

MISPLACED MODIFIERS

A **misplaced modifier** is a word, phrase, or clause that is improperly separated from the word it describes.



I have a funny story. Yesterday I saw a dog on the way to the coffee shop.

Why would a dog go to a coffee shop?

The dog wasn't going to the coffee shop. I was. A man leaving was walking the dog drinking a cup of coffee.

Dogs don't drink coffee.

No, the man was drinking the coffee he had bought slowly, and...

Listen! He was trying to drink *the coffee* slowly while walking unsuccessfully.

Why did he buy the coffee slowly?

Why would he walk unsuccessfully?

He was trying to both drink his coffee and walk the dog without success.

So it was *the dog* that wasn't successful.

The dog was fine! Drinking his coffee, the dog made him trip and fall.

I thought you said dogs don't drink coffee.

Aargh!!! Forget it!

When are we going to get to the funny story?