Prepositional Phrases Used as Adjectives and Adverbs

A prepositional phrase that modifies a noun or pronoun is functioning as an adjective phrase. Remember that adjectives tell what kind, how many, or which one.

A prepositional phrase that modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb is functioning as an adverb phrase. Remember that adverbs tell how, when, where, how often, and to what extent.

Examples:
The whale with the unusual markings is our favorite.
(adjective phrase; tells which whale)
The whales in the water park show performed with ease.
(adverb phrase; tells how)

Directions

Underline the adjective phrase in each sentence. Write the word it modifies.

1. Horseshoe crabs resemble hard hats with long tails. ________________________________
2. They are close relatives of spiders. ________________________________
3. The mouth of the horseshoe crab is well hidden. ________________________________
4. It is an opening underneath the crab’s body. ________________________________

Underline the adverb phrase in each sentence. Write the word(s) it modifies.

5. Whales are the largest mammals that live on the Earth. ________________________________
6. Whales behave with great intelligence. ________________________________
7. A whale must breathe air through its lungs. ________________________________
8. Whales can dive for long periods. ________________________________

Underline each prepositional phrase. Then, circle ADJ for adjective phrases or ADV for adverb phrases.

9. One rock sample from the moon is 4,720 million years old. ADJ ADV
10. The rock was collected by the Apollo space mission. ADJ ADV
11. The daytime temperature on the lunar equator is 243°F. ADJ ADV
12. A black hole is formed by a star’s complete collapse. ADJ ADV
13. About 150 meteorites from space pound the Earth each year. ADJ ADV
14. An Alaskan, Mrs. E. H. Hodges, is the only person hurt by a falling meteorite. ADJ ADV
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Answer Key

1. with long tails; hats
2. of spiders; relatives
3. of the horseshoe crab; mouth
4. underneath the crab’s body; opening
5. on the earth; live
6. with great intelligence; behave
7. through its lungs; must breathe
8. for long periods; can dive
9. from the moon; ADJ
10. by the Apollo space mission; ADV
11. on the lunar equator; ADJ
12. by a star’s complete collapse; ADV
13. from space; ADJ
14. by a falling meteorite; ADV