

Linking Verbs

14d. A *verb* expresses action or a state of being.

A *linking verb* connects the subject to a word or word group that is in the predicate and that identifies or describes the subject. Such a word or word group is called a *subject complement*. All linking verbs are intransitive, since they do not have objects.

The most commonly used linking verbs are forms of the verb *be* and other verbs such as *appear, become, feel, grow, look, remain, seem, smell, sound, stay, taste, and turn*.

EXAMPLES DeAnn **became** a famous artist and sculptor. [The compound subject complement *artist and sculptor* identifies the subject *DeAnn*.]

Don't the new chimes in the bell tower **sound** wonderful! [The adjective *wonderful* describes the subject *chimes*.]

Some verbs may be used as linking verbs or as action verbs.

EXAMPLES The skirt **turned** scarlet from the dye Mina added to the water. [linking]

Dwayne **turned** the car around in the driveway. [action]

EXERCISE A In the sentences below, underline linking verbs once and subject complements twice.

Example 1. These grapes taste sweeter than those.

1. When Roberto received the compliment, he turned red with embarrassment.
2. Did the bananas at the grocery store look good this morning?
3. Paula felt much calmer after talking to her grandmother.
4. The tree seemed taller today than it did yesterday.
5. The travelers grew tired after the long journey.

EXERCISE B In the space above each underlined verb below, identify the verb by writing *L* for *linking* or *A* for *action*.

Example April 4, 1974, [1] was a day that [2] will always be remembered in baseball history.

At 2:40 P.M. in Cincinnati, Hank (Henry) Aaron of the Atlanta Braves [6] tied what [7] had been Babe Ruth's unbroken record—714 home runs during a major league baseball career. He [8] turned a 3 ball, 1 strike pitch into a home run that [9] sailed over the wall.

Four days later, on April 8, Aaron [10] made history again. The stadium [11] looked packed, and millions [12] were watching the game in their homes. The weather [13] was cool and cloudy. The Dodgers [14] were leading 3 to 1, and the Braves [15] had one player on first base. The pitcher [16] threw a fastball, and Aaron [17] knocked it over the left field fence. The crowd [18] must have been wild with excitement! Aaron [19] had hit number 715 and [20] had broken Ruth's record.