

WRITING DEVELOPMENT

In her book, *The Writing Revolution* Judith Hochman tells us that students' problems with reading comprehension, as well with writing essays, occur because they have not been taught systematically to write ... to which her book gives a step-by-step guide.

The Writing Development exercises here are adapted from her programme.

The 'Roaring Twenties' II – Entertainment, Prohibition and Crime

4. Appositives

An appositive is a noun-phrase placed beside a noun to explain it more fully. It is a key tool in making your sentences more interesting and more concise; they are useful to convey a large amount of information in the minimum number of words.

Consider the two sentences.

“The 'Black Bottom Stomp' was first recorded by Jelly Roll Morton. It was named after a Black neighbourhood in Detroit.”

Using an appositive, this could be rendered:

“The 'Black Bottom Stomp', named after a Black neighbourhood in Detroit, was first recorded by Jelly Roll Morton.”

Or “Named after a Black neighbourhood in Detroit, the 'Black Bottom Stomp' was first recorded by Jelly Roll Morton.”

1. Identify the appositive in the following sentences:

- In 1927, *The Jazz Singer*, a movie starring Al Jolson, was the first 'talkie'.
- The Charleston – a fast dance developed in Black communities – was adopted by flappers, who danced it alone to challenge the 'drys' who wouldn't go out to clubs.

2. Suggest suitable appositives to complete the following sentences:

- Film stars like Clara Bow, _____, were a role model for new fashions and social behaviours.
- Al Capone, _____, thought to have murdered more than 200 opponents”.
- The Iroquois lived in longhouses, _____.

3. Create a sentence using the given appositive:

- the first jazz record
- famous as examples of the high standards police SHOULD achieve

4. Brainstorm a range of suggested appositives for 'Prohibition' in the following sentence. Then decide which would be the best in the specific context of the sentence:

- Prohibition in 1920s America, _____, is often regarded as a failure.

5. One of the key features of my style of writing, and a main way in which I make my writing so dense, is the use of varied and complex appositives. This webpage contains some – can you find them?