Parts of speech for kids: the 8 jobs a word can do, with examples

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The eight parts of speech explained for kids, with a definition and examples of each, the order to teach them in, and free practice pages for every one.

A part of speech is the job a word does in a sentence, and there are eight: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection. Once a child can name the job, sentences stop looking like a pile of words and start looking like a machine with parts. Peabody has a page for seven of the eight, each with a one-sentence definition, examples and three questions with answers, free through the end of 2026, with no sign-up and no ads.

This post gives you all eight in one place, a sentence with every job labelled, the order that works for teaching them, and five-minute ways to practise at home or in class.

The eight parts of speech at a glance

- Part of speech: Noun · What it does: A noun is a word that names a person, a place, an animal or a thing. · Examples: dog, park, sister, kite · Peabody page: Nouns
- Part of speech: Pronoun · What it does: A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun, such as I, you, he, she, it, we and they. · Examples: she, it, they, we · Peabody page: Pronouns
- Part of speech: Verb · What it does: A verb is a word that tells what someone or something does or is. · Examples: jumps, eat, are · Peabody page: Verbs
- Part of speech: Adjective · What it does: An adjective is a word that describes a noun by telling what kind, how many or which one. · Examples: red, three, soft · Peabody page: Adjectives
- Part of speech: Adverb · What it does: An adverb is a word that tells how, when or where something happens, and many adverbs end in ly. · Examples: slowly, soon, outside · Peabody page: Adverbs
- Part of speech: Preposition · What it does: A preposition is a word that shows where or when something is, such as in, on, under, behind, before and after. · Examples: under, after, on · Peabody page: Prepositions
- Part of speech: Conjunction · What it does: A conjunction is a word that joins words or sentences, such as and, but, or, so and because. · Examples: and, but, because · Peabody page: Conjunctions
- Part of speech: Interjection · What it does: A short word or phrase that shows a sudden feeling. · Examples: wow, ouch, hooray · Peabody page: none yet

The whole set is on one hub page too: grammar, one skill at a time.

One sentence, every job

Take this sentence: "Wow, the small dog ran quickly under the table, and it barked." Every word has a job.

- Word: Wow · Part of speech: Interjection · Why: It shows a sudden feeling.
- Word: the · Part of speech: Article (a kind of adjective) · Why: It points to one particular noun.
- Word: small · Part of speech: Adjective · Why: It tells what kind of dog.
- Word: dog · Part of speech: Noun · Why: It names an animal.
- Word: ran · Part of speech: Verb · Why: It tells what the dog did.
- Word: quickly · Part of speech: Adverb · Why: It tells how the dog ran.
- Word: under · Part of speech: Preposition · Why: It shows where the dog ran.
- Word: the · Part of speech: Article (a kind of adjective) · Why: It points to one particular table.
- Word: table · Part of speech: Noun · Why: It names a thing.
- Word: and · Part of speech: Conjunction · Why: It joins two parts of the sentence.
- Word: it · Part of speech: Pronoun · Why: It takes the place of the dog.
- Word: barked · Part of speech: Verb · Why: It tells what the dog did next.

Read the table once with your child and ask them to cover the last column. Most children can guess the job of a word if they say what it is doing in the sentence.

The order to teach them in

Not all eight need to arrive at once. This order follows the Common Core Language standards and what children find easiest.

1. Nouns and verbs first, in kindergarten and 1st grade. A child who can tell the things from the actions can already build a sentence: a dog, runs.
2. Adjectives and pronouns next, in 1st and 2nd grade. Adjectives make a noun more exact, and pronouns save a child from saying Mia four times in a row.
3. Adverbs in 2nd and 3rd grade. They are harder because they can describe a verb, an adjective or another adverb, so start with the how, when and where of a verb.
4. Conjunctions and prepositions from 3rd to 5th grade. Both are small words with big jobs. Conjunctions join ideas, prepositions place them in space and time.
5. Interjections any time. They are the easiest to spot and children enjoy them, so they make a good warm-up.

The same word can do two jobs

Children get stuck when a word they know as a noun shows up as a verb. The job comes from the sentence, not from the word.

- Word: play · Sentence: We saw a play at school. · Job: Noun
- Word: play · Sentence: The kids play tag. · Job: Verb
- Word: light · Sentence: Turn on the light. · Job: Noun
- Word: light · Sentence: Please light the candle. · Job: Verb
- Word: light · Sentence: The box is light. · Job: Adjective

A good question to teach is "What is this word doing here?" instead of "What is this word?"

Five-minute practice

You do not need a worksheet. Try one of these.

- Spin the wheel. Open the parts of speech wheel on Peabody Teach, spin it, and take turns giving a word of the kind it lands on. It works as a class warm-up or a car game.
- Try three. Each skill page has three questions with the answers one tap away. Start with nouns or verbs and do one page a day.
- Hunt in a story. Pick one page of a story from the library and find three nouns and three verbs. Then find one adjective for each noun.

Peabody does not have a grammar game. What it has today is a page for each skill, flashcards linked from each page, and the wheel on Peabody Teach.

Questions grown-ups ask

What are the 8 parts of speech?

Noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection. Some school lists add the article or the determiner as a ninth, and some count the article with the adjectives.

What grade do kids learn parts of speech?

Nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns start in kindergarten and 1st grade. Adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions are usually in 3rd to 5th grade, and by middle school students use all eight to analyse sentences.

Is "the" a part of speech?

The word "the" is an article, which is a kind of determiner. Many school lists count it with the adjectives because it also tells which noun. Use whichever label your child's teacher uses.

Where can a child practise?

Start at the grammar hub and pick a skill. Each page has a definition, examples and three questions to try, with a free flashcard deck linked.