

LINKING VERBS

1) COMMON LINKING VERBS:

| | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Be | Am |
| Is | Are |
| Was | Were |
| Shall be | Shall have been |
| Will be | Will have been |
| Has been | Have been |
| Had been | Can be |
| May be | Might be |
| Should be | Could be |
| Become | Would be |
| Appear | Seem |

*Note: There are other combinations of some of these linking verbs--for example:

| | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Has become | Could have come |
| Have appeared | Should have appeared |
| Had seemed | Should have been, etc. |

2) SENSORY LINKING VERBS:

| | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Look | Smell | Sound | Taste | Feel |
|------|-------|-------|-------|------|

3) LESS COMMON LINKING VERBS:

| | | | |
|------|--------|-------|------|
| Grow | Remain | Prove | Stay |
|------|--------|-------|------|

4) LINKING VERBS are used by themselves (in contrast to helping verbs, which come before another verb: was running).

Linking verbs are usually followed by a subject complement--a noun, pronoun, or adjective that refers to and describes, or means the same as, the subject.

5) EXAMPLES OF COMMON LINKING VERBS (SC=subject complement):

SC
John is President.

SC
The dog was hungry.

SC
I will not be late.

SC
She seemed nervous.

6) EXAMPLES OF SENSORY LINKING VERBS (Note: Sensory verbs are used as linking verbs only when there is no action involved in the sentence.):

SC
The pie looked delicious.

SC
The flower smelled sweet.

SC
The pie tasted delicious.

SC
The sun felt wonderful.

7) NOTE: Sensory verbs are sometimes action verbs also.

John looked at the delicious pie.

John smelled the sweet flower.

John tasted the delicious pie.

She felt the sharp blade of the new knife.

REMEMBER: If a sensory verb is an action verb--as in the above sentences--it cannot be working as a linking verb.

8) EXAMPLES OF LESS COMMON LINKING VERBS:

SC
She grows prettier every day.

SC
The test proved too difficult for most students in the class.

SC
He remains the kind man he always was.

SC
The room stayed cool two hours after the air conditioner was turned off.