Parts of Speech: How It Works



Grammar · Grades 3–4

Every word in a sentence has a job. These are the four big ones.

1. Noun

Names a person, an animal, a place or a thing.

The **fox** ran to the **barn**.

Ask: who or what?

2. Verb

Tells what the subject does or is.

The fox **ran** to the barn.

Ask: what does it do?

3. Adjective

Describes a noun. It tells what kind, how many or which one.

The **red** fox ran.

Ask: what kind?

4. Adverb

Tells more about a verb: how, when or where.

The fox ran **quickly**.

Ask: how, when or where?

Ask the question

1. **Who or what?** A noun (or a pronoun in its place).
2. **What does it do?** A verb.
3. **What kind? How?** What kind is an adjective. How, when or where is an adverb.

One sentence, four jobs

The	**small**	**frog**	**jumped**	**high.**
	adjective	noun	verb	adverb

A **pronoun** is a fifth job. It stands in for a noun:

It jumped high.

It = the small frog

Watch out

A word's job can change from one sentence to the next.

Fish swim in the pond.

Here fish is a noun.

We **fish** at the pond.

Here fish is a verb.

Ask what the word is doing in *this* sentence.