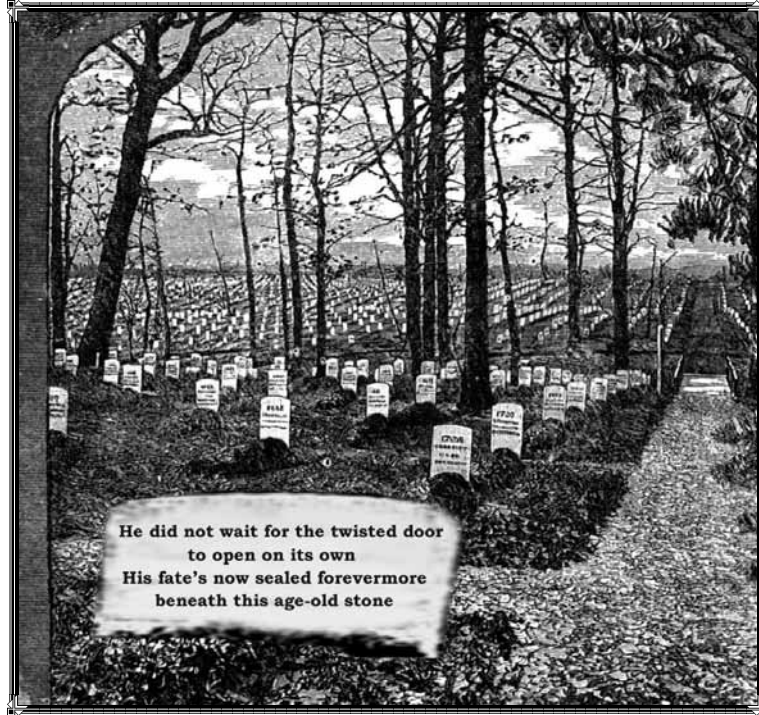


CHAPTER NINETEEN 19



“My goodness, Henry. Look where we are. We’re in a cemetery!”

The wind continues to whistle: “Henry . . . Henry . . .”

There are tombstones everywhere, of all sizes, of all sorts.

“How did we end up in a cemetery?” says Henry, with a worried look.

“I don’t like it. I want to go back,” he says, just like a spoiled child.

“You want to go back? Don’t make me laugh, Henry.

Where do you want to go back to exactly?”

“I don’t know but—”

“Oh, be quiet. You know very well that if we go back . . .”

I cut short my reply because my eyes are abruptly drawn to a tombstone that is not like the others.

Indeed, its epitaph is quite curious, as can be witnessed by the mysterious inscription:

**He did not wait for the twisted door
to open on its own
His fate’s now sealed forevermore
beneath this age-old stone**

We look at each other. What does this epitaph mean?

Who did not wait?

READING COMPREHENSION

During this session,

just answer the



1. For now, Henry does not seem to be the bravest child in the world. Why?

2. What are the scariest things the children see and hear in the cemetery?

3. Do you think Henry had the worst idea of all by wanting to go back?

4. Why is the epitaph on the tombstone probably the strangest epitaph of all?

5. First, can you pick out the five hardest words in the epitaph and define them?

Second, can you give your best guess as to what the epitaph means?



SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVES

DETECTIVE

In chapter 18, you learned that comparative adjectives compare two things. But **superlative adjectives** compare *three or more things*. Superlative adjectives show that they have **the most** of a quality.



Tombstone A



Tombstone B



Tombstone C

Tombstone A is a small tombstone. Tombstone A is smaller than Tombstone B. Tombstone A is also smaller than Tombstone C. Therefore, Tombstone A is **the smallest** tombstone of all. **Smallest** is called a superlative adjective. Notice that it is preceded by the word **the**. Since *small*, a positive adjective, is made up of only 1 syllable, the superlative adjective is formed by adding the ending **-est**. However, for most adjectives made up of 2 syllables and all adjectives made up of 3 or more syllables, the superlative adjective is formed by putting the word **most** before the adjective: *Tombstone C is **the most impressive** tombstone of all.* Now, compare the **Table of Clues 33** on page 115 with the **Table of Clues 36**. Then fill in the blanks.

| TABLE OF CLUES 36 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Forming Regular Superlative Adjectives | | |
| Positive Adjective | Superlative Adjective Preceded by <i>the</i> | Write in the rules for forming superlative adjective endings! |
| old young | the old _____ _____ young _____ | Just add the ending _____ to 1-syllable positive adjectives. |
| nice brave | _____ nice _____ _____ brave _____ | If the 1-syllable adjective already ends in the letter _____, just add the letters _____. |
| red big | _____ red _____ the big _____ | If the 1-syllable adjective is consonant + vowel + consonant, double the last _____ and add the ending _____. |
| scary tasty | _____ scar _____ _____ tast _____ | If a 2-syllable adjective ends in the letter _____, change that letter to _____ and add the ending _____. |
| cautious (2) patient (2) beautiful (3) delicious (3) | the most cautious _____ patient _____ beautiful _____ delicious | For most 2-syllable adjectives that do not end in the letter y , and for all 3-or-more-syllable adjectives, put the word _____ before the adjective. |

☛ QUIZ YOURSELF

A. Fill in the blanks using the superlative form of the adjective in parentheses. The first one has been done for you.


1. (pretty) That cloud is one of the prettiest things in the sky.
2. (mysterious) The inscription is _____ one I have ever seen.
3. (scary) That tombstone is _____ one in the cemetery.
4. (curious) The epitaph was _____ epitaph of all.
5. (loud) The whistling of the wind was _____ I had ever heard.
6. (difficult) That epitaph is _____ of all to decipher.
7. (old) The house was _____ one in the neighborhood.

B. Underline the positive adjective in the introductory sentence. Then fill in the blanks with the comparative and superlative forms of the underlined adjective. The first one has been done for you.

1. The first reply was short. The second reply was shorter. But the third reply was _____ the shortest of all.

2. Math is difficult.  Science is _____.
But language is _____ subject of all.

3. Dresses are expensive. Horse carriages are _____.
But houses are _____ of all.

4. An insect is smart.  A mouse is _____.
But humans are _____ animals in the whole world.

5. A pillow is light.  A feather is . But air is one of _____ things that can be found anywhere.

6. A whistle is noisy. The bark of a dog is _____. But that train is _____ thing I have ever heard.

THE SAME EXCEPTIONS CAN APPLY –

SO PLEASE, OH PLEASE, DO NOT CRY!

You learned that *most* 2-syllable superlative adjectives are preceded by the word **most**. However, a few may take the **-est** ending! Here are several examples showing the positive adjective, the comparative adjective, and then the superlative adjective:

- simple – simpler – **simplest**
- quiet – quieter – **quietest**
- yellow – yellower – **yellowest**
- narrow – narrower – **narrowest**



And besides the examples above, there are superlative adjectives that are irregular! Take a careful look at the third column in the **Table of Clues 37**.

| TABLE OF CLUES 37 | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Irregular Superlative Adjectives | | |
| Positive Adjective Revisited | Comparative Adjective Revisited | Superlative Adjective |
| good | better | best |
| bad | worse | worst |
| ill | worse | worst |
| far (distance) | farther | farthest |
| far (degree) | further | furthest |
| little (quantity) | less | least |
| much | more | most |
| many | more | most |

BE INVENTIVE!



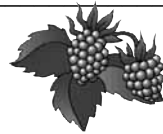
Now it's time to be a little inventive. Look at the positive adjective on the left and the three nouns on the right. Can you write three sentences using the positive adjective, followed by the comparative adjective, and then the superlative adjective? Watch out! The nouns are not necessarily in the right order! The first one has been done for you. In parentheses are a few examples of how you could end your sentence. Can you make up your own original endings?

1. **scary** **haunted house, cemetery, dinosaur**

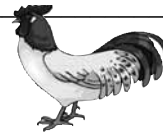
A cemetery is scary, but a haunted house is scarier. However, a dinosaur is the scariest thing (of all!) (I have ever seen/eaten/heard, etc.) (in the world!)

2. **beautiful** flower, Miss Riley, sky

3. **good** seeds, crackers, berries



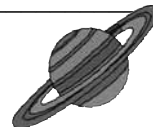
4. **ill** chick, hen, rooster



5. **bad** meatloaf, medicine, fluoride treatment



6. **far** Pluto, Mars, Saturn



The Twisted Times

The only newspaper in the world
that keeps you in the loop!

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

AND UNDERLINE THE CORRECT WORDS WHILE YOU'RE READING!

Bottom of Frances's Note Found!

Exclusive Interview With Detective Edwards
Special Report By Sarah Riley
The Twisted Times

REPORTER RILEY: Good morning, Detective Edwards. May I ask you about the **(later, latest)** updates concerning Frances? Also, how is the case proceeding?

DETECTIVE EDWARDS: Good morning, Miss Riley. I must admit that Frances's disappearance is one of the **(most difficult, difficult)** cases I have ever worked on.

Indeed, I am having a **(harder, hardest)** time putting the pieces together than I would have ever imagined. You see, I thought it was going to be **(a, an) (more easy, easier)** case to solve. I was wrong.

REPORTER RILEY: Oh, Detective. I have confidence in you. You are the **(best, better)** detective I know. If anyone can solve this case, you can.

DETECTIVE EDWARDS: Thank you for your confidence. The **(most, more)** important update of all is that the bottom half of the note was just found. You might remember that Mrs. Leeds found the upper portion of the note, which referred to a peculiar old house that intrigued Frances. You might also remember that the last word written on it was *location*. I've always had the **(funnier, funniest)** feeling that if we could find the bottom half of the note, we might find Frances. And now we have it.

REPORTER RILEY: Where exactly was the **(lower, more lowest)** half of the note found, and who found it?

DETECTIVE EDWARDS: Well, two of my detectives noticed a curious scrap of paper with some interesting writing on it as they were walking through the old cemetery. Actually, it was the **(younger, youngest), (shortest, shorter)** detective who discovered it. The **(taller, tallest), (more older, older)** detective was busy reading an epitaph that he described as the **(strangest, stranger)** epitaph he had ever seen. Anyway, Mr. Ize, the **(elder, most eldest)** of the two, realized the importance of the scrap of paper and promptly brought it to my office.

REPORTER RILEY: Oh, Detective. This case is one of the **(more, most)** intriguing cases I have ever come across!

DETECTIVE EDWARDS: And challenging. Now that I have the bottom part of the note, I can't figure out what the writing on it means!

REPORTER RILEY: I am confused.

DETECTIVE EDWARDS: Frances is even **(smarter, more smarter)** than we thought. She obviously wanted to keep the location of the house to herself, so she wrote the location in some sort of code!

REPORTER RILEY: She wrote the location of the house in code? That is the **(worse, worst)** thing I could have ever imagined and the **(most far, furthest)** thing from my mind! What sort of code?

DETECTIVE EDWARDS: Here, I'll show you. *(He pulls out the scrap of paper from his pocket.)*

MAX AHN LX BL BG
YKHGM HY MAX VXF XM XR