



Verbs

The verb is the foundation of any sentence. Without a verb, there is no sentence. In written work, the job of the **verb** is to let the reader know the action of one of the nouns in the sentence.

After locating all the nouns and pronouns in a sentence, find the word or words that tell what one of the nouns did. When this is done, the verb has been found. The noun that caused the verb is known as the **subject** of the sentence.

Example: In a little boat, the old man sat quietly waiting for a nibble.
What are the nouns? They are "boat", "man" and "nibble".
Did the boat do anything? No.
Did the man do anything? Yes!
Did the nibble do anything? No.
What did the man do? He sat.
"Sat" is the verb in this sentence, and "man" is the subject.

Some verbs do not describe actions. These verbs talk about how things exist, or what they are similar to. These are called **verbs of being**. Some examples are **be** (is, are, were, ...), **have**, **seem**, **feel**, **sound**, and **taste**.

Example: That cloud looks like an elephant.
The verb is looks. The subject is cloud. The cloud isn't doing anything in this sentence, but the sentence says that the cloud is similar to.

Sometimes it takes more than one word to express an action. When this happens, it is known as a **verb phrase**. We can find verb phrases the same way as we find single verbs.

Example: The people in the flood area have moved to higher ground.
What are the nouns? They are "people", "area" and "ground".
Did the people do anything? Yes!
Did the area do anything? No.
Did the ground do anything? No.
What did the people do? They have moved.
"Have moved" is the verb in this sentence, and "people" is the subject.