OBJECTIVES

When you have completed the materials in this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

- Define the eight parts of speech.
- Recognize how parts of speech function in sentences.
- Compose sentences showing words playing more than one grammatical role.

PRETEST

Study the following sentence and identify selected parts of speech. For each word listed underline the correct part of speech. Compare your answers with those at the bottom of the page.

The manager and I seriously examined all programs on office computers.

1. and a. preposition b. conjunction c. verb d. adverb
2. seriously a. preposition b. conjunction c. verb d. adverb
3. examined a. adjective b. conjunction c. verb d. adverb
4. on a. preposition b. pronoun c. noun d. adverb
5. office a. adjective b. conjunction c. noun d. adverb

CAREER TIP

“Whatever your program in college, be sure to include courses in writing and speaking. Managers must constantly write instructions, reports, memos, letters, and survey conclusions. If this comes hard to you, it will hold you back.”

—James A. Newman and Alexander Roy in Climbing the Corporate Matterhorn
As you learned in Chapter 1, this book focuses on the study of the fundamentals of grammar, current usage, and appropriate business and professional style. Such a study logically begins with the eight parts of speech, the building blocks of our language. This chapter provides a brief overview of the parts of speech; the following chapters will deal with these topics more thoroughly.

THE EIGHT PARTS OF SPEECH

Learning the eight parts of speech helps you develop the working vocabulary necessary to discuss and study the language. You especially need to recognize the parts of speech in the context of sentences. That's because many words function in more than one role. Only by analyzing the sentence at hand can you see how a given word functions.

Nouns

In elementary school you probably learned that nouns are the names given to persons, places, and things. In addition, though, nouns name qualities, concepts, and activities.

Persons: 
Estella, Mr. Takimoto, president, Scott

Places:
Toledo, island, Canada, college

Things:
computer, billboard, motorcycle, chair

Qualities: 
dependability, honesty, initiative

Concepts: 
knowledge, freedom, friendship, happiness

Activities:
skiing, surfing, management, eating

Nouns are important words in our language. Sentences revolve around nouns since these words function both as subjects and as objects of verbs. To determine whether a word is really a noun, try using it with the verb is or are. Notice that all the nouns listed here would make sense if used in this way: Estella is young, Toledo is in Ohio, computers are fun, and so on. In Chapter 4 you will learn four classes of nouns and rules for making nouns plural.

Pronouns

As substitutes for nouns, pronouns are used in our language for variety and efficiency. Compare these two versions of the same sentence:

Without Pronouns: 
Elizabeth gave the book to Matt so that Matt could use the book to study.

With Pronouns:  
Elizabeth gave the book to Matt so that he could use it to study.

In sentences pronouns may function as subjects of verbs (for example, I, we, they) or as objects of verbs (me, us, them). They may act as connectors (that, which, who), and they may show possession (mine, ours, his).* Only a few examples are given here. More examples along with functions and classifications of pronouns will be presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

*Words such as his, my, and its are classified as adjectives when they describe nouns (his car, my desk, its engine).
**Verbs**

Verbs express an action, an occurrence, or a state of being.

- Jason built an excellent Web site. (Action)
- It has many links. (Occurrence)
- He is proud of it. (State of being)

Action verbs show the action of a sentence. Some action verbs are runs, studies, works, and fixes. Verbs that express a state of being generally link to the subject words that describe or rename it. Some linking verbs are am, is, are, was, were, be, being, and been. Other linking verbs express the senses: feels, appears, tastes, sounds, seems, looks.

Verbs will be discussed more fully in Chapters 8–11. At this point it is important that you be able to recognize verbs so that you can determine whether sentences are complete. All sentences have at least one verb; many sentences will have more than one verb. Verbs may appear singly or in phrases.

- Stacy submitted her application to become a management trainee. (Action verb)
- Her résumé is just one page long. (Linking verb)
- She has been training to become a manager. (Verb phrase)
- Stacy feels bad that she will be leaving her old friends. (Linking verb and verb phrase)

**Adjectives**

Words that describe nouns or pronouns are called adjectives. They often answer the questions what kind? how many? and which one? The adjectives in the following sentences are italicized. Observe that the adjectives all answer questions about the nouns they describe.

- Small, independent businesses are becoming numerous. (What kind of businesses?)
- We have six franchises in four states. (How many franchises? How many states?)
- That chain of hotels started as a small operation. (Which chain? What kind of operation?)
- He is energetic and forceful, while she is personable and deliberate. (What pronouns do these adjectives describe?)

Adjectives usually precede nouns. They may, however, follow the words they describe, especially when used with linking verbs, as shown in the first and last examples above. Here is a brief list of words often used as adjectives:

- bright, long, successful
- effective, sensitive, terrific
- helpless, small, wet

Three words (a, an, and the) form a special group of adjectives called articles.

**Adverbs**

Words that modify (describe or limit) verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs are adverbs. Adverbs often answer the questions when? how? where? and to what extent?

- Today we must begin work. (Must begin when?)
- James proceeded rapidly with the orders. (Proceeded how?)

**STUDY TIP**

To test whether a word is truly a verb, try using it with a noun or pronoun, such as Kim eats, she seems, or it is. He food doesn’t make sense because food is not a verb.

**SPOT THE BLOOPER**

From The Wall Street Journal comes a report that Marshall Field’s, the big Chicago retailer, announced it would serve hot chocolate to “tiresome” shoppers.

**STUDY TIP**

The adjectives a, an, and the are sometimes called “noun markers” because they identify or “mark” nouns.
He seemed exceedingly happy. (How happy?)
Did you see the schedule there? (Where?)
The prosecutor did not question him further. (Questioned him to what extent?)

Here are additional examples of common adverbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>carefully</th>
<th>greatly</th>
<th>rather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>commercially</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>really</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evenly</td>
<td>only</td>
<td>very</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many, but not all, words ending in *ly* are adverbs. Some exceptions are friendly, costly, and ugly, all of which are adjectives.

**Prepositions**

*Prepositions* join nouns and pronouns to other words in a sentence. As the word itself suggests (*pre* meaning "before"), a preposition is a word in a position before its object (a noun or pronoun). Prepositions are used in phrases to show a relationship between the object of the preposition and another word in the sentence. In the following sentence notice how the preposition changes the relation of the object (*Mr. Lee*) to the verb (*talked*):

Kent often talked with Mr. Lee.
Kent often talked about Mr. Lee.
Kent often talked to Mr. Lee.

The most frequently used prepositions are to, by, for, at, from, with, and of. A more complete list of prepositions can be found in Chapter 13. Learn to recognize objects of prepositions so that you won’t confuse them with sentence subjects.

**Conjunctions**

Words that connect other words or groups of words are *conjunctions*. The most common conjunctions are and, or, but, and nor. These are called *coordinating conjunctions* because they join equal (coordinate) parts of sentences. Other kinds of conjunctions will be presented in Chapter 15. Study the examples of coordinating conjunctions shown here:

Koshi, Bill, and Amber are all looking for jobs. (Joins equal words.)

You may be interviewed by a personnel officer or by a supervising manager. (Joins equal groups of words.)

**Interjections**

Words expressing strong feelings are *interjections*. Interjections standing alone are followed by exclamation marks. When woven into a sentence, they are usually followed by commas.

*Wow!* Did you see the total of our bill?
*Oops!* I forgot to send the attachment.
The vocabulary of American English is constantly growing. Some Britshers criticize our eagerness to accept new words and meanings. Prince Charles pronounced American English "very corrupting" and to be avoided at all costs. He told the British Council that Americans tend to "invent all sorts of new nouns and verbs and make words that shouldn't be."

A word of caution: English is a wonderfully flexible language. As noted earlier, many words in our language serve as more than one part of speech. Notice how flexible the word mail is in these sentences:

- Our mail is late today. (Noun—serves as subject of sentence)
- The knight's suit of mail protected him. (Noun—serves as object of preposition)
- Mail the letter today. (Verb—serves as action word in sentence)
- Your voice mail box is full. (Adjective—used with voice to describe box, which is the subject of sentence)

Now complete the reinforcement exercises for this chapter.
Business and professional people are very concerned about appropriate English usage, grammar, and style. This concern is evident in the number and kinds of questions called in to grammar hotline services across the country. Among the callers are business supervisors, managers, executives, professionals, secretaries, clerks, administrative assistants, and word processing specialists. Writers, teachers, librarians, students, and other community members also seek answers to language questions.

Selected questions and Dr. Guffey’s answers to them will be presented in the following chapters. In this way you, as a student of the language, will understand the kinds of everyday communication problems encountered in business and professional environments.

The original questions in our Hotline Queries came from the Los Angeles Pierce College Business English Hotline, which is no longer in service. More recently, questions have come from grammar hotline services across the country. You may download a list of grammar hotlines in the United States and Canada at the Tidewater Community College Writing Center Web site at http://www.tcc.edu/students/resources/writcent/GH/.

Q: We’re having a big argument in our office. What’s correct? E-mail, e-mail, email, or Email? On-line or online? Website, Web site, web site, or website?

A: Initially, most people capitalized E-mail and hypenated on-line. With increased use, however, both of these forms have been simplified to forms that I recommend: e-mail and online. In my observation most publications today are moving toward e-mail for both noun and verb forms and online for both adjective and adverb functions. In regard to Web site, I recommend the capitalized two-word form. Capitalizing Web is logical since it is a shortened form for World Wide Web, just as Net is a shortened form for the Internet. You might want to check with your company’s in-house style manual for its preferred style for all of these words.

Q: What is the name of a group of initials that form a word? Is it an abbreviation?

A: A word formed from the initial letters of an expression is called an *acronym* (pronounced ACK-ro-nim). Examples: snafu from situation normal, all fouled up, and PIN from personal identification number. Acronyms are pronounced as single words and are different from abbreviations. Expressions such as FBI and dept. are abbreviations, not acronyms. Notice that an abbreviation is pronounced letter by letter (F, B, I) while an acronym is pronounced as a word (MADD, which stands for Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

Q: I saw this sentence recently in the newspaper: *At the movie premiere the crowd scanned the arriving limousines for glitterati.* Is glitterati a real word?

A: A fairly recent arrival to our vocabulary, glitterati means “celebrities or beautiful people.” New words are generally considered legitimate when their use is clear and when they are necessary (that is, when no other word says exactly what they do). If educated individuals begin to use such words, the words then appear in dictionaries, and glitterati has made it.

Q: Which word should I use in this sentence? *Our department will (disburse or disperse) the funds shortly.*

A: Use disburse. Disperse means “to scatter” (Police dispersed the unruly crowd) or “to distribute” (Information will be dispersed to all divisions). Disburse means “to pay out.” Perhaps this memory device will help you keep them straight: associate the b in disburse with bank (Banks disburse money).

Q: How should I address a person who signed a letter *J. R. Henderson*?

A: Use Dear J. R. Henderson.
Q: What's the difference between toward and towards?
A: None. They are interchangeable in use. However, I recommend using the shorter word toward because it is more efficient.

Q: Is every day one word or two in this case? We encounter these problems every day.
A: In your sentence it is two words. When it means “ordinary,” it is one word (she wore everyday clothes). If you can insert the word single between every and day without altering your meaning, you should be using two words, as in your sentence.

Q: Should an e-mail message begin with a salutation or some kind of greeting?
A: When e-mail messages are sent to company insiders, a salutation may be omitted. However, when e-mail messages travel to outsiders, omitting a salutation seems curt and unfriendly. Because the message is more like a letter, a salutation is appropriate (such as Dear Courtney, Hi Courtney, Greetings, or just Courtney). Including a salutation is also a visual cue to where the message begins. Some writers prefer to incorporate the name of the recipient in the first sentence (Thanks, Courtney, for responding so quickly).
Reinforcement Exercises

A. (Self-check) Complete these statements.

1. Names for persons, places, things, qualities, concepts, and activities are
   a. verbs  b. adjectives  c. nouns  d. pronouns  c  

2. Words that substitute for nouns are
   a. adverbs  b. adjectives  c. interjections  d. pronouns  d  

3. The part of speech that answers the question What kind? is a(n)
   a. adverb  b. adjective  c. preposition  d. conjunction  b  

4. Words that answer the questions How and To what extent are
   a. adverbs  b. adjectives  c. pronouns  d. conjunctions  a  

5. Me, us, you, and she are examples of
   a. pronouns  b. nouns  c. adverbs  d. adjectives  a  

6. Quickly, sincerely, and openly are examples of
   a. pronouns  b. prepositions  c. adverbs  d. adjectives  c  

7. And, or, nor, and but are
   a. adverbs  b. prepositions  c. interjections  d. conjunctions  d  

8. Words that join noun or pronoun objects to other words in sentences are
   a. adverbs  b. prepositions  c. conjunctions  d. adjectives  c  

Check your answers below.

B. In each of the following groups of sentences, one word is used as an adjective, as a noun, and as a verb. For each sentence, indicate the part of speech for the italicized word.

   Example: We have little time in which to make a decision.
           Officials will time the runners in the marathon.
           Factory workers must punch a time clock.
           noun  
           verb  
           adjective  

1. Put that desk in the corner.
   noun  

2. Your new pickup truck corners well.
   verb  

3. CEOs seem to prefer corner offices.
   adjective  

4. Travelers boarded the supersonic jet in Paris.
   noun  

5. Tony complained of jet lag when he arrived in Los Angeles.
   adjective  

Guffey, Business English 8e, ©2005, Mason:South-Western
6. Can businesspeople jet from Hong Kong to Honolulu in four hours?

7. Advertisements promised instruction from a *master* teacher.

8. Few students can *master* Web design in a short course.

9. The pilot of a merchant ship is considered its *master*.

Write complete sentences using the word *work* as a noun, as an adjective, and as a verb. Answers will vary.

10. (noun) We have a great deal of *work* to do.

11. (verb) Can you *work* overtime?

12. (adjective) That job requires a *work* order.

C. The italicized words in the following sentences are either prepositions or conjunctions. Write C for conjunction or *P* for preposition.

1. Technical skills are important *for* entry-level positions, *but* communication skills are necessary for promotion *into* management.

2. Writing good letters and e-mail messages *to* customers creates goodwill *for* business and professional organizations.

D. Read the following sentences and, taking into account the function of each word within each sentence, identify the part of speech of each word shown. Use a dictionary if necessary.

One e-mail message contained a virus, but it was very quickly deleted.

1. One *adjective*

2. e-mail *adjective*

3. message *noun*

4. contained *verb*

5. a *adjective*

6. virus *noun*

7. but *conjunction*

8. it *pronoun*

9. was *verb*

10. very *adverb*

11. quickly *adverb*

12. deleted *verb*

Hurriedly she parked the small sports car and rapidly raced to class.

1. Hurriedly *adverb*

2. she *pronoun*

3. parked *verb*

4. the *adjective*

5. small *adjective*

6. sports *adjective*

7. car *noun*

8. and *conjunction*

9. rapidly *adverb*

10. raced *verb*

11. to *preposition*

12. class *noun*
E. Selected verbs in the following sentences have been italicized. Use a check mark to indicate whether these verbs are linking or action.

**Example:** The Chinese are major users of cell phones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINKING VERB</th>
<th>ACTION VERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. An optimist is a person who thinks a housefly is looking for a way out.


3. The hotel manager selected four trainees from many applicants.

4. The voice on her recorded message sounds good.

5. Please deliver the computers and printers before April 4.

6. The manager and the personnel director studied all job descriptions carefully.

7. Words are the most powerful drug used by mankind.

8. Sheila felt bad that too much month was left at the end of her money.

F. **Hotline Review.** In the space provided write the correct answer choice.

1. Only the treasurer has authority to ______ funds from our accounts.
   a. disperse  b. disburse  c. disburse  d. dispurse
   
2. Experts suggest that users check their ______ at regular intervals.
   a. Email  b. E-mail  c. email  d. e-mail
   
3. We are considering subscribing to an ______ databank to aid research.
   a. on-line  b. online
   
4. Police used tear gas to ______ a demonstration of striking teachers in Ecuador.
   a. disperse  b. disburse  c. disburse  d. dispurse
   
5. All computer files must be backed up ______ to prevent possible loss.
   a. everyday  b. every day  c. every-day
   
6. Backing up files is an ______ occurrence in most organizations.
   a. everyday  b. every day  c. every-day
   
7. Which of the following is an acronym?
   a. NFL  b. FBI  c. PIN  d. RSVP
   
   **c**
G. **Writing Exercise.** In a couple of complete sentences, explain why it is important to understand the parts of speech for this course and later on the job. *Answers will vary.*

It’s important to understand how the parts of speech work so that I can talk about them in this course. On the job it’s important to know the parts of speech so that when I look up words in a dictionary I understand how they may function in sentences.

In a couple of sentences, explain the difference between nouns and verbs. Which do you think is more important to a writer? *Nouns name persons, places, and things. They also name qualities, concepts, and activities. They are important because they are the subjects of sentences. Verbs show the action in a sentence. They can also be used to link words to the subject or to rename the subject. Writers often say that verbs are more important because they evoke feelings.*
EDITOR'S CHALLENGE

To develop your vocabulary skills, supply a single word for each blank in the following memo. The word you supply should represent the part of speech shown.

Southeast Industries
Interoffice Memo

DATE:  June 4, 200x
TO:   Michele Taylor, Senior Personnel Officer
FROM:  Emily Lopez-Lee, Research Assistant
SUBJECT:  SUMMARY OF ARTICLE ABOUT SITUATIONAL INTERVIEWS

As you requested, I (verb) located an article about the increasing use of situational interviews to select (adjective) new employees. The article by Jennifer Merritt is titled “Improv at the Interview,” and it appeared in BusinessWeek magazine in February, 2003. You asked (pronoun) me to summarize the important information (preposition) in this article. Here are some points in which I think you will be interested:

• Companies today face shareholder scrutiny, hiring slowdowns, and expense-slashing. Thus, managers cannot afford to hire the wrong (noun) person.
• Situational (also called “behavioral”) interviews are replacing traditional interviews because the former are thought to be more accurate in predicting performance.
• Situational interviews (adverb) generally involve asking the candidate to respond to a typical situation. For example, the interviewer might play the role (preposition) of a customer who was angry about an account overcharge.
• Traditional interviews in which a manager sits (adverb) down and talks with a job prospect are only 7 percent accurate in predicting performance of (adjective) job candidates. Situational interviews, on the other (noun) hand, are thought to be 54 percent accurate.

Although this article (verb) appeared in BusinessWeek, I have doubts about its contention that situational interviews are replacing traditional interviews. The author did not provide any figures to support that view. As your research assistant, I (adverb) genuinely enjoyed finding this information for you. If you would like other articles summarized, please let me know.

Answers will vary.
LEARNING WEB WAYS

Many colleges and universities offer online writing labs (OWLs). These Web sites provide helpful resources for students and businesspeople. You can read online or download handouts providing help with punctuation, spelling, sentence construction, parts of speech, and writing in the job search.

**Goal:** To learn to use an online writing lab.

1. With your Web browser on the screen, key the following URL in the location box: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu). Press Enter.
2. Look at the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) home page.
3. Scroll down to reveal the site’s six areas illustrated with pencil icons. Notice that a hand appears when you move your cursor over an underlined title. This indicates a hot link.
4. Click Handouts and Materials. Then scroll down and click Complete Scroll-Down List of Our Handouts.
5. From the list of handouts, click Parts of Speech.
6. Click Using Pronouns Clearly. Read the handout.
7. Print a copy. Circle three examples illustrating incorrect use of pronouns.
8. Click Back in the upper corner of your browser. Return to the OWL Handouts Index.
9. Select another topic to peruse.
10. End your session by clicking the X box in the upper right corner of your browser. Turn in your printout or send an e-mail message to your instructor summarizing what you learned.

INFOTRAC IN ACTION

Your instructor worries that grammar is boring to her students. She asks you to help her find some way to enliven the subject. She remembers reading an article about brain-based activities for teaching grammar. But she can’t find the article. She wants you to search the InfoTrac database for it. Conduct a keyword search for brain-based grammar or just grammar. Be sure to use a keyword search and not a subject search. Once you locate the article, find three ideas for motivating students learning grammar. In the space provided or on a separate sheet, write a note to your instructor describing the ideas in complete sentences. Begin with “As you requested, I have located . . . .” See the Editor’s Challenge exercise for ideas in summarizing an article.

Answers will vary. As you requested, I have located an article titled “Grammar That’ll Move You!” In the article the author describes three “surefire” activities for making the teaching of grammar exciting. (1) Punctuating Dialog Cards requires students to add punctuation marks with Velcro to sentences on cards. (2) Roll Out Run-Ons is an activity in which teams correct huge, zany, run-on sentences. (3) Vivid Verb Cheers is an activity in which teams write a cheer containing five to ten vivid verbs. The team then performs the cheer. I have printed the article for you to see how these activities can be used in classes.
POSTTEST

Identify the parts of speech in this sentence by underlining the correct choice. Compare your answers with those at the bottom of the page.

Greg **eagerly installed** two new **printers** **in** our department.

1. eagerly a. adverb b. pronoun c. preposition d. conjunction
2. installed a. adverb b. verb c. preposition d. conjunction
3. two a. verb b. pronoun c. adjective d. conjunction
4. printers a. verb b. adverb c. adjective d. noun
5. in a. verb b. adverb c. preposition d. conjunction

BONUS LEARNING RESOURCES

Want extra practice? Check out these bonus learning resources!

See the inside cover for a complete description of these activities. Your instructor will tell you which of the following to complete. To access any of the Web activities, go to the Guffey Student Web site at http://www.westwords.com/guffey/students.html or http://www.meguffey.com. Click Book Support, click your book cover, and click the appropriate activity.

On the Web:
- Web Editor’s Challenge provides a business document to be revised.
- Web Interactive Chapter Review tests your knowledge of chapter concepts.
- Web Crossword Puzzle reviews chapter and builds your vocabulary.
- WebCheck Reinforcement Exercises 2.1, 2.2 provide dictionary practice and strengthen your vocabulary.

In Your Book:
- Self-Help Exercises give you more chances to reinforce your learning.

On Your CD-ROM:
- CD Study Guide (Ms. Grammar) builds your language skills.
- PowerPoint Slides summarize chapter principles and include checkups.