Adverbs as a Word Class

Worksheet 1: Adverb, Adverbial, Adverb Phrase

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: B2 (CEFR)

Reference: A Class Is Not a Job

At B2 it becomes essential to separate two ideas that learners often merge:

Term	What it means	Example
Adverb *a word class*	A single word belonging to the category (like 'noun' or 'verb')	**quickly**, **often**, **here**, **very**
Adverb phrase *a phrase headed by an adverb*	An adverb plus its own modifiers	**very quickly indeed**, **far too often**
Adverbial *a function*	Any unit doing the *job* of an adverb — it may be a phrase or a clause, and may contain no adverb at all	He left **in a hurry**. (prep. phrase) He left **when it ended**. (clause) He left **last Tuesday**. (noun phrase)

The point: every adverb can be adverbial, but not every adverbial contains an adverb. *Quickly* and *in a hurry* do the same job; only one is an adverb.

Part A – Classify the Underlined Unit

For each underlined unit, write (i) its word class or phrase type and (ii) whether it is functioning as an adverbial.

#	Sentence	Type	Adverbial?
1	She answered <u>immediately</u>.		
2	She answered <u>without hesitation</u>.		
3	She answered <u>the moment I asked</u>.		
4	She answered <u>every question</u>.		
5	He spoke <u>surprisingly frankly</u>.		
6	He spoke <u>last night</u>.		
7	The results were <u>extremely</u> disappointing.		
8	<u>Given the circumstances</u>, the decision was fair.		

Part B – Four Tests for Adverbhood

1. Substitution: can it be replaced by a single -ly word? **2. Mobility:** can it move to the front or end?
3. Question: does it answer how / when / where / why / how often / to what degree?
4. Omission: can it be removed and leave a grammatical sentence?

Apply the tests to decide whether the bold word is an adverb. Write YES or NO and name the test that decided it.

#	Sentence	Adverb?	Test used
1	He arrived **home** at midnight.		
2	He built a **home** in the mountains.		
3	The lecture was **rather** dull.		
4	We meet **weekly**.		
5	The **weekly** meeting was cancelled.		
6	She is **hardly** the ideal candidate.		

Score: _____ / 20

Worksheet 2: Adverb, Preposition or Particle?

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: B2 (CEFR)

Reference: The Same Word, Three Classes

Words such as *up, down, in, out, over, on, off, through, past, around* can belong to three different classes depending on the structure around them.

Class	Structure	Example
Preposition	Followed by a noun phrase (its object) — the two cannot be separated	He ran **up** *the hill*. *NOT: He ran the hill up.*
Particle *(part of a phrasal verb)*	Bonded to the verb; forms a new meaning; can move round a noun object	He looked **up** *the word*. / He looked *the word* **up**.
Adverb	No object at all; gives direction or place	He looked **up** and smiled.

The pronoun test: with a particle, a pronoun object *must* come between verb and particle — "He looked it up" ✓ / "He looked up it" ✗. With a preposition, the pronoun must follow — "He ran up it" ✓.

Part A – Identify the Class

Write P (preposition), PART (particle) or ADV (adverb) for each bold word. Apply the pronoun test where possible.

#	Sentence	P / PART / ADV
1	Please turn the radio **down**.	
2	She walked **down** the corridor.	
3	The prices came **down** last quarter.	
4	He climbed **over** the fence.	
5	The meeting is **over**.	
6	Think it **over** before you decide.	
7	The plane took **off** late.	
8	Take your shoes **off**.	
9	He fell **off** the ladder.	
10	She has gone **out**.	

Part B – Prove It

> **For each pair, rewrite using a pronoun object. State which sentence proves the word is a particle and which proves it is a preposition.**

1. **a.** He ran *up* the stairs. **b.** He rang *up* his brother.

2. **a.** She got *on* the bus. **b.** She put *on* her coat.

3. **a.** They went *through* the tunnel. **b.** They went *through* the accounts.

Part C – Ambiguity

> **Each sentence has two readings depending on the class of the bold word. Explain both.**

1. The soldiers looked **over** the wall.

2. She turned **in** her badge.

3. He ran **through** the report.

Score: _____ / 25

Worksheet 3: Position, Scope and Meaning

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: B2 (CEFR)

Reference: Three Positions, and Why They Matter

Position	Where	Typical adverbs
Front	Before the subject	Sentence adverbs, time and connecting adverbs: *Fortunately, Yesterday, However*
Mid	After the first auxiliary; after *be*; otherwise before the main verb	Frequency and degree: *always, often, nearly, completely, just*
End	After the verb and its object	Manner, place, definite time: *carefully, outside, at six*

Focusing adverbs — *only, even, just, also, mainly, particularly* — attach to whatever *follows* them. Moving them changes what the sentence asserts.

Part A – Mid Position

Insert the adverb in mid position. Watch the auxiliaries and the verb *be*.

1. She has finished the report. *(already)*

2. He is late for meetings. *(never)*

3. They would have told us. *(certainly)*

4. I understand what you mean. *(completely)*

5. The results have been published. *(only just)*

6. Do you eat meat? *(ever)*

Part B – The Scope of 'Only'

Place *only* in each position and explain what the sentence then means.

Base sentence: *The committee approved the proposal on Friday.*

#	Position of 'only'	Meaning

1	Only the committee approved…	
2	The committee only approved…	
3	The committee approved only the proposal…	
4	The committee approved the proposal only on Friday.	

Part C – Which Reading?

> **Explain the difference in meaning within each pair.**

1. **a.** He didn't leave *willingly*. **b.** *Willingly,* he didn't leave.

2. **a.** She *naturally* answered the question. **b.** She answered the question *naturally*.

3. **a.** They *clearly* stated their position. **b.** They stated their position *clearly*.

4. **a.** *Honestly,* he answered every question. **b.** He answered every question *honestly*.

Part D – Correct the Position

> **Each sentence is grammatical but the adverb is badly placed. Improve it.**

1. She speaks very well English.

2. I go often to the cinema at the weekend.

3. He plays always the same song.

4. We saw yesterday your brother in town.

Score: _____ / 30

Worksheet 4: Analysis, Editing and Extended Writing

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: B2 (CEFR)

Part A – Text Analysis

Remote working was, admittedly, adopted rather hastily in 2020, and the consequences are still being assessed. Companies that had previously resisted it now insist, somewhat awkwardly, that they had always intended to move in that direction. Employees, meanwhile, report that they work considerably longer hours at home, though they commute far less. Curiously, both sides claim the arrangement suits them.

The truth is probably more complicated. Productivity has not risen dramatically; nor has it collapsed. What has changed, apparently irreversibly, is the expectation that work happens exclusively in one building.

Questions

1. Identify **four** sentence adverbs (disjuncts) and explain what each one signals about the writer's stance.

   _____

   _____

2. Find one adverb modifying **another adverb** and one modifying an **adjective**.

   _____

3. "they work considerably longer hours … though they commute far less." Identify the word class of *far* here and state what it modifies.

   _____

4. The phrase *apparently irreversibly* is placed between commas. What would be lost if it were moved to the front of the sentence?

   _____

5. Find an adverbial that is **not** an adverb, and identify what type of unit it is.

   _____

Part B – Editing for Register and Position

> **Rewrite the paragraph, correcting adverb errors and raising the register to formal written English. There are seven issues.**

The company done really good last year, but the board reacted quite slow to the new competition. Hopefully — and I say this honest — they will move quicker this time. They have only announced the strategy yesterday, and staff have hardly no information about it. Frankly speaking, everybody is nearly certain that things will change dramatical.

_____

Part C – Extended Writing

Write **150–180 words** on **one** of the following. Maintain a consistently formal register.

Topic A: Assess whether social media has changed the way people read.	**Topic B:** Assess whether the ability to work anywhere has made workers freer or less free.

> **You must include and underline: (1) two sentence adverbs; (2) one adverb in mid position with a perfect or modal auxiliary; (3) one focusing adverb (*only, even, particularly*) placed to control scope precisely; (4) one adverb modifying an adjective; (5) one adverbial that is not an adverb.**

Chosen topic: ___ A ___ B Word count: _____ Requirements met: _____ / 5

Score: _____ / 35

Answer Key & Teacher Notes

For teacher use only — B2 Level, Adverbs as a Word Class

Worksheet 1 – Part A

#	Type	Adverbial?
1	adverb	Yes
2	prepositional phrase	Yes
3	subordinate (time) clause	Yes
4	noun phrase	No — it is the direct object
5	adverb phrase (adverb + adverb head)	Yes
6	noun phrase	Yes — a noun phrase functioning adverbially
7	adverb (degree)	No — it modifies the adjective, it is not a clause adverbial
8	non-finite / participial clause	Yes

> *Items 4 and 6 are the teaching pair: both are noun phrases, but only one is adverbial. Item 7 makes the second point — an adverb is not automatically an adverbial.*

Worksheet 1 – Part B

#	Adverb?	Reasoning
1	YES	Answers 'where' and takes no preposition — a directional adverb.
2	NO	Noun — it has an article and is the object of 'built'.
3	YES	Degree adverb modifying 'dull'; substitutes with 'quite/fairly'.
4	YES	Answers 'how often'; can move ('Weekly, we meet').
5	NO	Adjective — it premodifies the noun 'meeting'.
6	YES	A degree adverb with a negative meaning, modifying the whole predicate.

Worksheet 2 – Part A

1 PART · 2 P · 3 ADV · 4 P · 5 ADV ***(or adjective — accept with justification)*** **· 6 PART · 7 PART · 8 PART · 9 P · 10 ADV**

> *Item 5 is genuinely contested: many grammars treat 'over' in "The meeting is over" as an adjective (it follows a linking verb and can be modified: 'almost over'). Reward students who notice the problem.*

Worksheet 2 – Part B

#	Answer
1	**a. He ran up them. (preposition — the pronoun follows). b. He rang him up. (particle — the pronoun must precede).**
2	**a. She got on it. (preposition). b. She put it on. (particle).**
3	**a. They went through it (the tunnel) — literal, preposition. b. They went through them — also a preposition, but the meaning is idiomatic ('examined'). This pair shows that idiomatic meaning does not by itself make a particle: 'go through' is a prepositional verb, not a separable phrasal verb.**

Worksheet 2 – Part C

#	Both readings
1	**Preposition: they gazed across the top of the wall. Particle ('look over' = inspect): they examined the wall.**
2	**Particle ('turn in' = hand over): she surrendered her badge. Preposition: she rotated while inside her badge — literally impossible, which is why only the particle reading survives. Accept students who note the second reading is blocked by meaning, not grammar.**
3	**Preposition (literal): he physically ran through it. Prepositional verb ('run through' = review quickly): he skimmed it.**

Worksheet 3 – Part A

1 She has already finished the report. **2** He is never late for meetings. *(after 'be')* **3** They would certainly have told us. *(after the first auxiliary)* **4** I completely understand what you mean. **5** The results have only just been published. **6** Do you ever eat meat?

Worksheet 3 – Part B (Scope of 'only')

#	Meaning
1	**Nobody else approved it — the committee alone did.**
2	**They approved it and did nothing more (they did not fund it, implement it, etc.). Colloquially it is also used for readings 3 and 4 — worth discussing.**
3	**They approved that one thing and nothing else.**
4	**Friday was the only day on which approval happened — implying delay or a single occasion.**

> *Prescriptively, only belongs immediately before the element it focuses. In speech, mid position plus stress does the work instead. Make the register distinction explicit rather than banning position 2.*

Worksheet 3 – Part C

#	Answer

1	**a. He left, but not willingly. b. Odd/marked: 'willingly' would have to comment on the whole clause, which it cannot — 'willingly' is a manner adverb, not a disjunct. This shows that fronting is not available to every adverb.**
2	**a. Of course she answered (disjunct). b. She answered in a natural, relaxed manner (manner adverb).**
3	**a. It is obvious that they stated it (disjunct). b. Their statement was expressed with clarity (manner).**
4	**a. I am being honest with you as the speaker (style disjunct). b. His answers were truthful (manner).**

Worksheet 3 – Part D

1 She speaks English very well. **2** I often go to the cinema at the weekend. **3** He always plays the same song. **4** We saw your brother in town yesterday.

> *All four errors come from L1 transfer (adverb between verb and object). The single most useful rule for B2 learners: nothing separates an English verb from its direct object.*

Worksheet 4 – Part A

Q	Answer
1	**admittedly (concession — the writer grants a point); somewhat awkwardly (evaluative, slightly critical); meanwhile (connective/contrast); curiously (the writer finds it odd); apparently (hedged evidence); probably (hedged certainty). Any four with sensible commentary.**
2	**Adverb + adverb: 'rather hastily', 'apparently irreversibly', 'far less'. Adverb + adjective: 'more complicated' (more), or 'considerably longer'.**
3	**'Far' is a degree adverb modifying the comparative adverb 'less'.**
4	**Between commas it modifies specifically 'what has changed' and is heard as a parenthetical hedge on that change. Fronted, it would take scope over the entire sentence, weakening the link to the verb and sounding like a comment on the act of writing.**
5	**'in 2020' (prepositional phrase); 'at home' (prepositional phrase); 'in that direction' (prepositional phrase); 'in one building' (prepositional phrase).**

Worksheet 4 – Part B (Model rewrite)

The company performed very well last year, but the board reacted rather slowly to the new competition. It is to be hoped that it will move more quickly this time. The strategy was announced only yesterday, and staff have almost no information about it. Frankly, almost everyone is certain that matters will change dramatically.

#	Issue	Reason
1	**done really good → performed very well**	non-standard verb; 'good' is an adjective

2	**quite slow → rather slowly**	adverb required after an action verb
3	**Hopefully → It is to be hoped that**	register: the disjunct 'hopefully' is avoided in very formal prose
4	**I say this honest → frankly / honestly**	adjective used for adverb; also cut for register
5	**only announced … yesterday → announced only yesterday**	scope: 'only' should sit before what it focuses
6	**hardly no → hardly any / almost no**	double negative — 'hardly' is already negative
7	**dramatical → dramatically**	-ic → -ally; 'dramatical' is not current English

> *'Nearly certain' → 'almost certain' is an eighth, subtler issue: 'nearly' collocates poorly with gradable certainty adjectives. Accept either treatment.*

Worksheet 4 – Part C: Marking Rubric

Criterion	Descriptor	Marks
Structural range	All five required features present and correctly identified	0–5
Scope control	Focusing adverb placed so the intended meaning is unambiguous	0–4
Position	Mid position handled correctly with auxiliaries; nothing separates verb from object	0–3
Register	Consistently formal; disjuncts appropriate to written academic style	0–3
Task & coherence	150–180 words; argument developed, adverbs serve the argument	0–3