

# The Action Verb

Recognize an *action verb* when you see one.

**Explode! Scream! Sneeze! Type! Kick!** What are these words doing? They are expressing action, something that a person, animal, force of nature, or thing can *do*. As a result, we call these words *action verbs*. Look at the examples below:

In the library and at church, Michele ***giggles*** inappropriately.

***Giggling*** is something that Michele can *do*.

Because of the spicy Jamaican pepper, David ***reached*** for his glass of iced tea.

***Reaching*** is something that David can *do*—happily, if his mouth is on fire.

Carlos ***watched*** pretty women in skimpy bikinis parading on the beach.

***Watching*** is something that Carlos can *do*.

The alarm clock ***buzzed*** like an angry bumblebee.

***Buzzing*** is something that the alarm clock can *do*.

The coffee maker ***gurgled*** on the kitchen counter.

***Gurgling*** is something that the coffee maker can *do*.

If you are unsure whether a sentence contains an action verb or not, look at every word in the sentence and ask yourself, "Can a person or thing *do* this?"

Read the sentence below:

During biology class, Omesh napped at his desk.

Can you ***during***? Is ***during*** something *you* can *do*? Can you ***biology***? Is there someone ***biologying*** outside the building right now? Can you ***class***? Do your obnoxious neighbors keep you up until 2 a.m. because they are ***classing***? Can you ***Omesh***? What does a person do when he's ***Omeshing***? Can you ***nap***? Bingo! Sure you can! You'd probably prefer napping to listening to a biology lecture yourself. Can you ***at***? Of course not! Can you ***his***? Show me ***hising***. Can you ***desk***? Demonstrate ***desking*** for me!

In the sentence above, there is only one action verb: ***napped***.



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