To Be Verbs

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:
- Identify to be verbs.
- Brainstorm to be verbs.
- Write using to be verbs.

Preparation

Materials Needed
- Chart paper and markers
- To Be Verbs (BLM 3)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation
If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the To Be Verbs anchor chart and the modeling text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.

1. Focus

Explain To Be Verbs

Say: Verbs that connect the subject in a sentence to more information about the subject are called linking verbs, or to be verbs. Listen to this sentence: “The boy is glad.” The word is is a to be verb that links the subject, boy, to the adjective that describes the boy, glad. Some other to be verbs are was, were, am, and are. Today we’re going to practice using to be verbs.

Model Using To Be Verbs

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

1. Those are Mr. Morgan’s flowers!
2. Tia is right.

Modeling Text

Read sentence 1. Say: The verb are in the first sentence is a to be verb. The verb are links the subject, Those, to the words Mr. Morgan’s flowers, which tell me more about what the subject is. Are is a present tense verb, so I know that the sentence is telling about the flowers.

Read sentence 2. Say: In the sentence “Tia is right,” the verb is describes what the subject, Tia, is now—she’s right. The verbs is and are are present tense verbs. We can also use to be verbs in past tense. The past tense of is is was. The past tense of are is were. I can create an anchor chart that shows present and past tense to be verbs.

Begin an anchor chart for linking verbs that students can help add to during the practice part of the lesson. Fill in the singular rows of the anchor chart.

Say: The pronoun I goes with the verb am when something is happening now; for example, “I am happy now.” It goes with the verb was when something has already happened; for example, “I was happy yesterday, too.” The pronoun you goes with the verb are when something is happening now; for example, “You are happy now.” The pronoun you goes with the verb were when something has already happened; for example, “You were happy yesterday.” The pronouns he, she, and it go with is when something is happening now and they go with was when something has already happened.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am</td>
<td>I was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are</td>
<td>You were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He, she, it is</td>
<td>He, she, it was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are</td>
<td>They were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are</td>
<td>We were</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample To Be Verbs Anchor Chart

2. Rehearse

Practice Using To Be Verbs

Ask students to help you complete the chart using plural pronouns. **Ask:** Which to be verb goes with the pronoun we when we are talking about something that happens in the present or now? What to be verb goes with we when we talk about something that happened in the past?

Ask students to form pairs and choose one present tense to be verb and one past tense to be verb from the anchor chart to use in written sentences.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences with To Be Verbs

Invite pairs to share their sentences with the class. Make note of student pairs who struggle with this activity. Use this information to plan further instruction.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We can use to be verbs such as am, is, and are to link the subject in a sentence to more information about the subject. The to be verbs am, is, and are are present tense verbs. The to be verbs was and were are past tense verbs. As you are writing, make sure you are using the correct verb form and tense. You can look at the anchor chart to check your use of to be verbs.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and using to be verbs, have them complete BLM 3.

4. Share

Bring students together. Review and provide corrective feedback based on students’ answers to BLM 3. Ask students to share what they learned about using to be verbs.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Provide practice in using present tense to be verbs. Display the sentence frames below on chart paper. Circle the verbs. Model using the sentence frames. For example, point to the sentence frame, and then point to yourself. **Say:** I am a teacher. Ask students to repeat as they point to themselves and identify themselves as students. Point to the next sentence frame and point to a student. **Say:** You are a student. Ask students to repeat. Continue pointing to the sentence frames, and then pointing to more students as you use each sentence frame. Then ask students to continue pointing to each other and themselves as they use the sentence frames:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am ______.</th>
<th>You are ______.</th>
<th>He is ______.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She is ______.</td>
<td>We are ______.</td>
<td>They are ______.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to develop sentences. Students may need additional support to understand that to be verbs show a state of being or feeling. Encourage students to act out the meanings of the sentences they develop.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share the following English/Spanish cognates: past/el pasado; present/el presente; verb/el verbo.