

## Main Verbs and Helping Verbs

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

A *verb phrase* consists of at least one *main verb* and one or more *helping verbs* (also called *auxiliary verbs*).

**EXAMPLES** John **must be feeding** the cats now. [*Must* and *be* are helping verbs. *Feeding* is the main verb.]

Do you **have** a favorite artist? [*Do* is the helping verb. *Have* is the main verb.]

**EXERCISE A** In the sentences below, underline the main verbs once and the helping verbs twice.

**Example 1.** Have you ever seen any paintings by Mexican artist Rufino Tamayo?

- Rufino Tamayo was born in 1899.
- During Tamayo's childhood, his aunt would sell fruit in a market in Mexico City.
- His eye for color was probably influenced by this experience; red, green, and yellow are included in the dominant colors in his paintings.
- Some of his work was inspired by the paintings of Spanish artist Pablo Picasso.
- Our art teacher has shown us slides of Rufino Tamayo's paintings.
- Tamayo's art has been exhibited in museums throughout the United States and Mexico.
- In 1936, Tamayo was living in New York City, where he could pursue his goals as an artist.
- Tamayo's painting *Children Playing with Fire* may have been created in reaction to the Mexican Revolution.
- Tamayo may have worried that people would destroy themselves and the earth through war.
- Didn't several other artists of the 1930s and 1940s have that same concern?

**EXERCISE B** In the paragraph below, underline the verbs and verb phrases. Then, circle the main verbs.

**Example** [1] Have you ever seen the actor Mario Moreno?

[11] By the 1940s, this popular Mexican movie personality had become an international success. [12] He was more commonly known as Cantinflas. [13] Mexicans had fallen in love with his charming but clumsy character who was always dressed in baggy pants, a white T-shirt, and a hat. [14] You may have seen the 1956 movie *Around the World in 80 Days*, in which Cantinflas appeared as the character Passepartout. [15] Rufino Tamayo must have also appreciated the work of Cantinflas because he painted a portrait of the Mexican star in 1948.