

31 Adjectives that only come before a noun

Activity A

Common combinations

There are some adjectives in English that can only be used in attributive position in a sentence, which means they can only be placed **before** a noun. Example: *It is **utter** madness to go out during a typhoon.* (We cannot write: *the madness is utter.*) Some of the following sentences contain this kind of adjective but some sentences have adjectives that can be used in both positions. Decide which of the b) sentences are incorrect and delete them. Check your answers in the dictionary.

Delete incorrect sentences.

- 1 a) I met a **high-flying** female lawyer at the conference.
b) The female lawyer who I met at the conference was **high-flying**.
- 2 a) There have been **devastating** consequences following the earthquake.
b) The consequences of the earthquake have been **devastating**.
- 3 a) His behaviour at school is terrible but there are **mitigating** factors.
b) His behaviour at school is terrible but there are factors that are **mitigating**.
- 4 a) That was the **chief** reason why I contacted you.
b) That reason why I contacted you was **chief**.
- 5 a) There is a **significant** difference in the results compared to last year.
b) The difference in the results compared to last year is **significant**.
- 6 a) Only the police can use this **dedicated** radio frequency.
b) Only the police can use this radio frequency that is **dedicated**.

Activity B

This kind of adjective often forms strong collocations with specific nouns—you hear and see the combinations frequently. Here are some sentences that have been separated after the adjective (in bold). Match the beginning of each sentence with its most suitable ending. Check your answers and then look up the meanings of any news words in the dictionary.

Match the beginning of each sentence with the best ending:

1 It is important for the judge to consider all mitigating	a chef first prize in the baking competition.
2 We thought he was being kind but then we discovered he had ulterior	b purpose of warning you about the budget cuts.
3 I sent that email with the express	c education to prepare them for the future.
4 As I looked out of the plane I felt nothing but sheer	d boy when he was first employed by the company.
5 As the disease spreads, rogue	e circumstances when deciding on the punishment for a crime.
6 My grandfather was a mere	f cells attack different parts of the body.
7 It is important for children to get an all-round	g closure of the hospital.
8 We are pleased to award this aspiring	h voice campaigning for the rights of minorities.
9 In the 1950s, he was a lone	i terror at the thought of jumping out with only my parachute to save me.
10 Despite protesting, we were not able to prevent the eventual	j motives for helping us.