

-ing & -ed adjectives

Are you boring or bored? Learners of English often have problems differentiating between pairs of adjectives ending -ed or -ing. In fact, once you know the rule it is not very difficult.

These adjectives usually refer to an emotional state. You should perceive the situation as one in which one (active) agent emits the emotional state and the other (passive) agent receives it. Anything can create an emotional state: your sister, a parrot, a book or a film can all create interest. However, to receive an emotional state you have to have a brain. So only people and animals can receive emotional states:

EMITTER

Causes the emotional state

Its role is active

It therefore has an active

ending: -ing

People, animals or things

Examples

amazing
amusing
annoying
astounding
boring
confusing
depressing
disappointing
disgusting
embarrassing
exciting
exhausting
frightening
frustrating
infuriating
interesting
petrifying
satisfying
shocking
surprising
terrifying
tiring
worrying

EMOTIONAL STATE

Examples

amazement
amusement
annoyance
astonishment
boredom
confusion
depression
disappointment
disgust
embarrassment
excitement
exhaustion
fear (fright)
frustration
infuriation
interest
petrification
satisfaction
shock
surprise
terror
tiredness
worry

RECEIVER

Receives the emotional state

Its role is passive

It therefore has a passive

ending: -ed

People and animals

Examples

amazed
amused
annoyed
astonished
bored
confused
depressed
disappointed
disgusted
embarrassed
excited
exhausted
frightened
frustrated
infuriated
interested
petrified
satisfied
shocked
surprised
terrified
tired
worried



amazing



amused

So when confronted with a problem concerning these adjectives, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the agent a thing? Yes - then it must be -ing.
- Is the agent generating the emotional state? Yes - then it must be -ing.
- Is the agent receiving the emotional state? Yes - then it must be -ed.

-ing or -ed adjectives

1. The children are so e..... as they are going on a school trip today.
2. I think that film should be certified 18, there are some very f..... scenes in it.
3. What did you think of the restaurant? I thought the food was rather d....., I had heard that it was supposed to be top class.
4. His table manners are d....., I don't think he has ever been taught how to eat properly.
5. Travelling by train is very i..... as you can see all the countryside but it is quite t..... I am always e..... after a long train ride.
6. We went to the Warner Bros park last week. There is a ride there which is absolutely t..... It is a kind of rollercoaster which turns upside down. I was p.....
7. I find it a..... that parents can let their 10 year old children out until 11 o'clock at night, without knowing where they are.
8. My mother was always very w..... that we didn't eat enough vegetables, but I always thought carrots and peas were d.....
9. How e.....! My boss caught me kissing my boyfriend! My colleagues thought it was very a..... and all laughed about it, but I didn't. I was very e.....
10. Do you like sudokus? I hate them, I get very f..... when I can't find a number that fits.
11. That film was about how the world is going to end very soon unless we become more environmentally-friendly. It was quite d.....
12. All these papers I have to sign – and just to open a bank account! I don't really understand them all, they are quite c.....
13. The teacher was very s..... when Mike got a 10/10 in his maths exam, as he normally fails all his exams. Unfortunately, the a..... change in his marks was because he had cheated and not because he had been studying.
14. My husband is i.....! After dinner it is his turn to do the washing up, but he never does it properly, and usually leaves the dirty water in the sink, and soap bubbles all over the kitchen sides. I get very a..... because I have to clear it up.
15. The lecture this afternoon was very b..... Some people were so b..... they fell asleep!