



Main Verbs and Helping Verbs

Notice the differences between the pairs of sentences.

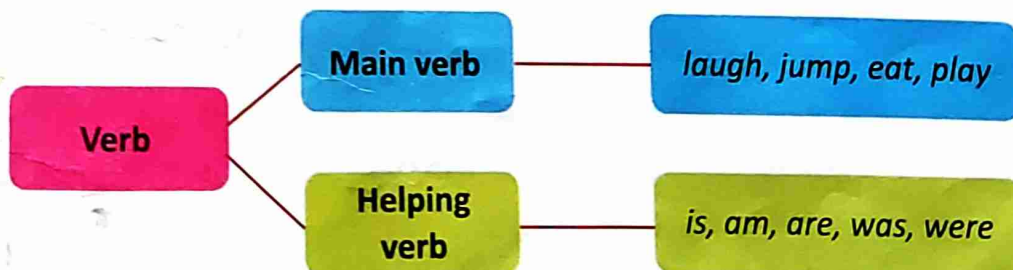
1. a. I dance.
b. I am dancing.
2. a. Children jump.
b. Children are jumping.
3. a. Bees buzz.
b. Bees were buzzing.
4. a. I read.
b. I was reading.

Did you see that in each pair the first sentence has only one verb? It is called the **main verb**.

Now, note that the second sentence in each pair has two verbs. The extra verbs in the second sentences, such as am, are, were, was, help us by giving more information about the main verb. They are called **helping verb**.

Let's Learn

1. As you already know, a **sentence** must have a **verb**.
2. **Main verbs** have the main responsibility of creating meaning for sentences.
3. **Helping verbs** have different types of responsibility in sentences. They **help** the main verbs.



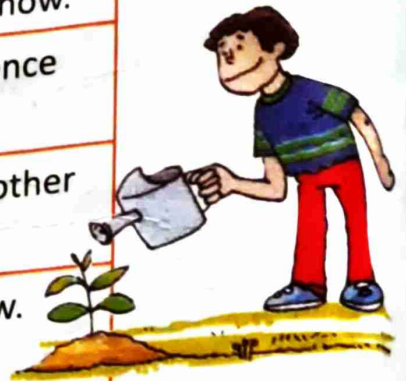
Examples: I go to school every day. (go is the **main verb**)

I am going to school. (am is the **helping verb**, going is the **main verb**)

Let's Do

1. Read the following sentences.

a.	i.	We <u>play</u> football everyday.	ii.	We <u>are</u> playing football now.
b.	i.	I <u>work</u> on my science project.	ii.	I <u>am</u> working on my science project.
c.	i.	Marcus <u>helps</u> his mother in the kitchen.	ii.	Marcus <u>is</u> helping his mother in the kitchen.
d.	i.	I <u>plant</u> two trees every year.	ii.	I <u>am</u> planting a tree now.



2. Read all the i. sentences given in the table once again. Underline the verbs there. These are the main verbs. Write the verbs in the blanks below.

a. play

c. helps

b. work

d. plant

Read the ii. sentences now. Here you will find both main verbs and helping verbs. Underline the helping verbs and write them in the blanks below.

a. are

c. is

b. am

d. am

The **helping verbs** above describe the **present time**. The action in the sentences is in the present time.

3. Read some more sentences which have helping verbs. They are a little different this time. Notice the difference.

a. I was playing cricket last Sunday.

c. I was very happy that day.

b. My friends were playing with me.

d. They were going for a picnic.

The **helping verbs** in these sentences are was and were

Let's Learn

The **helping verbs** above describe the **past time**. The action in the sentences took place in the past time.

A **main verb** tells us about an action. ✓

A **helping verb** lets us know the **time** of that action: the present or the past.

A **sentence** may be meaningless without the **helping verb**.

Example: I painting a picture. ✗

I am painting a picture. ✓

Remember



When we use *is/am/are/was/were* before a main verb, we add *-ing* to the main verb. For example: I *am cleaning* (clean + *-ing*) the room.

Let's Practise

1. Read the sentences below. Write after each sentence if the action is in the present or in the past.

a. i. We are building sandcastles today. **present**

ii. We were building sandcastles yesterday. **past**

b. i. Ritu is working on her art project. **present**

ii. Ritu was working on her art project. **past**

c. i. I am baking a cake. **present**

ii. I was baking a cake. **past**

d. i. Vinod is helping his aunt in the kitchen. **present**

ii. Vinod was helping his aunt in the kitchen. **past**



2. Read the story below. Circle the helping verbs and underline the main verbs. Write **present** or **past** in the blanks given. One has been done for you.

Once a little girl was feeling hungry. She decided to eat some **past**

3. The sentences given below are incomplete. Add a helping verb to each sentence and rewrite them.

a. We playing football last Sunday.

We were playing football last Sunday.

b. I working on my science fair project an hour ago.

I was working on my science fair project - an hour ago.

c. Raghavan working with his father in the garage now.

Raghavan is working with his father in the garage now.

d. I planting a tree here.

I am planting a tree here.

e. The monkeys jumping from tree to tree.

The monkeys are jumping from tree to tree.

f. The cars racing on the track.

The cars are racing on the track.

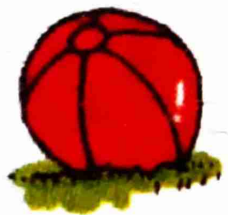


Let's Learn

Helping verbs can also act as **linking verbs**. In some sentences, they link the main noun or pronoun of the sentence with their description.

Examples:

Noun/Pronoun	Linking Verb	Description
1. This ball	is	red.
2. I	was	late for the party.
3. These dresses	are	pretty.



Let's Practise

Find the main nouns/noun expressions/pronouns and their descriptions in the given sentences and write them down. See how they are linked by linking verbs.

1. We were in the park.

2. Rinku and Mina are friends.
3. My uncle is an officer in the army.
4. Harish was not at home.
5. Dolphins are mammals.
6. The trees were leafless in winter.



Noun/pronoun	Linking verb	Description
1. <u>We</u>	<u>were</u>	<u>in the park</u>
2. <u>Rinku and Mina</u>	<u>are</u>	<u>friends</u>
3. <u>My uncle</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>an officer in the army</u>
4. <u>Harish</u>	<u>was</u>	<u>not at home</u>
5. <u>Dolphins</u>	<u>are</u>	<u>mammals</u>
6. <u>The trees</u>	<u>were</u>	<u>leafless in winter</u>

Activity

Make groups of four. Look at the words given below. Each group should prepare a story using all the words and expressions given below. You may add more words/expressions. Read out your story to the class. The class will vote for the three best stories.

crow

thirsty

saw

pitcher

water

at the bottom

pebbles

dropped

inside

the pitcher

water

came up

crow

happy

Revision

- The two types of verbs are the main verbs and the helping verbs.
- Helping verbs tell us about the time of an action.
- Helping verbs can also act as linking verbs.