

Using Appositives to Begin Sentences

Have you ever found yourself sadly saying, “Well, I wish I had known that before”? By using appositive phrases at the beginning of a sentence, you can control when a reader learns certain facts and, thus, control your reader’s reactions to your words.

An **appositive** is a noun or pronoun placed beside another noun or pronoun to identify or explain it. An **appositive phrase** is made up of an appositive and its modifiers.

Original:	This poem focuses on a tree. The poem is a masterpiece of symbolism.
Combined:	A masterpiece of symbolism, this poem focuses on a tree.

Notice that, in the original first sentence, the reader might be unimpressed by another poem about a tree. However, in the combined sentence, the reader is immediately aware that this poem is something special. The placement of the information in the appositive phrase has changed the reader’s reaction.

Note: When you use an appositive phrase to begin a sentence, remember to use a comma at the end of the phrase.

DIRECTIONS Combine the following sets of sentences by using an appositive at the beginning of each sentence.

1. “Loveliest of Trees” appears in A Shropshire Lad, by A. E. Housman. It is a poem. The poem centers on a cherry tree in bloom.

2. The cherry tree is a symbol of spring. It also represents several other ideas.

3. The speaker reflects on how important it is to pay attention to beautiful things. The speaker is a young man.

4. The tree is described in a wistful manner. It is a metaphor for the brevity of life.

5. The speaker mentions Eastertide. The speaker is an appreciative observer of nature. Eastertide is a time for celebrating freshness and promise.

6. The speaker resolves to see as many “things in bloom” as he can. The speaker is one who knows that time and beauty pass quickly.

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Answer Key

Answer Keys:

Answers will vary. These are sample answers.

1. “The Loveliest of Trees,” a poem centering on a cherry tree in bloom, appears in A Shropshire Lad, by A. E. Housman.
2. A symbol of spring, the cherry tree represents several other ideas.
3. A young man, the speaker reflects on how important it is to pay attention to beautiful things.
4. A metaphor for the brevity of life, the tree is described in a wistful manner.
5. An appreciative observer of nature, the speaker mentions Eastertide, a time for celebrating freshness and promise.
6. One who knows that time and beauty pass quickly, the speaker resolves to see as many “things in bloom” as he can.