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The Importance of Verbs

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Bob his hamburger quickly. Wait, did that sentence make sense? No. It didn't. What's missing? A verb is missing! *Bob ate his hamburger quickly.* That is much better. A verb is a part of speech used to describe motion or convey a subject in action. Examples of verbs include walk, shop, jump, read, etc. Verbs have specific tenses based on how you use them. *Present tense* indicates the verb is occurring in the moment. *Past tense* means the action has already taken place. In addition, *future tense* specifies the action that will take place at a later time (future).

Verbs are a very important part of speech because without them a sentence cannot exist. They serve several purposes within a sentence:

- **Make a statement** – The dog *ran* home.
- **Help to ask a question** – Did he *run* home?
- **Give a command** – *Run* home.
- **Express action** – The dog *ran* after the ball.
- **Express a state of being** – The dog *is* tired from running.

There are five types of verbs that help make a sentence:



1. Action verb – express an action that is either physical (*talk, run, fall, etc.*) or mental (*think, hope, choose, etc.*)



2. Linking verb – links the subject of a sentence to another word: *appear, be, feel, grow, look, remain, seem, smell, sound, stay, taste, etc.*



3. Auxiliary or Helping verb – changes the tense (when something happened), voice (relation of the subject to the verb and is either active or passive), or mood (a statement of fact, what might or could be, or give a command or plea): *be, do, have, can, may, shall, was, will, etc.*



4. Transitive verb – transfers the action from one noun to another and always has an object that receives the action of the verb or completes the meaning of the verb: Bill *took* the job.



5. Intransitive verb – doesn't transfer action so it doesn't have an object: The phone *broke*.

Verbs are very important for language development because they allow children to start building sentences. The choice of verb determines the grammatical form in a sentence. Children who use more verbs have more advanced grammatical skills. Most children use at least 40 verbs by the time they are 24 months old.



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You can help your child learn new verbs by doing the following:



- Keep a list of the verbs your child understands and says. Keeping track will help you know which new verbs your child is learning each month and how many.



- Think about things your child likes to do. This will help you include new verbs in their vocabulary by associating verbs with their interests.



- Show your child what a verb means. Whenever possible, try to do the action while you say the verb in a short sentence.



- Repeat the verb often. Children need to hear new words many times before they start using the words correctly themselves.



Verbs are important because they help children communicate about different events in their lives by combining words into sentences. By understanding what verbs are and using some of the tips from above, you can help your child learn to use verbs and increase their overall expressive language.

Resources:

"Why Verbs Are Important, A Brief English Grammar Synopsis," Medium, accessed July 19, 2017. <https://medium.com/@Grammar/importance-of-verbs-1e2ddf0b6396>

"Verbs are an important part of speech," Readable Writer, accessed July 19, 2017. http://www.readablewriter.com/04_Verbs.pdf

"Verbs Pave the Way for Language Development," The Hanen Centre, accessed July 19, 2017. <http://www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Articles/Verbs-Pave-the-Way-for-Language-Development.aspx>

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