



Pendemonium

The Great African Safari: Verbs

Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 3–5

Curriculum Focus: Language Arts

Lesson Duration: One class period

Program Description

Four writing implements must save the world from the clutches of a permanent marker gone bad. With his sidekick, Dottie, and his own small army, the evil Dark Marker makes a claim for global domination by stealing verbs from a local newspaper and exploring the geography, cultures, and animals in Kenya. Penny the pencil, Buzz the PDA, Florentina the fountain pen, and Arturo the gel pen discover Dark Marker's plot and solve clues about grammar rules to save the world from communication chaos.

Discussion Questions

- What is a verb?
 - What is the difference between an active and an inactive verb?
 - How do verbs, particularly active verbs, improve the quality of writing?
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Analyze verbs.
- Identify irregular verbs (go, went, swim, swam).
- Explore present tense and past tense verbs.
- Examine how verbs must match their subjects.
- Work effectively in small groups.

Materials

- *The Great African Safari: Verbs* video
- Paper and pencils
- Crayons, colored pencils, or colored markers
- Two paper bags: one filled with subjects and the other filled with verbs (active and inactive)
- A set of action verb cards
- Print resources about verbs

Procedures

1. After viewing the video, reinforce its concepts by reading *To Root, To Toot, to Parachute* by Brian P. Cleary, or a similar book with a lighthearted look at verbs.
2. Briefly review verbs, action verbs, irregular verbs, present tense and past tense verbs, and verbs matching their subjects.
3. Go around the room and ask each student to name a verb, and then have them use it in a sentence.
4. Play the pantomime verb game to continue the lesson. Create a set of action verb cards with at least one card per student. Then divide the class in half so there are two teams. Next have a student from one of the teams come up, one at a time, to the front of the class and draw a card from the stack of verb cards. The student must act out, or pantomime, the word on the card. Then have a student from the other team come up and act out the word he or she chooses. Place a time limit of one minute (or a time period of your choice) for each team to guess each of the words. Each team receives one point for every verb that it guesses. The team who ends up with the most points wins. (Some suggested words: argue, shake, grab, knock, wash, sing, jump, fall, clean, count, eat, run, kick, sleep, dig, drink).
5. To teach verb and subject-verb agreement, write sentences, such as the following, on the board.
 - (1) Devon always _____ the answers to the problems.
 - (2) The dog and the cat _____ outside.
 - (3) Amy and her sister _____ to school yesterday.
 - (4) The bird _____ overhead before landing on the ground.
 - (5) The movie _____ for about two hours. Ask for volunteers to complete each sentence with a verb. Then have the students determine whether the verb is in present or past tense. Point out that, in some cases, verbs in either the present or past tense can fit in the sentence.
(Possible answers: (1) knows, knew, solves, solved (2) sit, sat, wait, waited, (3) went, walked (4) flies, flew (5) lasted)
6. Then play a subject-verb agreement game. Divide the class in half. Have one group write subjects and the other group write verbs (both active and inactive). One person from the first group stands and reads the subject. The first person in the second group stands and reads the subject along with the verb he has written. The students must confer and decide if the subject and verb agree. If they don't, the students must make the necessary change and tell the class why they needed to make that change.
7. As an ending activity, divide the class into groups of three. Have each group draw six subjects and six verbs from two separate bags filled with these two parts of speech. Then ask each group to write a story on any topic they choose using at least three of the words they drew from the verb bag and three of the nouns they drew from the noun bag. Tell them they can also illustrate their work using crayons, colored pencils, or colored markers. When the groups complete their stories, have volunteers read the stories to the class, citing the six nouns and six verbs they picked and the three nouns and the three verbs that they used.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students consistently worked effectively in small groups; were consistently able to identify action verbs, irregular verbs, present and past tense verbs; were consistently able to match verbs with subjects; were consistently able to create stories using verbs; and consistently understood how verbs, particularly action verbs, were effective in improving their writing.
- 2 points: Students usually worked effectively in small groups; were usually able to identify action verbs, irregular verbs, present and past tense verbs; were usually able to match verbs with subjects; were usually able to create stories using verbs; and usually understood how action able to create stories using verbs; and consistently understood how verbs, particularly action verbs, were effective in improving their writing.
- 1 point: Students rarely worked effectively in small groups; were rarely able to identify action verbs, irregular verbs, present and past tense verbs; were rarely able to match verbs with subjects; were rarely able to create stories using verbs; and rarely understood how verbs, particularly action verbs, were effective in improving their writing.

Vocabulary

action verb

Definition: A verb that describes an act or shows action

Context: The horse *galloped* around the ring with his head held high.

altitude

Definition: A high location or area

Context: Brittany and Joseph had to climb for hours before reaching the altitude at the top of the mountain.

irregular verb

Definition: Any verb whose past tense is not formed by adding -d, -ed, or -ied to the present tense.

Context: "To go" is an irregular verb because the past tense of "go" is "went."

migration

Definition: Moving from place to place (particularly animals)

Context: Due to migration, some birds fly south for the winter.

past tense

Definition: A verb tense used to express an action or condition that occurred in the past



Context: Dave was the only member of his family who had red hair.

present tense

Definition: The verb tense expressing action in the present time

Context: Janelle is the president of her class and vice-president of the student council.

safari

Definition: A land journey, especially hunting or exploring in East Africa

Context: Would you like to see lions and tigers on a safari in Africa?

wildebeest

Definition: A large antelope; also known as a gnu

Context: It might be fascinating to see a large group of wildebeests.

Print Resources

Cleary, Brian. *To Root, To Toot, to Parachute*, Lerner Group, 2000.

Rhyming text and attractive illustrations combine to offer substance about verbs in an engaging manner.

Collins, S. Harold, *Verbs*. Garlic Press, 1995.

Hopper, Vincent F. *English Verbs (Barrons Verb Series)*. Barron's Educational Series, 2004.
This book contains more than 120 irregular verbs conjugated in all tenses.

Sunley, Laura. *Fun with Grammar -75 Quick Activities and Games That Help Kids Learn About Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, and More*, Scholastic, Inc., 2002.

Verb Detectives is just one of the engaging games offered in this book.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:



- Language Arts: Viewing– Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media
- Language Arts: Writing: – Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process; uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions
- Language Arts: Reading– Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process
- Language Arts: Grammar and Usage– Uses verbs in written compositions (e.g. verbs for a variety of situations, action words)

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association have developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching the English language arts. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>.

- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

How To Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

Play Video – This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.



Video Index—Here the video is divided into sections indicated by video thumbnail icons; brief descriptions are noted for each one. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

Standards Link—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

Teacher Resources—This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

VIDEO INDEX

Segment 1: Introduction to Verbs (6 min.)

Description

In this edition, Dark Marker has taken *The Point's* verbs. To help solve his first clue, Penny explains verbs to the team.

Pre-viewing question

Q: What is a verb?

A: A verb is a word that expresses action, occurrence, or existence.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do sentences always have verbs?

A: Yes, every complete sentence contains a verb.

Segment 2: Exploring Verbs (4 min.)

Description

Solving the first clue, the team travels to Kenya, where Penny shares more about verbs.

Pre-viewing question

Q: What is an action verb?

A: Action verbs tell you what the subject of a sentence does.

Post-viewing question

Q: What are some examples of action verbs?

A: Examples of action verbs include think, find, and jump.

Segment 3: Matching Verbs With Subjects (7 min.)

Description

The next clue lands the team at a Kenyan marathon. They also observe a wildebeest migration.

Pre-viewing question

Q: What does it mean for verbs and their subjects to match?



A: That means that if the subject is singular, it needs a singular verb form. If the subject is plural, it needs a plural verb form.

Post-viewing question

Q: What letter is usually needed to add or subtract to adjust to a singular or plural subject?

A: Usually the letter "s" adjusts a verb to a singular or plural subject.

Segment 4: Challenge Review (6 min.)

Description

Dark Marker's final clue takes the foursome to Tanzania at the Masai warrior area.

Pre-viewing question

Q: How regular verbs change from present tense to past tense?

A: Regular verbs change from present tense to past by adding a -d, -ed, or -ied.

Post-viewing question

Q: How can a writer make his or her writing more interesting to the reader?

A: Using as many action verbs as possible makes writing more interesting.