Adjective Phrases

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Loretta S. Gray

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Preface

As an intermediate or advanced student of English, you are rapidly expanding your vocabulary. While you are studying, you are probably experiencing some frustration with idiomatic language because it does not follow strict patterns (e.g., the preposition for follows the noun fondness, but the preposition of follows the adjective fond). Sometimes an idiomatic phrase's meaning cannot even be understood from the meaning of its individual words (e.g., the verb phrase to drop in on someone has nothing to do with letting something fall). Because rules regarding idiomatic language are unclear or vague, practice is the only way to truly master them.

In the series *Mastering Idiomatic English*, you will have the opportunity to learn more about idiomatic language. The result of your study will be a larger vocabulary and an expanded knowledge of correct usage. The series consists of four texts:

Mastering Idiomatic English: Adjective Phrases Mastering Idiomatic English: Noun Phrases Mastering Idiomatic English: Prepositional Phrases Mastering Idiomatic English: Verb Phrases

In this text, you will learn about idiomatic adjective phrases. Although it may seem that these phrases do not follow any patterns, this is not always true. The text includes practice with patterns when they are present; it also provides practice with phrases that do not have a recognizable pattern.

Organization of the Book

Topics are listed in order of difficulty, based on the presence or absence of a pattern in the phrases. However, the units can be completed in any order, depending on your needs. Each unit is organized in the following way.

- List of adjective phrases Adjective phrases are listed alphabetically. The adjective appears first, followed by the most commonly used preposition and by an object form (e.g., someone or something). The adjective phrases chosen for each unit all refer to a specific context (e.g., school), concept (e.g., connections), or emotion (e.g., anxiety). Individual adjective phrases that are related in some way are listed together.
- **Recognition exercises** These exercises give you the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of the idiomatic phrase's meaning.
- Pattern exercises These exercises require you to use a pattern to change a word from one part of speech to another (e.g., from a noun to an adjective).
- Sentence formation The purpose of this activity is to give you practice in placing adjectives and prepositions in various types of sentences.
- Task The final exercise of each unit asks you to use your knowledge in a specific, real-life situation.
- Answers The answers to the exercises are listed in the back of the book.
- Index All adjective phrases are listed alphabetically in the index.

Contents

1	Enchantment
2	Surprise
3	Satisfaction
4	Work
5	Connections
6	Turmoil
7	Attraction
8	Hobbies
9	School
10	Talent
11	Incompetence
12	Kindness
13	Travel
14	Worry69
15	Trouble
	Answers
	Index

Unit 1: Enchantment

amazed by someone or something

I was amazed by the young athlete. We were amazed by her artwork.

amused by someone or something

I was amused by his remarks. We weren't amused by the joke.

beguiled by someone or something

Antony was beguiled by Cleopatra. We were beguiled by the exotic atmosphere.

bewitched by someone or something

Her fiancé was bewitched by her eyes. She was bewitched by her new neighbor.

captivated by someone or something

We were captivated by his intelligent conversation. The audience was captivated by the performance.

charmed by someone or something

I was charmed by his smile. He was charmed by his friend's sister.

enchanted by someone or something

We were enchanted by the music. She was enchanted by the man she met last night.

enthralled by someone or something

The tourists were enthralled by the landscape. The moviegoers were enthralled by the opening scene.

entranced by someone or something

The students were entranced by the poet. We were entranced by his broad smile.

fascinated by someone or something

They were fascinated by the intricate dancing. Weren't you fascinated by the early explorers?

Exercise 1a

Fill in the blanks below with the correct adjectives.

amazed
amused
beguiled
bewitched
captivated
charmed
enchanted

Example: The book critic was <u>enthralled</u> by the novel's plot.

- 1. They were _____ by the evening light.
- **2**. We were ______ by the three tenors.
- 3. The pioneers were ______ by the fertility of the soil.
- 4. The children were ______ by the clown's expressions.
- 5. You were _____ by the beautiful flowers in the garden.
- **6.** I was ______ by your glance.
- 7. He was ______ by her grace and beauty.

Exercise 1b

Which preposition follows the adjective in every sentence?

Exercise 2a

Example:

Read the first sentence; then complete the second sentence with an idiomatic adjective phrase.

His odd behavior didn't amuse us.

	We weren't <u>amused by his odd behavior</u> .
1.	Their success amazed us.
	We were
2.	The soundtrack captivated the moviegoers.
	The moviegoers were
3.	His soft voice bewitched her.
	She was
4.	Martin's athletic ability fascinated everyone in school.
	Everyone in school was
5.	The color of the sunset entranced the couple.
	The couple was
6.	The young boy charmed his teacher.
	The teacher was
7.	My friend's sister beguiled me.
	Lwas

Exercise 2b

When adjectives are formed from verbs referring to emotions, such as those above, which preposition is commonly used?

Exercise 3a

Example:

Read the first sentence; then complete the second sentence with an idiomatic adjective phrase, using the noun + preposition from the first sentence.

We found the desert isle enchanting. We were enchanted by the desert isle.

1.	The symphony's performance of Beethoven's Fifth was enthralling.
	We were
2.	I thought the book was quite amusing.
	I was quite
3.	Her smile was beguiling.
	He was
4.	We thought the band was amazing.
	We were
5.	Our guide was extremely charming.
	We were extremely
6.	They found the small cottage enchanting.
	They were
7.	I think his paintings are fascinating.
	I am

Exercise 3b

Is the past participle (-en form) or the present participle (-ing form) used to refer to the experiencer?

Is the past participle (-en form) or the present participle (-ing form) used to refer to the cause of the experience?

Read the first question; then write a second question with an idiomatic adjective phrase.

Ex	mample: Did Marilyn bewitch you? Were you bewitched by Marilyn?
1.	Did the speech captivate the audience?
2.	Did Segovia enthrall the young musicians?
3.	Did his personality entrance you?
4.	Did the novel fascinate you?
5.	Didn't his memory amaze you?
6.	Didn't her conversation amuse you?
7.	Didn't the welcome gift charm the guests?
8.	Didn't the entire evening enchant you?

Read the movie review from the magazine Movies Now; then answer the questions about it.

Loose Strings ***

Moviegoers looking for enchantment must see Loose Strings, a film about two sisters who are charmed by the same man but for different reasons. Jenny is beguiled by Gene's music. They meet in the community orchestra when Gene captivates the audience with his solo performance. Ironically, Julie doesn't like music much at all. When she first meets Gene, they are at the zoo watching otters. Both are amused by the playfulness of the animals. Gene finds both women fascinating and thinks he is in love with both. The plot unfolds cleverly; if you go to this movie, you will be bewitched by the way three loose strings are pulled together.

Example: What movie will readers of *Movies Now* be enchanted by? They will be enchanted by *Loose Strings*.

1.	Who are Jenny and Julie charmed by?
2.	What is Jenny beguiled by?
3.	Who is captivated by Gene's solo performance?
4.	What are both Gene and Julie amused by?
5.	Who is Gene fascinated by?
6.	What will moviegoers be bewitched by?

Unit 2: Surprise

appalled by something

We were appalled by his rudeness.

They were appalled by her remarks.

astonished by something

I was astonished by her great success.

They were astonished by my stupidity.

awed by someone or something

They were awed by the young boy who had composed the symphony.

The master was awed by the skill of the apprentice.

dumbfounded by something

We were dumbfounded by his rejection.

They were dumbfounded by the couple's decision to elope.

frightened by someone or something

The children were frightened by the thunder.

I was frightened by the sudden noise.

overwhelmed by something

The freshmen were overwhelmed by the first day of college.

We were overwhelmed by the crowds downtown today.

scared by someone or something

The children were scared by the old man with the gruff voice.

The hikers were scared by the bear.

shocked by something

We were shocked by the news.

They were shocked by his decision to leave home.

startled by something

I was startled by the telephone.

The community was startled by the morning headlines.

surprised by someone or something

We were surprised by Morgan.

The campers were surprised by the change in weather.

Exercise 1a

Fill in the blanks with the correct adjectives.

Example: The children were <u>scared</u> by Mrs. Temple's witch costume.

- **1.** We were _____ by the results.
- 2. I was ______ by the alarm clock.
- 3. My parents were _____ by the poor condition of my apartment.
- **4.** Liz is ______ by the demands of her new job.
- 5. The jogger was _____ by a dog.
- **6.** Mr. Edwards was ______ by Joey's progress.
- 7. We were _____ by their behavior.
- 8. The tourists were _____ by the size of the volcano.

appalled astonished awed frightened overwhelmed shocked startled surprised

Exercise 1b

The adjectives in this unit are past participles (-en verb forms). When these adjectives are used, what verb usually preceeds them? Which proposition usually follows?

Read the first sentence; then complete the second sentence with an idiomatic adjective phrase.

Ex	ample:	His bad language appalled my parents. My parents were appalled by his bad language.
1.	Their fai	ilure surprised us.
	We were	·
2.	The you	ng boy's talent astonished his teachers.
	The tead	chers were
3.	The fire	alarm startled the audience.
	The aud	ience was
4.	The surg	geon's intellect awed the interns.
	The inte	erns were
5.	The viol	ent threats shocked her.
	She was	
6.	The kno	ck at the door scared us.
	We were	:
7.	Her inte	rest in Craig dumbfounded her friends.
	Her frier	nds were
8.	The assign	gnment overwhelmed the new employee.
	The new	employee was

Read the first sentence; then complete the second sentence with an idiomatic adjective phrase.

Example:		The music teacher found her vocal agility astonishing. The music teacher was astonished by her vocal agility.
1.	We foun	nd the main character in the story frightening.
	We were	2
2.	The adn	ninistration thought his disrespect was appalling.
	The adn	ninistration was
3.	The sire	ns were startling.
	The elde	erly couple was
4.	The stud	lents' enthusiasm was overwhelming.
	The tead	chers were
5.	His high	a level of performance is very surprising.
	We are v	very
6.	They for	and his appearance shocking.
	They we	re
7.	The tour	rists found the architecture astonishing.
	The tour	rists were
8.	The inci	dent was dumbfounding.
	We were	

Read the first question; then write a second question with an idiomatic adjective phrase. Note that when you use a negative question, you are seeking agreement from your listener for the positive statement.

Weren't you dumbfounded by his lecture?	
1.	Didn't the eloquence of his speech astonish you?
2.	Didn't his decision surprise you?
3.	Didn't their description of the crime shock you?
4.	Didn't her loud sneezes startle you?
5.	Didn't the power outage scare you?
6.	Didn't your duties overwhelm you?
7.	Didn't the neighbors' impoliteness appall you?
8.	Didn't the novel frighten you?