



Introduction to Parts of Speech:
**Big Herb
and His Verbs**

Produced
by
Colman Communications Corp.

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BIG HERB AND HIS VERBS

From the
*Introduction to
Parts of Speech Series*
Grades 2-4

Viewing Time: 17:22

INTRODUCTION

Background

Big Herb and His Verbs is the second program in the *Introduction to Parts of Speech* series. The target audience is made up of language arts/grammar students in grades 2-4. The program's goal is to significantly enhance student comprehension of the four main topics almost always covered when verbs are studied at the primary level: (a) defining verbs, (b) recognizing verbs, (c) the five principal functions of verbs (d) the present and past tense of verbs.

Curriculum Correlation

This video helps students meet Standard Six of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), which states, "Students (should be able to) *apply knowledge of language structure...*"

Moreover, the program's topics closely parallel those of almost all major language arts texts. An online review of

school district scope and sequence charts also indicates that the program’s teaching points correspond to grammar concepts currently taught in primary level language arts curricula.

Program Summary

The citizens of Abrupt, Montana are plagued by bitterly cold winds. If the townsfolk are caught outside when the winds hit, they are frozen solid for months. When they thaw, they forget what they had been doing when they froze. Big Herb and his daughter, Little Vera, come up with a plan to help their fellow villagers: the two will stay inside, where it is warm, paint signs that tell what everyone was doing, and then hang the signs on them. When people thaw, they can look at the signs and then go about their business, picking up where they left off. To paint signs correctly, however, Little Vera has to know about verbs. Big Herb tells her that verbs can show action – what somebody or something *does*. He also shows his daughter how verbs can tell what somebody or something *has* or *is*. Finally, when a person is talking about himself or herself, the verb *am* may be used. Everybody is happy with the signs until Big Herb’s sister, Medium Martha, comes to town. She observes that by the time people have thawed, many will have already done the things shown on the signs, so the signs don’t properly reflect the time when things happened. Herb then explains that verbs can tell when things happen – right now, or in the past. He then shows that when the ending “-ed” is added to verbs, they show that the action has occurred in the past.

Preparation and Pretest

Before presenting the lessons suggested below, we encourage you to preview the program, as well as review this guide and the accompanying blackline master activities in order to familiarize yourself with their content.

In addition, you may wish to give the *Pre-Test* before starting your instruction. This brief quiz is an assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the program's key concepts. If you give the *Pre-Test*, explain to your students that they are not expected to answer all the questions correctly, but they are expected to try their best. You can remind them that the questions point to key concepts they should focus on while watching the program. After you evaluate your students' answers, as well as review the materials presented in this guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, additions or deletions to meet the specific needs of your class. We encourage you to do so; for only by tailoring this program to your students will they obtain the maximum instructional benefits afforded by the material.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After viewing this video and participating in the suggested activities, viewers should be able to do the following:

1. Define verbs as words that can show action – what somebody or something *does*.
2. Know that verbs are words that can tell what somebody or something *is* or *has*.
3. Explain that a person can use the verb *am* when talking about himself or herself.
4. Form verbs in the present and past tense.

PREPARATION

Materials Needed

Students will need a pencil for the handout material. If possible, duplicate all handout material before beginning the unit.

Viewing Strategies

Several viewing strategies may be employed. You may

find it useful to show the program in its entirety, then play it segment by segment, using each segment as a basis for a single lesson or multiple lessons, depending on the level of student comprehension. A final review screening, fast-forwarding through stop points, undoubtedly will help reinforce student understandings.

On-Screen Type

Main words are capitalized when used as titles or headings, which improves readability and follows commonly accepted grammatical rules.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

Introduce the Program

Tell the class they will see a video about one of the parts of speech. Does anyone know what we mean when we say “parts of speech?” Write the following sentence on the chalkboard: *Margaret throws the ball.* Tell the class that each word in the sentence is a particular kind of word – one of the “parts of speech” found in our language.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 1

Underline the word “throws.” Ask the class to name another word that might make sense. For example, what about “catches?”

Explain that “throws” and “catches” show action – which is what a word known as a verb does. Tell your class that the verb – one of the of the parts of speech in our language – will be discussed in the video.

Now ask the class if anyone has ever heard of a “tall tale?” If time allows, you may read a short version of one of the

following tall tales: Paul Bunyan, Big Mose, or John Henry. What makes these stories “tall.” Explain exaggeration. Now tell the class that the video they’re about to see is another tall tale. But, as mentioned, it also will tell them about an important part of speech, the verb. Show the first segment.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 1

Ask, “How can you tell that this is a tall tale?” Be sure that students mention that the citizens of Abridge freeze for months and that balls and words freeze in the air. Now, tell the students that the first part of the program gives one definition of verbs. Write the following definition on the chalkboard or overhead projector: A verb is a word that shows action. It shows what someone or something *does*. Ask the students to wave their hands. Write on the chalkboard “wave.” Have your students stand and hop in place. Write “hop” on the chalkboard. Ask your students to clap. Write the word “clap” on the chalkboard. Say, “These words show what everyone *does*.” So they are verbs. Pass out the ***Name the Verbs*** worksheet. Do it as a class exercise, discussing various possibilities. Be sure that everyone has written down the correct answers.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 2

Review the definition of a verb given in the first segment. Stress that a verb can show what someone or something *does*. Next, explain that some parts of speech do more than one thing and that verbs are an example. Tell the class that verbs do three more things, besides telling what someone or something does. Now show the second part of the program.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 2

Ask the class, “What are the three other things that verbs

can tell us, besides telling what someone or something does?” If the class can’t remember, still frame Little Vera’s sign that summarizes the four functions of verbs – *does, is, has, am*. Then have the class verbally compose sentences with each verb. Write them on the chalkboard as they are stated. If you are using this program at the intermediate level, you may want to extend this discussion to include the plural forms, *are* and *have*. Then, hand out ***Four Jobs for Verbs***, which gives students another chance to use the information presented in the second section of the video. You may instruct the students to complete the exercise as an individual activity, or as a small group or class activity. Be certain to go over the answers.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 3

Briefly review the four jobs verbs perform and give brief examples of each, or ask the class to give examples. Tell the class that they will now see the third part of the video. Continue by stating that this part explains how verbs can tell *when* things happen. Mention that the program shows one of the most important ways to write verbs so they will show a different time than “right now.” Tell the class that they’ll also see a new person in this section of the program – Big Herb’s sister. Now show the third segment.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 3

Ask the class, “How did Big Herb say verbs could be written to tell what has happened in the past?” Have the class mention examples given in the video. After it has been determined that adding “ed” to the verb is one way, you may mention several verbs that do not form their past tense by adding “ed.” Examples might be *run, swim, throw* and *eat*. Now hand out ***When Things Happen***. Have the class do this exercise individually, as a small group exercise, or as a class

exercise. Go over the answers, stressing once again that while many verbs tell what happened in the past by adding “ed,” many tell what has happened by changing the verb in other ways.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Segment 4

Review the material in the first three segments of the program if you feel it will prove helpful to your students. Then tell your class that the remainder of the program explains what happens to Big Herb, Little Vera and Medium Martha. Ask, “Since this is a tall tale, can you imagine a good ending for it?” Have the class explore several possibilities and then show the final section of the program.

Post-Viewing Activities

Segment 4

Discuss the end of the program, especially the assertion that Big Herb, Little Vera and Medium Martha invented many of the verbs we use today. Where do real verbs (and other words) come from? Explain that the words we use come from languages people used thousands of years ago and that words change over the years. Why might words change? Briefly discuss new technologies and newly discovered phenomena that foster the development of new or changed words. Now pass out *Big Herb’s Review*. Go over the material with the class and explain that knowing the answers will help them when they take the post-test.

After you feel your students are at an acceptable comprehension level, give them the post-test. After the test has been graded, go over the answers, reviewing any concepts not yet mastered.

DESCRIPTION OF BLACKLINE MASTERS.

VERB PRE-TEST – An assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the objectives prior to viewing

the program.

NAME THE VERBS – A reinforcement activity designed to help students understand that verbs can tell what a person or thing *does*.

FOUR JOBS FOR VERBS – An exercise that underscores the concept that verbs can tell what something or someone *does, has, and is*. It also reinforces that the verb *am* can be used when speaking about oneself.

WHEN THINGS HAPPEN – An exercise that helps students remember that many verbs show past tense by adding “ed” to the end of the word.

BIG HERB’S REVIEW – A written activity that bolsters comprehension of the program’s key concepts.

VERB POST-TEST – An assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the program’s objectives after completing the unit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – Provides questions to be asked after each segment of the program.

ANSWER KEY

Video Quiz

1. b. can show action
2. feeds
3. false
4. has
5. is, has
6. mowed, walked
7. painted, jumped
8. They end in “ed.”
9. present, ask
10. false

Discussion Questions

Segment One:

1. Abrupt, Montana
2. Abrupt winds
3. balls, words
4. People would forget what they were doing before they

froze. 5. Big Herb and Little Vera 6. know about verbs
7. A verb is a word that can show action – what someone
or something does. 8. feeds 9. eats

Segment Two:

1. a verb that doesn't show action 2. has 3. am 4. am

Segment Three:

1. Yes. They were presented the key to the village. 2.
Medium Martha 3. The verbs on the signs didn't show the
right time. 4. He was hungry and wanted to get something
to eat. 5. tell the time things happen 6. add "ed" to the
end of the verb 7. mowed

Segment Four:

1. To ask them to come to Quick to paint signs. 2. They
were too busy making verbs in Abrupt. 3. Train children
from Quick. 4. They stopped blowing. 5. They invented
new verbs. 6. From Big Herb, Little Vera and Medium
Martha in Abrupt, Montana.

Verb Pre-Test

1. c 2. a 3. b 4. c 5. c 6. b 7. a

Name the Verbs

First sentence: chases or kicks Second sentence: pops
Third sentence: swings, tosses or throws Fourth
sentence: tosses or throws

Four Jobs for Verbs

First sentence: jumps or hops Second sentence: has
Third sentence: am Fourth sentence: is

When Things Happen

1. played 2. painted 3. invented 4. talked
5. cooked 6. drifted 7. mowed 8. chewed
9. kicked 10. licked

Big Herb's Review

1. Verbs can show action. Verbs can tell what someone or something has. Verbs can tell what someone or something is.
2. am
3. Answers will vary.
4. talked, asked, painted

Verb Post-Test

1. c 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. a 6. c 7. b 8. c
9. a 10. c

TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

It was a beautiful day in Abrupt, Montana. Clouds drifted lazily across the deep blue sky and the sun shone brightly. Ahem! The *sun* shone brightly!

That's better. Yes, the sun was shining and it was nice and warm.

But that didn't fool the folks in Abrupt. No-siree! Even though the temperature was balmy, everybody wore their heaviest coats.

And sure enough, without any warnin' at all, bitterly-cold winds with their snow and ice swept down from the nearby mountains.

And as you can see, these weren't just any winds. No sir-ee-bob! These were Abrupt winds, 'bout the coldest winds there ever were!

So when they hit the fine, upstandin' citizens of Abrupt...well, those folks were frozen solid, no matter what they were a-doin'.

'Fact is, not only were folks frozen solid, things were frozen solid, too, includin' balls that were thrown, the wind and snow and even words! Words that were on their way to folks' ears just stood frozen like a statue up there in the air.

Well, now. Once those winds a-started blowin,' they wouldn't

stop for months and months...which, as you can imagine, was a big problem.

'Cause by the time the thaw set in, folks would forget what was a-goin' on when the winds whipped into town.

Cowboy: Now, what was it that I was a-doin' when that doggoned Abrupt wind froze me up so solid?

Narrator: Well, that went on for years and years until two fine and honorable citizens of Abrupt, Big Herb and his daughter, Little Vera, had a terrific idea.

They'd just stay inside until those Abrupt winds came along, freezin' everything in their path and then they'd go out and put signs on people tellin' them what they were doin' when those bitter breezes came along.

That way, when folks thawed out, they'd know what they had been a-doin'.

Now, Big Herb was the kind of buckaroo who wanted to be certain that everything would be done just right. So he decided that he'd better tell Little Vera about verbs, 'cause they'd be usin' a lot of verbs in their new job.

"Vera, darlin'," he began, "the first thing you should know is this: verbs are words that can show action. Put another way, they show what someone or something does.

"Now, let me explain what I mean.

"You know our neighbor, Mr. Jones and his horse old Nelly, don't you?"

Little Vera said she did.

"Well, if we say 'Mr. Jones feeds his horse,' the word 'feeds' shows what Mr. Jones does, so it's a verb.

"Now, you know how Mrs. Peabody's goat is always eatin' the flowers in her garden?"

"Well, if we say 'The goat eats the flowers,' the word

'eats' shows what the goat does – he eats – and so that's a verb, too."

Well, later that day, Big Herb wrote out two sentences, just to make certain that Little Vera knew what a verb was.

Here they are. Can you find the verb in each sentence?

Here are Little Vera's answers, which are correct. The first verb tells what somebody – Mrs. Peabody – does. She ties.

And the second verb tells what something – the wind – does. It blows.

STOP ONE

Well now, just as Big Herb was congratulating Little Vera on the fine job she had done, what should come whippin' off the mountains, but one of those – yup, you guessed it – Abrupt winds.

And I mean to tell you, it was just about as fierce and cold as folks could ever remember!

Just about the whole town was caught outside, and they froze up as solid as bricks – 'cept for Big Herb and Little Vera, of course.

Inside their cozy shop, they got ready to paint the signs that would tell the townsfolk what they had been a-doin' when the winds hit.

After she had painted a few signs, Little Vera ran into something unexpected. "Look at this," she said.

"I've written 'Bobby has a box in his hand.' But I can't find a verb that tells what he does."

"Well, now," responded Big Herb, "not all verbs show what somebody or something does.

"Some verbs tell what somebody or something has. 'Juan has some chickens.'

Other verbs tell what somebody or something is. 'The bunny is cute.'

"And if you're talkin' about yourself – telling what you are – you use the verb 'am.' The word 'am' in 'I am good at painting signs,' would be an example.

Vera thought about Big Herb's explanation. Then she said, "Now, let me see if I've got this straight. In addition to telling what someone or something does, verbs are words that also can show what someone or something is, or has.

Or if I'm tellin' somethin' about myself, I can use the verb 'am,' as in 'I am small.'"

"That's right," said Big Herb. "I think you understand, Little Vera. But, to be sure, I'll give you a little review exercise to see if you can identify the verb in each sentence.

This was Big Herb's review exercise. Can you find the verb in each sentence?

"Blow," "has" and "is" were Little Vera's answers. Each one was correct. Did you do as well as she did?

STOP TWO

Well now, everybody in Abrupt was mighty appreciative of the fine job Big Herb and Little Vera were a-doin'. Why, the mayor even gave 'em the key to the village of Abrupt.

Now, folks were able to go about their business after readin' the signs that told them what they were a-doin' when the winds froze 'em up.

So things were goin' along mighty fine, until one day Big Herb's sister, Medium Martha, came to town.

Now, Martha was one of those people who never could leave well enough alone. The thing was, though, she was a mighty smart lady. Yes sir, she was.

So the next time those Abrupt winds came a-whistlin' down the mountains, and Big Herb and Little Vera prepared to paint their signs, Martha looked long and hard at what they were a-writin'.

After awhile she said, "You know, your signs tell what happens right now, in the present.

"When a sign says, 'Mr. Ramirez mows the lawn,' the verb, 'mows' shows that he's mowin' the lawn now, this very second.

"And when a sign says, 'Mr. Smith walks home,' that means he's doing it right now, too."

"But the thing is, by the time those folks thaw out, months from now, they will have already done those things, a long time ago."

Mr. Smith: I'm not a-goin' home now. I need me to get some grub. I haven't eaten anythin' in long time, and I got a mighty hunger a-goin' on here between my backbone and my belly-button!

Martha: So I don't think the verbs that tell what's happening now should be used on those signs.

"You know, Medium Martha, you're surely right!" said Big Herb. "Fortunately, verbs can tell us the time things happen, including past times.

"Yup, verbs can tell when things happen now, just like we've been paintin' 'em. And they also can tell us when things have already happened, before now – in the past.

"Here are two examples: 'Mr. Ramirez mowed the lawn,' 'mowed' bein' what he did in the past...and Mrs. Jones walked home.' Again, she did it – she walked – before now, in the past.

Then Big Herb looked over at Little Vera, who didn't even have to wait to hear what he had to say.

She just walked over to the work table, got out a pen, and said, "I know. You're goin' to give me a review exercise just to be certain that I know the difference between verbs that tell when things happen now and when they've already happened."

"No, ma'am, I'm not," replied her father. "But what I am gonna do is list two verbs that will show how they tell the present and the past."

These were the verbs. The first shows how a verb can tell what happens now, in the present, and then, by adding "ed," also can tell what happened before now, in the past.

Then Big Herb wrote these verbs and asked Little Vera to fill in the blanks with the correct verb that shows either present or past.

See if you can name the verbs.

Here are the verbs Little Vera named. And as before, she did a perfect job! Did you do as well as Little Vera?

STOP THREE

Well, by the time the next winds swept down on Abrupt, Big Herb, Little Vera, and Medium Martha (who, by now, had decided to stay on to help her brother and niece with their sign makin') were so good at usin' verbs, that folks from the nearby town of Quick sent someone over to ask 'em to paint signs there, too.

But, of course, the three were too busy with sign makin' in Abrupt to go to Quick.

But they did offer to train some young'ns from Quick to do the job right. Big Herb explained to 'em that a verb is a word that can show action – what somebody or something does.

Mr. Jones *feeds* his horse. That's what he does – he *feeds*. The goat *eats* the flowers. That's what the goat does – it *eats*.

Little Vera told the young'ns that verbs also can show what someone or something *is* (as in 'The dogie is frisky') or *has* (David has a bicycle).

And she told them that when a person is telling about himself or herself, the verb "am" can be used (I *am* happy).

And finally, Medium Martha showed how verbs can tell us the time when things happen – now, in the present (I paint signs) – or in the past (I painted signs).

Well, now! Right then and there somethin' mighty strange happened. Those Abrupt winds and Quick breezes just died away.

And so the sign-paintin' services of Big Herb, Little Vera, and Medium Martha were no longer needed. But that didn't bother them one bit. No siree-bob, it didn't!

You see, they'd gotten so much experience writin' verbs, they decided to go into the verb inventin' business. They invented verbs and sold 'em far and wide.

And that's why we're able to use so many verbs today. Without even knowin' it, we're using all those verbs made by those three wonderful folks in Abrupt, Montana! No sir! No ma'am! I am not joshin' you!

Web Resource

More definitive information on verbs can be found at
<http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/verbs.htm>

Other Programs in the *Introduction to Parts of* *Speech* *Series*

**Herman's Chow-Down Nouns
Adjectives for Armando
The Royal Principality of Pronouns**

Name _____

Verb Pre-Test

Directions: Circle the letter next to the statement that correctly finishes the sentence.

1. A verb can
 - a. describe another word.
 - b. name a person, place or thing.
 - c. show action.

2. A verb can
 - a. tell what a person or thing is.
 - b. tell the age of a person or thing.
 - c. replace a noun.

3. When you are speaking about yourself, you can use the verb
 - a. is.
 - b. am.
 - c. handsome.

4. Which word is not a verb?
 - a. has
 - b. throw
 - c. Bob

5. A verb can tell what happened in the past by adding the letters
 - a. el.
 - b. es.
 - c. ed.

6. Which sentence does not happen in the present?
 - a. Mr. Ramirez mows the lawn.
 - b. Mrs. Peabody's goat chewed the flowers.
 - c. Mr. Jones feeds his horse.

7. Which sentence happens now, in the present?
 - a. I am happy.
 - b. Big Herb painted many signs.
 - c. Mr. Smith walked home.

Discussion Questions – Big Herb & His Verbs

After Segment One

1. Where does the story take place?
2. What causes people to freeze there?
3. What things freeze in Abrupt?
4. Why is it a problem?
5. Who solves the problem?
6. According to Big Herb, what did Little Vera have to understand in order to correctly write signs?
7. What is a verb?
8. Name the verb in the sentence, “Mr. Jones feeds his horse.”
9. Name the verb in the sentence, “The goat eats the flowers.”
4. Why did Mr. Smith turn around?
5. What did Big Herb say verbs could do?
6. Name one way verbs can be changed to show the action was in the past?
7. Change the verb in the sentence, “Mr. Ramirez mows the lawn,” so it will tell Mr. Ramirez did it in the past.

After Segment Two

1. When Vera was painting signs, she came across something unexpected. What was it?
2. Name the verb in the sentence, “Bobby has a box in his hand.”
3. What verb do we use when we are talking about ourselves?
4. Name the verb in the sentence, “I am small.”

After Segment Three

1. Were the townsfolk of Abrupt happy with Big Herb and Little Vera’s work? What event in the story tells you this?
2. Who came to town?
3. What was Medium Martha’s discovery?

After Segment Four

1. Why did the people of Quick send someone to talk to Big Herb, Little Vera and Medium Martha?
2. Why did they refuse to go to Quick?
3. What did they do, instead?
4. What happened to the Abrupt winds?
5. What did Big Herb, Medium Martha and Little Vera do when the winds ended?

Name _____

Name the Verbs

Directions: Look at the pictures. Then finish the sentences by writing a verb in the spaces provided. The verb should tell what the person or thing does.



The girl _____
the ball.



The toast _____ up.



The cowboy _____
his rope.



The boy _____
the ball.

Name _____

Four Jobs for Verbs

Directions: Look at the pictures. Then finish the sentences by writing a verb in the spaces provided. Each verb should do a different job.



Larry _____
over the sprinkler.



Dina _____ a
present for Tom.



James said, "I _____
a basketball player."



Manuel _____ happy
whenever he draws.

Name _____

When Things Happen

Directions: The sign says, "Mr. Smith walks home." As you saw, however, Mr. Smith was walking home when he froze, but not any more. Now he's hungry and wants to eat. To be correct, the sign should now say, "Mr. Smith walked home." Below the picture, you'll find some sentences. Write new verbs on the lines so they will show what happened in the past.



1. Hector and his friend play _____ marbles.
2. Vera and Herb paint _____ signs very well.
3. They invent _____ new verbs when it got warm.
4. The cowboys talk _____ about the cattle.
5. Martha and Vera cook _____ meals.
6. The clouds drift _____ across the sky.
7. They mow _____ the lawn every Saturday.
8. The goats chew _____ the flowers.
9. They kick _____ the ball.
10. The children lick _____ the ice cream in the cone.

Name _____

Verb Post-Test

Directions: Circle the letter next to the statement that correctly finishes the sentence.

1. A verb can
 - a. name a person, place or thing.
 - b. describe another word.
 - c. show action.

2. A verb can
 - a. replace a noun.
 - b. tell the age of a person or thing.
 - c. tell what a person or thing is.

3. When you are speaking about yourself, you can use the verb
 - a. am.
 - b. is.
 - c. handsome.

4. Which word is not a verb?
 - a. has
 - b. Bob
 - c. throw

5. A verb can tell what happened in the past by adding the letters
 - a. ed.
 - b. es.
 - c. el.

6. Which sentence does not happen in the present?
 - a. Mr. Ramirez mows the lawn.
 - b. Mr. Jones feeds his horse.
 - c. Mrs. Peabody's goat chewed the flowers.

7. Which sentence happens before now, in the past?
 - a. I am happy.
 - b. Big Herb painted many signs.
 - c. Mr. Smith walks home.

Name _____

Verb Post-Test, Page 2

8. When a verb tells what happens now, we say it happens in the
 - a. past.
 - b. future.
 - c. present.

9. Which sentence has a verb that doesn't show action?
 - a. David has a bicycle.
 - b. Mike throws a ball to Paula.
 - c. Miss Marshall eats a hamburger.

10. In the sentence, "Big Mike Jones tagged the runner between home and third base," the verb is
 - a. runner.
 - b. between.
 - c. tagged.