

APSU Writing Center

Parts of Speech

Parts of Speech

The basic parts of speech are nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and articles.

Noun

- A noun is a word that describes a **person, place, or thing**. In a sentence, nouns answer the questions who and what. Sentences can have more than one noun.
 - **Example:** The **student** visited the **writing center**.
- A noun may be abstract.
 - **Example:** She was filled with **curiosity** about her essay topic.
 - **Curiosity** is an abstract noun as it's an idea, not a physical thing.
- Nouns may also be proper.
 - **Example:** **APSU Writing Center** offers many helpful workshops.
 - **APSU Writing Center** is a proper noun as it names a specific place.

Pronouns

- A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun in a sentence. Pronouns can be used as subjects or objects.
 - **Example:** The **bird** ate all of **its** food.
 - **It** is a substitute for the noun **bird**.
 - **Example:** **She** visited the APSU Writing Center to get help with her essay.
 - **She** is a subject pronoun. It replaces a noun that does the action in the sentence.
 - **Example:** The tutor gave **her** some tips for improving **it**.
 - **Her** and **it** are object pronouns. They replace nouns that receive the action in the sentence.

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Conjunctions

- Conjunctions are words that join or connect words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence.
- Coordinating conjunctions can be remembered with the acronym FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.
 - **Example:** The student wrote a draft, and the tutor reviewed it.
- Subordinating conjunctions like since, although, and while connect clauses of different importance.
 - **Example:** Although the student was tired, she finished her essay on time.

Adjectives

- An adjective is a word that modifies or describes a noun or pronoun.
- Adjectives may come before a noun or after a form of the verb to be (am, is, are, was, etc.).
- They answer questions such as What kind? How many? Which one? or Whose?
 - **Example:** The **diligent** student asked the writing tutor for feedback.
 - **Diligent** describes what kind of student.

Adverbs

- Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. They answer questions such as How? When? Where? and to what extent? Many adverbs end in -ly.
 - **Example:** The student typed her essay very quickly.
 - To what extent? “Very quickly” modifies the verb “typed.”
 - **Example:** The tutor spoke clearly during the workshop.
 - How? “Clearly” modifies the verb “spoke.”

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Prepositions

- Prepositions often describe time, location, or movement and are usually followed by a noun (the object of the preposition).
- When combined with nouns, they form prepositional phrases, which give more detail in a sentence.
- Common prepositions include: about, above, on, under, in, next to, between, after, and before.
 - **Example:** The writing tutor sat **next to the computer**.
 - Shows location.
 - **Example:** The student left **in the morning**.
 - The prepositional phrase “in the morning” modifies the verb “left.”

Articles

- Articles appear before a noun or noun phrase.
- **A / An** are indefinite articles, used before nonspecific or general nouns.
 - **Example:** **A** student asked for help at the Writing Center.
- **The** is a definite article, used before a specific or identifiable noun.
 - **Example:** **The** tutor explained how to cite sources correctly.

Verbs

- A verb describes the action, occurrence, or state of the subject of a sentence.
 - **Example:** Jenna was an avid reader.
 - **was** shows a state of being.
 - **Example:** The students are tired.
 - **are** shows the state of being of the students.

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Parts of Speech Quick Guide

Review each definition and use example words to create your own sentence in the blank boxes below.

Noun: A person, place, thing, or idea.

- Examples: student, essay, tutor, Writing Center, curiosity

Pronoun: A word that replaces a noun.

- Examples: she, he, it, her, they

Verb: Shows an action, occurrence, or state of being.

- Examples: explained, typed, visited, asked, reviewed

Adjective: Describes a noun or pronoun.

- Examples: diligent, helpful, tired, curious, specific

Adverb: Describes a verb, adjective, or another adverb. Answers how, when, where, or to what extent.

- Examples: quickly, clearly, carefully, thoroughly, very

Preposition: Shows a relationship of time, location, or movement; usually followed by a noun.

- Examples: in, on, next to, between, after

Conjunction: Connects words, phrases, or clauses.

- Examples: and, but, or, although, while

Article: A word that introduces a noun. **a/an** = general, **the** = specific.

- Examples: a, an, the



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References

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