

LESSON NOTES - STEP 2

The verb is the most important part of the sentence. It is a word that expresses mental or physical action (like “think” or “run”), or it expresses a state-of-being (like “am” or “became”). If a word is a verb, it has an “ing” form.

Example: run = running, took = taking
the “ing” form of all forms of “to be” = being

Verbs can be classified as **ACTION** or **LINKING** verbs. Refer to your S.A.M. sheet for a list of linking verbs. Some verbs can be action in one sentence and linking in another. Such verbs are indicated by a • on the SAM sheet. If there is a • by the verb, use the *Substitution Test* below to see if the verb is action or linking.

SUBSTITUTION TEST: If you can replace the verb with a form of the verb “to be” (is, am, are, was, were, be, been or being), the verb in the sentence is a linking verb. If you cannot replace it, the verb in the sentence is an action verb.

A verb phrase consists of the main verb and any helping verbs that go with it. (Refer to your S.A.M. sheet for a list of helping verbs). **The maximum number of words in a verb phrase is four.**

#1 #2 #3 #4

Example: will have been singing = verb phrase

“will” “have” and “been” are **helping verbs**. The **main verb**, “singing” is an action verb.

Be aware that adverbs frequently interrupt verb phrases. (Refer to your S.A.M. sheet for a list of common adverb interrupters.)

adverb interrupter

Example: have **certainly** been given

“Certainly” is not a verb; it is an adverb.
It “interrupts”, or comes between, the helping verbs and main verb in the verb phrase.

Sometimes the verb is compound. Compound verbs are joined by conjunctions.

Example: She ate candy **and** drank a coke.

conjunction

In an interrogative sentence (a sentence which asks a question), the normal word order is inverted or changed around. To make it easier to find the verb phrase, mentally change it into a statement.

Example: Will he be going with us? = He will be going with us.

verb phrase

LESSON PRACTICE

After you have shortened the sentence by eliminating the prepositional phrases, it will be easier to find the verb. Remember: you are looking for a word that shows action, or for one of the linking verbs on your S.A.M. sheet.

Write each sentence and enclose the prepositional phrases in [brackets]. Find and underline the verb twice and any helping verbs that go with it. Label the main verb as “A”ction or “L”inking. Be sure to use the list of linking verbs on the SAM Sheet as well as the substitution test if necessary.

Note: Watch for adverbs that interrupt verb phrases and label them.

Remember: The same word can be an action verb in one sentence and a linking verb in another sentence.

1. The man in the blue car was slowly driving toward me.

The man [in the blue car] was (helping verb) slowly driving (action verb) [toward me]

Another form of the verb “felt” is “feel.” Because the verb “feel” has a • by it on the S.A.M. sheet, you will need to test this verb with the substitution test. Would it make sense to say: “The clerk was the material?”

If the verb *cannot be replaced* by a linking verb (is, am, are, was, were, be, been, or being), it is an ACTION VERB. It is a LINKING VERB if it *can be replaced* by one of the words above.

2. The sales clerk felt the soft material of the velvet dress.

The sales clerk felt (action verb) the soft material [of the velvet dress].

3. The velvet material on the table felt soft.

The velvet material [on the table] felt (linking verb) soft

LESSON PRACTICE - OVERHEAD TRANSPARENCY MASTER

After you have shortened the sentence by eliminating the prepositional phrases, it will be easier to find the verb. Remember: you are looking for a word that shows action, or for one of the linking verbs on your S.A.M. sheet

Write each sentence and enclose the prepositional phrases in [brackets]. Find and underline the verb twice and any helping verbs that go with it. Label the main verb as action or linking. Be sure to use the list of linking verbs on the SAM sheet as well as the substitution test if necessary. Note: Watch for adverbs that interrupt verb phrases and label them.

Remember: the same word can be an action verb in one sentence and a linking verb in another sentence.

1. The man in the blue car was slowly driving toward me.

Adverb
interrupter

Ac
ti
on
V
er
b

Answer: The man [in the blue car] was slowly driving [toward me].

Another form of the verb “felt” is “feel”. Because the verb “feel” has a • by it on the SAM sheet, you will need to test this verb with the substitution test. Would it make sense to say, “The clerk WAS the material?” If the verb *cannot be replaced* by a linking verb (is, am, are, was, were, be, been, or being), it is an ACTION VERB. It is a LINKING VERB if it *can be replaced* by one of the words above.

2. The sales clerk felt the soft material of the velvet dress.

Action
Verb

Answer: The sales clerk felt the soft material [of the velvet dress].

(was)

3. The velvet material on the table felt soft.

Linking
Verb

Answer: The velvet material [on the table] felt soft.

(was)

GROUP PRACTICE

INSTRUCTIONS: Find the prepositional phrases in the sentences that follow and enclose them in [brackets]. Then, find the verb phrase and underline it twice. Identify the helping verbs and label the main verb as “A”ction or “L”inking. Be sure to identify the adverbs that interrupt the verb phrase when you find them.

(You may wish to copy these to your own paper.)

1. The girl in the sports car was not watching the traffic light.

The girl [in the sports car] was not watching (action verb)

2. He seems happy after lunch.

He seems (linking verb) happy [after lunch]

3. The band director sang loudly in the shower.

The band director sang (action verb) loudly [in the shower]

4. After recess, we are often feeling sick to our stomach.

[After recess], we are often feeling (action verb) sick [to our stomach]

5. In May, he will have been retired for twenty years.

[In May], he will have been (linking verb)

6. The president of the club believes in fair play.

The president [of the club] believes (action verb) [in fair play]

7. The dog always takes the biscuit to his dog house.

The dog always takes (action verb) the biscuit [to his dog house]

8. Why is he here?

Why is (linking verb) he here?

9. The driver should have been more careful.

The driver should have been (linking verb) more careful

10. Stand and stretch your muscles.

Stand and stretch (compound action verb) your muscles

11. I am careful with my money.

I am (linking verb) careful [with my money]

12. In the cool of the night, he sleeps.

[In the cool] [of the night], he sleeps (action verb)

13. The party became dull around midnight.

The party became (linking verb) dull [around midnight]

14. A dancer must have strong legs.

A dancer must have (action verb) strong legs.

15. A tomato should be eaten with salt.

A tomato should be eaten (action verb) [with salt]

16. Future plans are being made by the pep club.

Future plans are being made (action verb) [by the pep club]

17. Flowers are beautiful in the spring.

Flowers are (linking verb) [in the spring]

18. Report cards will be distributed on Friday.

Report cards will be distributed [on Friday]

19. Those projects have usually been successful in the past.

Those projects have usually been (linking verb) successful [in the past]

20. My parents were not invited to the party.

My parents were not invited (action verb) to the party

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

INSTRUCTIONS: Find the prepositional phrases in the sentences that follow and enclose them in [brackets]. Then, find the verb phrase and underline it twice. Identify the helping verbs and label the main verb as “A”ction or “L”inking. Be sure to identify the adverbs that interrupt the verb phrase.

1. The man in the elevator was not pushing the buttons.

The man [in the elevator] was not pushing (action verb) the buttons.

2. What was the point of the story?

What was (linking verb) the point [of the story]

3. The danger can be described in one word.

The danger can be described (action verb) [in one word]

4. In the fall, the warm ground melts the first layer of snow.

[In the fall], the warm ground melts (action verb) the first layer [of snow]

5. The snow must have been falling all day.

The snow must have been falling (action verb) all day.

6. I will not be going home after the race.

I will not be going (action verb) home [after the race]

7. These pebbles are like hundreds of small wheels.

These pebbles are like (linking verb) hundreds [of small wheels]

8. He felt sad after the movie.

He felt (linking verb) sad [after the movie]

9. The teacher should have taken more time.

The teacher should have taken (action verb) more time.

10. Her students were not expecting a test.

Her students were not expecting (action verb) a test

11. The blame will not be resting on me.

The blame will not be resting [on me]

12. Snow can sometimes threaten the lives of mountain people.

Snow can sometimes threaten (action verb) the lives [of mountain people]

13. Cold weather in October can often signal a bad winter.

Cold weather [in October] can often signal (action verb) a bad winter

14. Some medicine should be taken with food.

Some medicine should be taken (action verb) [with food]

15. Sit quietly and read your book.

Sit (action verb) quietly and read (action verb) your book

16. On a snowy morning, I usually sleep late.

[On a snowy morning], I usually sleep (action verb) late.

17. It has been snowing in Denver for two days.

It has been snowing (action verb) [in Denver] [for two days]

18. The dinner tastes good.

The dinner tastes (linking verb) good

19. We could have done a better job.

We could have done (action verb) a better job

THE WRITING CONNECTION

USING VERB PHRASES

Complete each sentence below by writing a verb phrase in the blank, using main verbs and necessary helping verbs in each one. If you use any adverb interrupters, mark them. Then, read over your sentences to be sure they make sense.

1. The men will chuck the trash to the curb.
2. Ana did not (adv int) study for ten years in May.
3. Jerry had a wonderful night.
4. Did you go to school today?
5. Joshua watched his every move.
6. Amber has been sitting here for two hours.
7. Do we need our parents' permission?
8. May I sit and look from the table?
9. Leigh was looking for an explanation.
10. The doctor had already (adv int) prepared for the patient's surgery.
11. Lisa was not running out that late.
12. Could you please give me one more chance?
13. Mason was running in the woods.
14. We heard rumors about people.
15. Alec gave him his last chance.
16. Dawson will meet you at the movies tonight.
17. Where did we get the money for this?
18. Will you tell me your secret?
19. Todd smacked your brother.
20. Ricky does not care for your opinion.