

Class: Grade
VIIITopic: TRANSITIVE/ INTRANSITIVE VERBS
Study Notes

OCTOBER -2022

What is a verb?

Verbs are words that show an action (*sing*), occurrence (*develop*), or state of being (*exist*). Almost every sentence requires a verb.

Type of Verb	Function	Examples
Regular	Past and past participle forms end with “-ed”, “-d”, or “-t”.	Look - looked; Sleep - slept; Save - saved
Irregular	Past and past participle forms do not end with “-ed”, “-d”, or “-t”.	Give - gave, given; Write - wrote, written
Action	Describing an action.	They <i>are playing</i> in the field.
Stative	Describing a state of being or condition.	She <i>loves</i> cats.
Transitive	Used with a direct object.	He <i>gave</i> the gift to her.
Intransitive	No direct object is used.	It <i>is raining</i> .
Helping/auxiliary	Used in addition with verbs to alter meaning, mood, or tense.	She <i>has been</i> living with her sister.
Modal	Used to set the mood of a sentence.	We <i>can</i> bring some food.
Linking	Used to link subject to predicate.	The perfume <i>smells</i> good.
Phrasal	Combination of verbs, prepositions, and adverbs to create a new meaning.	They <i>are working out</i> at the gym.

The two main kinds of verbs, *transitive verbs*, and *intransitive verbs*, are discussed below:

A verb can be described as *transitive*, or *intransitive* based on whether it requires an object to express a complete thought or not. A **transitive verb** is one that only makes sense if it exerts action on an object.

An **intransitive verb** will make sense without one.

How to identify a transitive verb?

Transitive verbs are not just verbs that can take an object; they demand objects. Without an object to affect, the sentence that a **transitive verb** inhabits will not seem complete.

Eg; Please bring coffee.

In this sentence, the verb *bring* is transitive; its object is *coffee*, the thing that is being brought. Without an object of some kind, this verb cannot function.

Eg; Please bring.

Bring what, or who? The question begs itself because the meaning of *bring* demands it.

Here are some more examples of **transitive verbs** and their objects.

Eg; The girls carry water to their village.

Could you phone the neighbors?

I caught a cold.

Lila conveyed the message.

Each of the verbs in these sentences have objects that complete the verbs' actions. If the objects were taken out, the results would be illogical and questions would be raised in the mind of the reader; for example, *Lila conveyed*. Conveyed what?

Transitive Verbs – Passive Form

Transitive verbs can have a passive form. Active: Subject + **transitive verb** + *object*

Passive: *Object* + **was/were** + **transitive verb** (+ by subject)

- Thieves **stole** *his car*. (active)
- *His car* **was stolen**. (passive)
- Thomas Edison **invented** *the light bulb*. (active)
- *The light bulb* **was invented** by Thomas Edison. (passive)
- They **sold** *some books*. (active)
- *Some books* **were sold**. (passive)

Direct and Indirect Objects

A transitive verb can take more than one object.

Donovan **gave** *his sister* a laptop.

In this sentence, there is an indirect object, "his sister," and a direct object, "a laptop." However, there is another way to say this same idea using a prepositional phrase.

Donovan **gave** a laptop to his sister.

In English, an indirect object may come between a transitive verb and the direct object, like the first example sentence about Donovan, or the indirect object could be in the form of a prepositional phrase, like the second example sentence about Donovan.

An indirect object is only needed if the action is being done to or for somebody; when using a transitive verb, you need to include a direct object, but you may not need to include an indirect object.

Finding the Object

You can figure out the direct object by using this question format: "The subject did what?" or "The subject [verb] what?"

The instructor **addressed** what?
the student's question

Miriam **borrowed** what?
the methodology books

Can you **bring** what?
your copy of the textbook

The speaker **discussed** what?
different marketing strategies

The committee members **will raise** what?
money

You can find the indirect object by asking the question "To whom?" or "For whom?"

Donovan **gave** a laptop to whom?
his sister

Example sentences using TRANSITIVE verbs

- We **enjoyed** *the concert*.
- I **opened** *the door*.
- She **kicked** *the ball*.
- He **took** *me* to a restaurant.
- I **saw** *an accident*.
- He **copied** *my answer*.

How to identify an intransitive verb?

An **intransitive verb** is the opposite of a **transitive verb**: It does not require an object to act upon.

Eg; They jumped.

The dog ran.

She sang.

A light was shining.

None of these verbs require an object for the sentence to make sense, and all of them can end a sentence. Some imperative forms of verbs can even make comprehensible one-word sentences.

Eg; Run!

Sing!

A number of English verbs can only be intransitive; that is, they will never make sense paired with an object. Two examples of intransitive-only verbs are *arrive* and *die*. You can't *arrive* something, and you certainly can't *die* something; it is impossible for an object to follow these verbs.

Example sentences using INTRANSITIVE verbs

- We **arrived** around midday.
- She **sneezed** loudly.
- Your baby **cries** a lot.
- His grandfather **died** last year.
- The rain **fell** heavily.
- I **was waiting** but nothing **happened**.
- The jokes were not funny, and nobody **laughed**.
- I **walk** to work every day.
- We **sat** on the bench.
- He **stood** in the corner.
- We **waited** but nobody **came**.

Transitive or intransitive? Some verbs can be both

Many verbs can be classified as both transitive and intransitive depending on how they are used in a sentence.

Eg; Urged by the others, she sang.

She sang the national anthem at the hockey game.

After he cleaned up, he left.

He left the gift on the table.

To decide whether the verb is being used transitively or intransitively, all you need to do is determine whether the verb has an object. Does she sing something? Does he leave something?

The verb is only transitive when the answer is yes.

Verbs That Are Both Transitive and Intransitive

Example Sentences

continue

We will **continue** *the meeting* after the break. (transitive)

The meeting **continued** after the break. (intransitive) **play**

Three of the students **play** *the guitar*. (transitive)

The students will **play** **outside today**. (intransitive)

return

Javier **returned** *the book* to the library. (transitive)

The students **returned** to school after the winter break. (intransitive)

grow

I **grow** *zucchini* in my garden. (transitive)

My daughter is **growing** **quickly**. (intransitive)

Example sentences of verbs that are both transitive and intransitive
(transitive) - (intransitive)

I **stopped** *the car*. – The car **stopped**.

I **broke** *my coffee mug*. – My coffee mug **broke**.

The summer heat **melted** my *ice cream*. – My ice cream

melted. She **speaks** *Arabic*. – She **speaks** very quickly.

Mike is **reading** *a book*. – Mike is **reading**.

New Zealand **won** *the match*. – New Zealand **won**.

TRANSITIVE VERBS

NEED AN OBJECT

I bought a car.

transitive verb direct object

You **buy** *something* (an object).

What did you buy? *A car*.

You cannot just say "I bought."
(incomplete - incorrect)

You need a direct object after a transitive verb. (In this case **buy**)

INTRANSITIVE VERBS

CANNOT HAVE AN OBJECT

The baby smiled.

intransitive verb

You cannot have an object after an intransitive verb.

(In this case **smile**)

You cannot "smile *something*"

Another example:

We waited but nobody came.

intransitive

intransitive

Verbs that are Transitive and Intransitive

Some verbs can be transitive in one sentence and intransitive in another.

I stopped the car.

transitive verb direct object

The car stopped.

intransitive verb there is no object

Sometimes the **meaning** of a verb **changes** depending on whether that verb is transitive or intransitive (especially with phrasal verbs).

He runs a small grocery store.

(transitive: **run** = manage)

He runs along the beach every morning.

(intransitive: **run** – the sport)