

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- abcteach.com/directory/basics/grammar/parts_of_speech
This web site provides activities about verbs, such as a verb brainstorm and a verb word search.
- www.funbrain.com/verb/index.html
"2 Bee or Nottoobee" is a verb game in which students test their knowledge of verb tenses.
- www.stufun.com/verbs/
Learn more about verbs on this fun web site!
- www.eduplace.com/tales
This Wacky Web Tales, site enables kids to use their knowledge about parts of speech to create interesting stories!

Suggested Print Resources

- Cleary, Brian P. *To Root, To Toot, To Parachute: What Is A Verb?* Carolrhoda Books, Minneapolis, MN; 2001.
- Heller, Ruth. *Kites Sail High: A Book About Verbs.* Grosset & Dunlap, New York, NY; 1988.
- Terban, Marvin. *Verbs, Verbs, Verbs: The Trickiest Action-Packed Words in English.* Scholastic Reference, New York, NY; 2002.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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TITLES

- DESCRIPTIVE WORDS & PHRASES
- NOUNS
- PUNCTUATION
- SENTENCES
- VERBS

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Verbs

Grades K-4

Grammar consists of a set of rules of language that can be clearly defined and applied to everyday speech and writing. In the classroom, grammar instruction can often be didactic and static, presenting grammar rules as absolute truth and diminishing the knowledge students already possess about language. In order to maximize the usefulness of teaching grammar, students need to be encouraged to discover the rules themselves, based on their own language experiences in real world contexts. Students already instinctively know a great deal about how language works, and as teachers, we need to bring this information to the surface in a dynamic and useful way.

Introduction

Verbs are action and being words, and are the part of grammar that makes things happen! Verbs have tenses that tell us when things take place — in the present, future or past. Helping verbs help main verbs show tense, and they tell us if an action is ongoing or completed. To tell if a word is a verb, we can look for certain clues like endings such as *-ed* or *-ing* or the use of a word with *will*.

Vocabulary

grammar — The set of rules that explains how we use language.

verbs — Words that show action or being.

tense — A form of a verb that shows time.

present tense — A form of a verb that tells that the action is happening now.

past tense — A form of a verb that tells that the action has already happened.

future tense — A form of a verb that tells that the action is very likely to happen.

irregular verbs — Verbs that do not show past tense by adding *-ed*.

helping verbs — Verbs that help a main verb tell when an action happens. Helping verbs also help to show if an action is ongoing or completed.

Grammar Rules

• Verb tenses:

- To put a verb into present tense, you usually add an *-s* (e.g., cook, cooks).
- To put a verb into past tense, you usually add an *-ed* (e.g., cook, cooked).
- To put a verb into future tense, you usually add *will* to the verb (e.g., cook, will cook).

Grammar Tests

- **The “Will Test”:** If a word can be used after “will,” then it is probably a verb. For example, “hop” and “run” are verbs because they can be used with “will” (e.g., will hop, will run). “Blue” and “calendar” are not verbs because they can’t be used with “will” (e.g., not “will blue” or “will calendar”).
- **The “Ending Test”:** If a word can take the endings *-s*, *-ed* or *-ing*, then it is probably a verb. For example, “jump” is a verb because it can take those endings (e.g., jumps, jumped, jumping), but “happy” is not a verb (e.g., not “happies,” “happied,” “happying”).

Focus Questions

1. What is a verb? Give some examples.
2. How is an action word different from a word of being? Provide an example of each.
3. What does verb tense tell us?
4. How do we put the verb “play” into present, past and future tenses?
5. What is an irregular verb? Give some examples. (Continued)

6. What does a helping verb do?

7. How can we show that an action is still going on? How can we show that it is all over and done with? Provide an example of each.

Follow-up Activities

- Share Robert Bender’s *The A to Z Beastly Jamboree* (Lodestar Books/Dutton, 1996) with your students. After reading, encourage students to identify all of the verbs in the story. Students can also make their own ABC book of verbs.
- Students can play verb charades! Each student can act out a certain action, and classmates can guess the verb being enacted.
- Share the Schoolhouse Rock song “Verb: That’s What’s Happening.” (See www.apocalypse.org/pub/u/gilly/Schoolhouse_Rock/HTML/grammar/verb.html for an online version of the song and lyrics.) Students can write their own songs about verbs.
- To help students get a better understanding of verb tenses, encourage them to write an action-packed paragraph in present tense, as if it was happening right now. Then students can rewrite the same paragraph in past and future tenses.
- Make a verb sorting game! Write a variety of verbs on index cards. Students can sort the cards into piles of action words or being words. You can also create a sorting game for past, present or future tenses.
- Write a poem on chart paper to use as practice for verb identification. After sharing the poem with your class, students can take turns circling the verbs, identifying if they are action or being words.
- As a class, brainstorm as many irregular verbs as possible. Students can take index cards and write the irregular verb on one card and the past tense of the verb on another (e.g., “think” on one card, “thought” on another). Students can then use these cards to play a memory game, turning all cards over and trying to find matches.
- A helping verb helps a main verb in many ways. Encourage students to imagine that they are main verbs. They can write thank you notes to helping verbs, listing all the ways in which helping verbs are helpful. Students can share their thank you notes with the class.
- Students can write journal entries about what they did over the weekend in the past tense. Then, they can write journal entries about what they are going to do tomorrow in future tense.
- Students can imagine they are sportscasters, giving play-by-play accounts of an important game. Students can prepare their sportscast and then deliver it for the class. Other students should keep a list of the verbs used in each sportscast.
- Students can cut out active pictures from magazines (e.g., people running, playing sports, gardening). In groups of three, students should write about one picture, each student using a different tense.
- As a class, students can make a Verb Book as one volume in a class Grammar Library. This book can include definitions, examples and illustrations for key concepts like action and being words, verb tenses and helping verbs.