

THE SENTENCE

A sentence has a SUBJECT and a VERB and makes a COMPLETE THOUGHT.

S V
Susan made fudge.

S V
I found the mop behind the door.

VERB

- 1) The verb of the sentence shows some kind of action, or it shows that something exists or is related to something else (see 3 below).

S V
Sam ran downstairs.

- 2) The largest group of verbs shows that something is happening, has happened, or will happen. These are called action verbs.

S V
Chuck likes pizza.

One way to find the action verb of a sentence is to ask yourself, "WHAT is happening in the sentence?" In the above example, the answer is someone likes something. Since "like" is an action and the other two words are nouns, the verb of the sentence is "likes."

- 3) Not all verbs show action. Some verbs connect or link the subject of the sentence to a predicate noun or adjective, also called a subject complement. These verbs are called linking verbs.

S V
Sarah is a nurse.

- 4) One of the most common of the linking verbs is "to be" which is conjugated into six parts: is, are, was, were, am, been. Other linking verbs are seems, appears, feels, tastes, become, and became.

S LV SC
The boy became ill during the game.

(The linking verb "became" connects the adjective ill to the subject "boy," showing the boy's state of being.)

- 5) Verbs show time as well as action. The different forms of verbs that show various times of action are called verb tenses. There are three primary verb tenses: present, past, and future. One way to see if a word is a verb is to conjugate the word into tenses. (A verb can be conjugated. Other parts of speech cannot.)

Present tense: The janitor cleans the erasers.
(The present tense verb cleans shows that the action is happening in the present.)

Past tense: The janitor cleaned the erasers.
(The past tense verb cleaned shows that the action is taking place in the past.)

Future tense: The janitor will clean the erasers.
(The future tense verb will clean shows that the action will exist in the future.)

SUBJECT

- 1) The subject of a sentence is a noun or a pronoun.

S
Mother baked a pie.

- 2) To identify the subject, first find the verb. (In the above sentence the action word is "baked.") Then, ask the question, "Who or What?" and say the verb.

EXAMPLE: WHO or WHAT baked a pie?
(The answer is "mother;" therefore, "mother" is the subject of the sentence.)

- 3) Remember that most subjects appear before the verbs they are connected to.
- 4) In some sentences which are requests or commands, the subject may be unspoken or understood. In that case, the subject is you, the person addressed.

S V
(you) Bring me a pencil.