**To Be Verbs**

**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:
- Understand that *to be* verbs link the subject of the sentence to words that tell more about the subject.
- Identify *to be* verbs.
- Sort present and past tense verbs.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**
- Chart paper and markers
- *To Be* Verbs (BLM 7)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the anchor chart, the modeling text, and the practice 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: *To be* verbs are linking verbs that connect the subject in a sentence to more information about the subject. The *to be* verbs *am, is, and are* are present tense verbs because they tell what the subject of the sentence is or is like right now. The *to be* verbs *was and were* are past tense verbs and tell us what the subject was or was like.

**Model Using To Be Verbs**

Say: Now I’m going to read you some sentences from a story. As I read these sentences, I’m going to look for *to be* verbs. I’m also going to see if the verbs are present or past tense.

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

1. Tia was late.
2. Her friends were busy with homework.

**Modeling Text**

Read aloud example 1. Say: Tia is the subject and the verb was links Tia with the word that describes her, late. Because this tells about Tia in the past, the *to be* verb is in past tense.

Read aloud example 2. Say: The sentence is about Tia’s friends. Friends is the subject of the sentence. The verb were is used to link the word friends with the word that describes them, busy. This tells about the friends in the past, so the verb is past tense. This time, the subject is plural so we use the plural *to be* verb were.

Begin an anchor chart for linking verbs that students can help add to during the practice part of the lesson. Use the examples from the modeling text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is</td>
<td>Tia was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The friends are</td>
<td>This was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His jeans are</td>
<td>Today was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am</td>
<td>We were</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample To Be Verbs Anchor Chart**
2. Rehearse

Practice Using To Be Verbs

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

1. This is no ordinary day.
2. His jeans were dusty.
3. Today is a special day.
4. I am curious.

Practice Text

Ask students to work with a partner and read each sentence. Ask them to find each to be verb and decide if it is present tense or past tense.

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

Share To Be Verbs

Invite students to share the to be verbs they found and state if the verbs are present or past tense. Discuss their responses. Ask the following questions:
• What is the to be verb in this sentence?
• Is the verb present or past tense?

Ask students to tell you where on the chart you should write the to be verbs from the practice text.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: Remember to use to be verbs to link the subject of a sentence with words that tell more about that 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 write, be sure you are using the correct tense of the to be verbs in your stories.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and using to be verbs, have them complete BLM 7.

4. Share

Bring students together. Review and provide corrective feedback based on students’ answers to BLM 7.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
Help beginning ELs understand and use to be verbs in their own oral sentences. As you read each sentence frame to students, supply a word that tells more about the subject of the sentence. Use pantomime to help students understand the meaning. Then work with students to orally complete each sentence frame using their own word choices.

I am ______. You are ______. She is ______.

Intermediate and Advanced
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers. Ask them to copy the sentence frames from above. Encourage students to work together to write their own words to complete each sentence.

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.