Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers

Purpose: Upon completion of this activity, students will understand what dangling and misplaced modifiers are and will practice correcting them in a short reading. This DLA should take approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

1. Go to the WRC reception desk and check out A Writer’s Reference. You will need a student ID card or a driver’s license to check this book out for use in the WRC.
2. Read the section covering problems with modifiers.
3. Respond to the following about the reading:
   a. What is a modifier?
   ________________________________________________________________
   b. Why should modifiers be placed close to the word they modify?
   ________________________________________________________________
   c. As a rule, sentences should move from subject to verb to ______________.
   d. What is a dangling modifier?
   ________________________________________________________________

4. Complete the activity on the next page by (1) locating the dangling and misplaced modifiers in the reading, (2) correcting each error, (3) writing the rule number from A Writer’s Reference in the margins. The first one has been done for you.
5. Before reviewing your answers with an instructor or tutor, use the space below to write any questions you still have about modifiers:
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

6. Review your answers with an instructor or tutor in the WRC. Have that person sign and date this sheet.

Attach a confirmation sheet or get a signature below:

Instructor Signature: ____________________________ Date: _______________________
The following selection is from *Developmental Exercises to Accompany A Writer’s Reference* sixth edition. Correct the five errors in dangling and misplaced modifiers.

Hearing the name Karl Marx, *People usually think of Russia* is usually the first thought that comes to mind. Marx never lived in Russia at all. Actually, he almost spent all of his adult life in England. He was a political exile for the last half of his life.

Marx lived first in Germany. Born of Jewish parents, his university studies were completed with a PhD at the University of Jena. His favorite professor tried to get Marx an appointment to teach at the university. When that professor was fired, Marx gave up hope of teaching at Jena or any other German university. Marx, because he was denied a university position, had to earn his living as a journalist. He worked briefly as a newspaper editor in Germany.

Next came France, Belgium, and a return to Germany. First, Marx and his new bride moved to Paris, where Marx worked for a radical journal and became friendly with Friedrith Engels. When the journal ceased publication, Marx moved to Brussels, Belgium, and then back to Cologne, Germany. He did not hold a regular job, so he tried desperately to at least earn enough money to feed his family.

Marx decided after living in Paris and Brussels he would settle in London. He and his family lived in abject poverty while Marx earned what little income he could by writing for an American newspaper, the *New York Tribune*. 