ADJECTIVES IN -ED / -ING

C2 — Mastery

English Grammar Worksheets | Participial Adjectives: bored / boring • Feelings vs Causes • Use in Context

4 Worksheets: Stylistics • Morphology at the Edges • Discourse Analysis • Writing & Meta-commentary | Answer Key Included

Worksheet 1: Stylistics of the Participial Adjective

Name: _____ *Date:* _____ *Level: C2 (CEFR)*

Reference: Effects and Devices

Device	Description	Example
Transferred participial epithet	the feeling migrates onto an object	a dejected umbrella; the tired light of November
Un- litotes	negated participle as understatement	not unmoved; a not unimpressive record
Stacked participials	accumulation for exhaustion or excess	a battered, rusting, long-abandoned truck
Nonce compounds	invented compound participials	a much-photographed, little-visited monument
Agentless menace	-ing forms with suppressed agent	a creeping suspicion; the gathering dark

Exercise A – Identify the device(s) and comment on the effect in one or two sentences.

1. "He hung his defeated coat on the hook."

_____

_____

2. "She was not unaware of the effect she produced."

_____

_____

3. "The town kept its faded, peeling, half-remembered grandeur."

_____

_____

4. "A much-discussed, seldom-read report."

_____

_____

5. "An unforgiving light fell across the desk."

_____

_____

Exercise B – Compose one sentence each: (1) a transferred participial epithet, (2) an un- litotes, (3) a nonce compound participial (much- / little- / over- / under-).

1.

_____

_____

2.

_____

_____

3.

_____

_____

Score: _____ / 16

Worksheet 2: Morphology and Syntax at the Edges

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: C2 (CEFR)

Part A – Blocked and possible forms. Explain why the starred forms fail, or under what conditions they could be rescued.

1. *an unarrived guest (but: "the still-unarrived guests" in journalese?)

_____

_____

2. *a very known author (but: "a well-known author")

_____

_____

3. *the fallen leaves were very fallen

_____

_____

4. *an ungone opportunity (vs "a missed opportunity")

_____

_____

Part B – -ing forms without corresponding feelings. Some -ing adjectives have no natural -ed partner. Explain what each describes and why *the -ed form is odd.

1. a promising student (*the professor was promised?)

_____

2. the prevailing mood

_____

3. a fleeting glance

_____

4. a telling detail

_____

Part C – Acceptability judgments: fully acceptable (✓), marked but licensed (?), ill-formed (✗). Justify briefly.

1. "I have never felt so seen." (social media register)

_____

_____

2. "a very married man" (ironic)

_____

_____

3. "the most drowned village in England" (of a reservoir village, journalism)

_____

_____

4. "He seemed being tired."

_____

_____

Score: _____ / 20

Worksheet 3: Discourse Analysis: Two Reviews, One Restaurant

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: C2 (CEFR)

Read both reviews, then answer the questions.

Text 1: *"A dazzling, endlessly inventive tasting menu. We left amazed, delighted, and already planning a return. The staff's unforced charm is disarming; even the bread course was quietly thrilling."*

Text 2: *"An exhausting parade of overworked plates. Diners seated near the kitchen looked harried rather than pampered; the much-hyped bread course was underwhelming, and the bill left us feeling not so much satisfied as processed."*

1. Both reviewers describe their own states with -ed forms and the restaurant with -ing forms. Find the pattern's one deliberate exception in each text and explain its effect.

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2. "overworked plates" and "processed": participial adjectives normally reserved for people/food-industry objects are applied unusually. Analyse both transfers.

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_____

3. Compare the intensification strategies (endlessly, quietly, much-, under-). What register does each signal?

_____

_____

4. "not so much satisfied as processed" — unpack the comparative frame and the pun.

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_____

5. Write a third, studiedly neutral review (40–60 words) of the same meal in which no unattributed -ing evaluation appears.

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_____

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Score: _____ / 20

Worksheet 4: Extended Writing and Meta-commentary

Name: _____ *Date:* _____ *Level: C2 (CEFR)*

Part A – Close reading. Read the excerpt (original, written for this worksheet) and answer.

The letter sat unopened for a week, gathering its quiet, accusing weight. She was not unused to waiting; waiting was the family trade. But there was something unfinished in the envelope's patient whiteness, something that made the kitchen feel like a held breath.

1. "unopened" vs "unfinished": one negates a completed event, the other a completed state. Analyse the difference in what each un- form presupposes.

_____

_____

2. "gathering its quiet, accusing weight": identify the devices at work in the participial chain.

_____

_____

3. "not unused to waiting": what does the double negative achieve that "used to waiting" would not?

_____

_____

4. "a held breath": explain how this passive participle transfers a human action onto a room.

_____

_____

Part B – Register transformation. Rewrite the sentence three times — (a) tabloid headline, (b) clinical incident report, (c) literary prose — changing only what register requires. Sentence: "The passengers were frightened when the train stopped suddenly in the tunnel."

a.

_____

_____

b.

_____

_____

c.

_____

_____

Part C – Essay introduction (200–250 words). Proposition: "The -ing adjective is English's most efficient instrument of unattributed opinion." Requirements: engage at least five phenomena from this pack (experiencer deletion, transferred epithet, un- litotes, blocked morphology, divergent meanings, nonce compounds ...), each exemplified; sustained formal-academic register; explicit line of argument.

_____

_____

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Word count: _____ Phenomena engaged: ____ / 5

Score: _____ / 30

Answer Key & Teacher Notes

For teacher use only

Worksheet 1

#	Item	Answer / Guidance
A	Devices	**1 transferred participial epithet — defeat displaced from wearer to coat. 2 un- litotes — coy understatement implying deliberate awareness. 3 stacked participials — decay accumulated in three registers (visual, physical, mnemonic). 4 nonce compound pair — irony via the gap between attention and engagement. 5 agentless -ing/un- blend — "unforgiving" animates the light as judge.**
B	Composition	**Check each device is genuinely instantiated; reward control of rhythm in the stack.**

Worksheet 2

#	Item	Answer / Guidance
A	Blocked forms	**1 un- prefers states/results of transitive verbs; "arrive" is unaccusative — rescued only in compounds with still-/as-yet-. 2 "known" alone is participial; the compound well-known is lexicalised as an adjective, so degree words attach to it. 3 "fallen" is a resultative participle, non-gradable — no degree reading available. 4 un- + intransitive "go" yields no state of the object; English lexicalises the gap with "missed".**
B	No -ed partner	**promising = giving grounds for hope (source, not experiencer); prevailing = currently dominant; fleeting = brief in duration; telling = revealing/significant. None describes a caused feeling, so no experiencer -ed form exists in that sense.**
C	Judgments	**1 ? — participle coerced into a feeling adjective; licensed by register, now near-lexicalised. 2 ? — ironic grading of an absolute -ed form. 3 ? — journalistic coercion of a resultative into a superlative; striking but interpretable. 4 ✗ — seem selects adjectives/NPs, not progressive participles.**

Worksheet 3

#	Item	Answer / Guidance
1	Exceptions	**Text 1: "disarming" describes the staff's charm acting on the diner — but the true exception is "unforced" (-ed form applied to the restaurant side), naturalising the charm as artless. Text 2: "harried" (-ed) applied to other diners — the reviewer exports feelings to third parties as observed fact.**
2	Transfers	**"overworked plates": labour-domain participle shifted to dishes, implying fussy excess and tired kitchen at once. "processed": industrial-food participle applied to the diner — the customer becomes the product.**
3	Intensification	**"endlessly/quietly" — literary-review adverbial finesse; "much-hyped/underwhelming" — compound and under- prefixation signal wry consumer-journalism register.**

#	Item	Answer / Guidance
4	Frame	**"not so much X as Y" replaces the expected -ed state with a dehumanising participle; pun: satisfied diner vs processed transaction/food.**
5	Neutral review	**Check: evaluations attributed ("some diners found...") or replaced by verifiable description; no bare "stunning/underwhelming" predications.**

Worksheet 4

#	Item	Answer / Guidance
A	Close reading	**1 unopened presupposes an expected event that has not occurred (dynamic verb negated in result); unfinished presupposes a process begun and suspended — the letter participates in an ongoing account. 2 agentless -ing ("gathering") + transferred epithet ("accusing") + coordinated physical/moral pair ("quiet, accusing"). 3 The litotes concedes familiarity while implying reluctance and cost; plain "used to" would read as neutral habit. 4 "held" imports a human holder; the room borrows a body's suspense — suppressed agent intensifies the dread.**
B	Registers	**Model: (a) "TUNNEL TERROR: PASSENGERS PETRIFIED AS TRAIN STOPS DEAD". (b) "Following an unscheduled stop in the tunnel, several passengers reported feeling distressed; no injuries were recorded." (c) "The train stopped, and the dark pressed in; no one spoke, each of them privately, politely afraid."**
C	Essay rubric	**Phenomena engaged & exemplified 0–10; analytical precision 0–8; register 0–6; coherence & argument 0–6.**