

Ask these questions in the following order:

Where is the verb?
Look for the action word. If
there's no action word, look
for the being words:
am, is, are, was, & were, be,
being, been.

Place these questions before the
verb and ask:

Who, or What **verb**?
(answer: Subject)

Place these questions after
the verb and ask:

verb who or what?
(Answer: object, complement)

Place these questions after any
verb and ask:

verb where?
verb when?
verb why?
verb how?
(answer: adverb)

Place these questions before any
noun and ask:

what kind of?
which?
how many?
(answer: adjective)

ScholarSkills Definitions of the Parts of Speech

A **noun** is a naming word: nouns name persons, places, things, or ideas.

A **pronoun** takes the place of a noun.

A **verb** is an action, being, or helping word.

A **subject** is a word or group of words that answers the question: who or what verb?

The **predicate** is a word or group of words that tells us what the subject is doing or being.

An **object** is a word or group of words that answers the question: verb who or what?

An **indirect object** is a word that answers the question verb to whom or for whom?

A **subject complement** is a word or group of words that answers the question “verb who or what?” when the verb is a linking word.

When the complement is an adjective it is called a **predicate adjective**.

When the complement is a noun or pronoun it is called a **predicate nominative**.

An **adverb** is a word or group of words that answers the following questions: verb where? verb when? verb why? verb how?. Adverbs also answer “how?” and “to what extent?” about adjectives and other adverbs.

An **adjective** is a word or group of words that answers the following questions: what kind? which one? how many nouns?

A **phrase** is a group of words without a subject-verb relationship.

Prepositions are words which begin phrases that end with a noun or pronoun and act like adverbs or adjectives.

Conjunctions connect. They help us to create and understand the relationships between words and groups of words in sentences.

Coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS—For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So) connect words and help to create compound sentences.

Subordinating conjunctions create dependent clauses and complex sentences.

A **clause** is a group of words with a subject-verb relationship.

Dependent clauses are incomplete thoughts.

Independent clauses are complete sentences.