

THE VERB

A verb is a word that expresses action or helps to make a statement.

Action verbs express either physical action or mental action. The verb think, which expresses mental action, is just as much an action verb as the verb kick, which expresses physical action.

EXAMPLES: Father works for the government.
Allan threw the ball over my head.
She always imagines the worst.

EXERCISE A: Underline each verb in the following paragraph. There are 25 of them, and all and all are action verbs. There may be several verbs in a sentence.

1. On our vacation in Colorado, we drove through steep Rocky Mountains. Just at
2. dusk one day a car whirled past us. “Whew!” exclaimed Mary Nell. “He knows
3. these curves better than we—hey, what happened to the road?” An opaque
4. curtain of dust wrapped itself around us. Our brakes futilely grabbed at loose
5. gravel. The front of the car suddenly plunged into something, perhaps an iron
6. railing, which quickly collapsed. End over end, the car rolled down the
7. mountainside. Not one of the four passengers panicked. Dad gripped the steering
8. wheel; Mom shielded the baby; I clutched the cushions of the back seat; Mary
9. Nell prayed. The car finally fell into a gorge and stopped upside down. As we
10. wriggled through open windows, help came. Later the doctor said, “No serious
11. injuries.” The mechanic, however, made a different report. He towed the car into
12. Denver, inspected the wreckage, and shook his head sadly. “This car needs at
13. least three weeks in the hospital!”

A few verbs link a noun with a noun or a noun with an adjective. These verbs are called linking verbs.

Linking Verbs

am, is, are, was, were, (will) be, has been,
become, get, (when it means become), seem, appear,
look, feel, smell, taste, remain, sound

Linking verbs do not express action. They help to make a statement.

EXAMPLES: Mother is a good cook. (mother cook)
This room has been empty all day. (empty room)
George will be our leader. (George leader)
The witness remained silent. (silent witness)
The dog seems friendly. (friendly dog)

Note: If you can put *is*, *are*, *was*, or *were* in place of a verb without greatly changing the meaning of the sentence, you may be sure the verb is a linking verb.

EXAMPLES: The bell sounds loud. The bell is loud. (Sounds is a linking verb.)
The muffins taste good. The muffins are good. (Taste is a linking verb.)
He became a great ball player. He was a great ball player. (Became is a linking verb.)

EXERCISE B: In the left column below are nouns modified by adjectives. By supplying verbs to link the nouns and adjectives, write sentences in the space at the right. Use five different linking verbs.

A. Stormy weather	A. <u>The weather looks stormy.</u>
1. dull knife	1. _____
2. hunted house	2. _____
3. shy child	3. _____
4. calm lake	4. _____
5. bitter medicine	5. _____

In the left column below are groups of two nouns, both naming the same person or thing. By using various linking verbs to connect the paired nouns, write sentences in the space at the right.

B. Nero – an emperor	B. <u>Nero was an emperor</u>
6. Joe – treasurer	6. _____
7. Kate – actress	7. _____
8. the lighthouse – our guide	8. _____
9. mongrels – watchdogs	9. _____
10. the movie – Western	10. _____