Adjectives:

Adjectives are parts of speech modifying, or giving more information about, nouns. A noun, as you will remember, refers to a person, place, or thing. Adjectives describe the person, place, or thing being discussed, and usually appear in front of nouns. Remember that adjectives can describe all sensory information such as color, temperature, and appearance. They tell you how something looks, how it tastes, smells, and feels. Adjectives give you clues about what is happening in a situation.

Consider the difference between the following sentences:

1. Look, an animal is walking this way!
2. Look, a ferocious, wild animal is walking this way!

After hearing the first sentence, you might not be alarmed, or especially nervous that an animal of some kind was coming towards you. But once you hear about the ferocious, wild nature or appearance of the animal, you obviously would feel more concern for your safety.

a) Find the difference between the following sentences by underlining the adjectives:

1. During my drive this morning I was blinded by the sun.
2. During my long, lonely drive this spring morning I was blinded by the burning, yellow sun.

Which sentence contains more descriptive information about the nouns (drive) (morning) (sun)? Do the adjectives help you understand more about the action that occurred in the more descriptive sentence?

If your adjective begins with a vowel sound, you need to use the article “an” instead of “a.” If your adjective begins with a consonant, you need to use the article “a” instead of “an.”

b) Fill in the blanks in the following sentences to make the meaning clearer, and provide more description concerning the people and things mentioned.

1. I can see why you bought that ______, ______ house!
2. While I walked through the ________ town, I spied a/an ________, ________ friend waving at me.
3. Are you looking for a/an ________, ________ car? Or do you want a/an ________, ________ truck?

Draw from this list of common adjectives if you need help filling in the blanks:

old, young, big, little, stout, thin, black, purple, angry, helpful, wonderful, obnoxious, indecent, loud, quiet, busy, beautiful, ugly, eloquent, sweet, sour, rough, smooth, cold, hot, fresh, rotten, smooth, rough, painful, gentle, rich, poor, friendly, rude, round, pointed, circular, straight, hollow, full, clean, dirty, long, short, fuzzy, good, bad, nasty, decent

1 See worksheet on articles for more information.
Answers to a)
   1. During my drive this morning I was blinded by the sun.
   2. During my long, lonely drive this spring morning I was blinded by the burning, yellow sun.

Possible Answers to b):
   1. I can see why you bought that beautiful, quiet house!
   2. While I walked through the busy town, I spied an old friend waving at me.
   3. Are you looking for a little, black car? Or do you want a big, purple truck?