

Helping Verbs and Main Verbs

12d. A **helping verb** (*auxiliary verb*) helps the main verb express action or a state of being.

EXAMPLE Christopher **can** sing beautifully.

A **verb phrase** contains one main verb and one or more helping verbs. Sometimes a verb phrase is interrupted by another part of speech.

EXAMPLES The code **was hidden** inside an old book. [The helping verb is *was*.]
Sparky **will not bite** you. [The helping verb is *will*.]

EXERCISE A Underline the verb phrase in each sentence. Then, draw another line under each helping verb.

Examples 1. People have celebrated birthdays in many different ways.

2. I didn't forget your birthday.

- Perhaps we should learn more about birthday celebrations in various countries.
- Mexicans will sometimes buy a piñata for a birthday party.
- The piñata is filled with small treats and gifts.
- In Mexico, families will usually celebrate a girl's fifteenth birthday with a special party.
- This traditional celebration is called a *quinceañera*.
- In the United States, a girl's sixteenth birthday is often treated as a special birthday.
- Some people do not like birthday celebrations.
- They might not tell you their age.
- Other people have celebrated in spectacular ways.
- Maybe I will celebrate my birthday in a new way this year.

EXERCISE B Underline the verb phrases in the following paragraph. Then, draw a second line under the helping verb in each phrase. Hint: The paragraph contains ten verb phrases.

Example A storm will sometimes produce thunder and lightning.

Scientists can explain the causes of thunder. The sound of thunder is caused by the heat of lightning. A bolt of lightning can heat nearby air molecules. The air molecules will then expand, and they will also move. Their movement can create sounds and echoes. Because light can travel faster than sound, you will first see the lightning. The flash will occur almost immediately; only afterward will you hear the thunder.

3. I wondered why.
4. Later, he told me about his plan.
5. He knew of a market for these beautiful leaves.
6. A local craft shop buys the leaves for craft classes.
7. For example, the class on greeting cards uses colorful leaves regularly.
8. The art classes always want leaves, too.
9. Artists incorporate the foliage into collages.
10. People enjoy the “back to nature” tone of this artwork.

EXERCISE B

11. I remember my great-grandmother’s recipe for gumbo.
12. The shrimp, vegetables, and spices simmer together.
13. I always drop a little hot pepper sauce into the pot.
14. Meanwhile, white rice steams until tender.
15. I prefer this mild rice along with the spicy gumbo.

Linking Verbs, p. 48

EXERCISE A

1. The huge diamond mine is now a museum.
2. The computerized voice sounds human to me.

3. After the storm, the islanders grew nervous at the sight of all the dark clouds.
4. Some of the bristlecone pine trees are very old.
5. The farm animals looked quite content.

EXERCISE B

6. Burr became one of the most colorful characters in U.S. history.
7. Burr came from a well-known Puritan family.
8. At age twenty-one, he was a commanding officer of an entire regiment.
9. He resigned in 1779 because of ill health.
10. Later, Burr practiced law.
11. He almost always looked healthy and successful.
12. Burr and Alexander Hamilton were long-time enemies.
13. Burr fought a duel with Hamilton.
14. Hamilton died from his wound.
15. Burr’s political career was soon over.

Helping Verbs and Main Verbs, p. 49

EXERCISE A

1. Perhaps we should learn more about birthday celebrations in various countries.
2. Mexicans will sometimes buy a piñata for a birthday party.

3. The piñata is filled with small treats and gifts.
4. In Mexico, families will usually celebrate a girl's fifteenth birthday with a special party.
5. This traditional celebration is called a *quinceañera*.
6. In the United States, a girl's sixteenth birthday is often treated as a special birthday.
7. Some people do not like birthday celebrations.
8. They might not tell you their age.
9. Other people have celebrated in spectacular ways.
10. Maybe I will celebrate my birthday in a new way this year.

EXERCISE B

The paragraph contains ten verb phrases.

Scientists can explain the causes of thunder. The sound of thunder is caused by the heat of lightning. A bolt of lightning can heat nearby air molecules. The air molecules will then expand, and they will also move. Their movement can create sounds and echoes. Because light can travel faster than sound, you will first see the lightning. The flash will occur almost immediately; only afterward will you hear the thunder.

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs, p. 50

EXERCISE A

1. At this airport, no planes land after dark.
2. My sister and I planted tomatoes and onions.
3. Rick's parrot screams all day long.
4. Everyone ran quickly toward the exit.
5. Of all the contestants, Ming Chin caught the largest fish.

EXERCISE B

Answers will vary. Sample responses are given.

6. Erin will not forget her spelling notebook.
7. Ernesto will recite "The Kraken" next.
8. Today we will draw silhouettes with charcoal.
9. While one partner works the puzzle, the other watches the clock.
10. Michael, can you cook linguine with tomatoes and basil?

Identifying Kinds of Verbs, p. 51

EXERCISE A

1. We are late, Tony.
2. That would be wonderful!
3. Terrence sings in the school choir.
4. I have traveled to Scotland twice.
5. I dreamed vividly last night.