nothing about it.

He seems very intelligent, **though**.If they open all the windows, **then**I’m leaving.

**2. Adverb as modifier**

**1. Modifier of adjective**  
An adverb may premodify an adjective:

That was **very** funny.  
It is **extremely** goodof you.

\*The adverb ***enough*** postmodifies adjectives, as in:

This building is high **enough***.*Most commonly, the modifying adverb is an intensifier The most frequently used intensifier is **very***.* Other intensifiers include **so, pretty, rath­er, unusually, quite, unbelievably.**Many are restricted to a small set of lexical items:

**deeply (**anxious)

**highly** (intelligent)

**strikingly** (handsome)

**sharply** (critical)*.*

Many intensifiers can modify adjectives, adverbs, and verbs alike.

Adverbs as premodifiers of adjectives may also be **‘viewpoint’**, as in:

**politically** expedient(‘expedient from a political point of view’),

**technically**possible

**theoretically** sound*.*

1. **Modifier of adverb**

An adverb may premodify another adverb, and function as **intensifier:**

They are smoking **very** heavily*.*They didn’t sing **that**loudly. (informal)

Your engine is running **very/ absolutely/fairly** smoothly**.**

They are smoking very **heavily.**

They did not injure him that **severely**.

Like adjectives, the only postmodifier of an adverb head is ***enough****,* as in:

**cleverly enough**

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**3. Modifier of prepositional phrase**

The few adverbs that premodify particles in phrasal verbs also premodify prepositions or (perhaps rather) prepositional phrases:

The nail went ***right*** *through* the wall.

His parents are ***dead*** *against* the trip

**4. Modifier of noun phrase**   
A few intensifiers may premodify noun phrases: *quite, rather* (esp BrE),

and the predeterminers *such* and exclamatory *what.* The noun phrase is

**He told such** a funny story.

I have never heard **such** wickedness.

It was **rather** a mess  
He was **quite** some player.

**what a (big) fool** he is!

**So** and interrogative and exclamatory **how** also precede the indefmite article, but they require the noun phrase to contain a gradable adjective and the head of the noun phrase to be a singular countable noun. In this use, they cause the adjective to move in front of the article:

**How** tall a man is he?

**How** tall a man he is!

Some adverbs signifying place or time postmodify noun phrases:  
PLACE: the way **ahead**, the neighbour **upstairs**, the sentence **below**

TIME: the meeting **yesterday**, the day **before**

**Prepositions and Prepositional phrases:**

A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition followed by a prepositional complement, which is characteristically a noun phrase or a wh-clause or *-ing* clause:

**at** the bus-stop  
**from** what he said  
**by** signing a peace treaty

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Prepositional Phrase | |  |
| Preposition | Dependent  Complement | Complement Type |
| on  from  by  in terms of  in variance with | the table  what he said  signing a peace treaty  money  the official reports | NP  nominal wh-clause  nominal –ing clause  NP  NP |

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**Simple and complex prepositions**

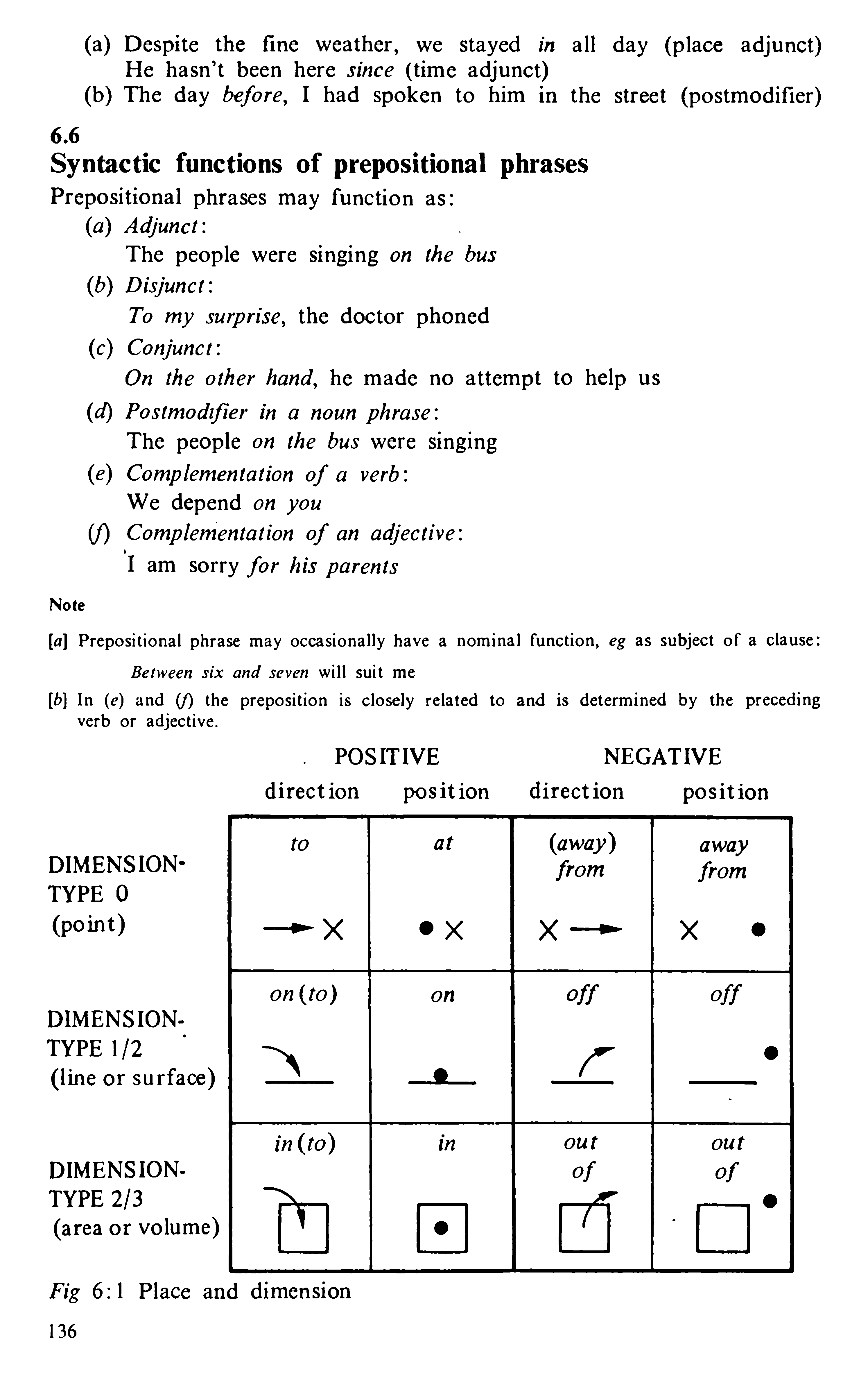
1. **Simple:** Most of the common English prepositions, such as ***at, in,***and ***for****,* are **simple**, *ie* consist of one word: **at, but, by, down, for, from, in, like, near (to), on, off, of, about, above, during, except, …etc.**
2. **Complex:** Prepositions, consisting of more than one word, are called **complex.** Most of these are in one of the following categories:

**[a] adverb + prep: *along with, as for, away from, out of, up to***

**[b] verb/ adjective /conjunction/+ prep :*****owing to, due to, because of***

**[c] prep + noun + prep:** ***by means of, in comparison with, in front of****,*

[d] which is by far the most numerous category, the noun in some complex prepositions is preceded by a **definite or indefinite** **article**: **in *the* light of; as a result of**

 **Syntactic functions of prepositional phrases:**

**1. Adjunct:** The people were singing **on the bus**.

1. **Disjunct:****To my surprise***,* the doctor phoned.
2. **Conjunct:****On the other hand**, he made no attempt to help us.
3. **Postmodifier in a noun phrase:**The people **on the bus** were singing.
4. **Complementation of a verb:**

We depend **on you**.

1. **Postmodifier of an adjective P:**

**I am** sorry **for his parents.**

1. **Prepositional phrase may occasionally have a nominal function, *eg* as subject of a clause:**

**Between six and seven** will suit me.

**To as a preposition and an infinitive marker**

**To** has two different uses. It can be an [infinitive](http://www.perfectyourenglish.com/grammar/infinitives.htm) marker. Examples are: to swim, to work, to break, to go etc.

* He likes **to sing**.
* She wants **to go**.
* You need **to work**.

**To** can also be a [preposition](http://www.perfectyourenglish.com/grammar/prepositions.htm).When **to** is a preposition, it can be followed by an **–ing form**, but not normally by an infinitive. This usually happens after expressions like [**look forward to**](http://www.perfectyourenglish.com/vocabulary/look-forward-to.htm)**, in addition to, object to, be used to** and **get round to**.

In the following examples, the preposition **to** is followed by either a noun or an [(ing) form](http://www.perfectyourenglish.com/grammar/-ing-forms.htm):

1. I **look forward to hearing** from you. (NOT I look forward to hear from you.)
2. We **look forward to continuing** our business relationship.
3. I **look forward to your next letter**.
4. I **am used to her silly ways**.
5. I **am used to working** with all kinds of people.
6. I **object to Friday work**.
7. I **object to working** on Fridays.

**Prepositions and Conjunctions**

One distinguishing criterion between the two word classes is that prepositions introduce complements which are *nominal* or *nominalized*, whereas the corresponding conjunctions (subordinators) introduce a *subordinate clause*. In certain cases, the same items can function both as prepositions and conjunctions, eg: *after*, as, *before*, *since*, *until*:

* 1. Say goodbye **before** you go. (Conj.)
  2. Larry arrived home **before** me. (Prep.)
  3. She waited **until** he had finished speaking. (Conj.)
  4. The ticket is valid **until** March. (Prep.)

**But** can function both as a preposition and a coordinating conjunction:

* + 1. They rushed to the hospital, but they were too late. (Conj.)
    2. There’s no one here but me. (Prep.)

**Prepositions and Adverbs**

Prepositions are items which are often formally identical with and semantically similar to adverbs, e g: **up, across, about, under,below, behind** ….Compare the following pairs:

She walked slowly **up** the hill. (Preposition)

John is **up** in his bedroom. (Adverb)

She walked **across** the street. (Preposition)

She walked **across.** (Adverb)

**Exercise**

Make sentences using the words given below as instructed:

1. *after* i) as a preposition ii) as a conjunction

2. *since* i) as a preposition ii) as a conjunction

3. *under* i) as a preposition ii) as an adverb

4. *below*i) as a preposition ii) as an adverb

5. *but* i) as a preposition ii) as a conjunction

6. *behind* i) as a preposition ii) as an adve

**Exercise on Phrases:**

Study the underlined phrases below, then identify:

1. the phrase type (NP, Adv. P, Adj. P), and

2. the syntactic function of each phrase.

3. heads and dependents.

a. Her new purse was pretty expensive.

b. The boy in the blue jeans says he'll do it.

c. I exercise very regularly and I eat quite healthily.

d. Somewhat reluctantly, she returned home a week early.

e. A student smarter than Paula won the spelling bee.

f. Samantha ate a very spicy burrito.

g. Mom baked tasty chocolate cookies.

h. When you became a Minister you appointed me Managing Director.

i. We are hoping to open the factory some time next year.

j. Will you talk with these rude people?