Herb was bored.
Herb was blue.
He sighed to himself,
“There’s nothing to do.”
Along came a fairy.
She said, “Listen, Herb.
There’s plenty to do.
All you need is a verb.”

What is a verb?
Most verbs are action words. They tell you what someone or something does. *Walk, shout, fly, listen,* and *sleep* are all action verbs. Can you think of others?
Then she opened a sack, and out some verbs flew.

“Pick one,” she said.

“Better yet, pick a few.”
The fairy was right!
Herb could do anything.
He could run. He could jump.

Some verbs are called helping verbs. They help the main verb describe the action:

He could run.

*Run* is the main verb. *Could* is a helping verb.
He could dance.
He could sing.

There are 23 helping verbs. They always appear with another verb. Try using some in sentences.

- am
- are
- be
- been
- being
- can
- could
- did
- do
- does
- had
- has
- have
- is
- may
- might
- must
- shall
- should
- was
- were
- will
- would

Grammar Tales: A Verb for Herb © Scholastic Teaching Resources
He could swing, hit, slide, score a home run,
ride a bike, climb a tree,
juggle fruit just for fun.
He could learn magic.
He could grow. He could shrink,
pull rabbits from hats,
disappear in a wink.

Hey, where are you going?
He could read, write, dream, imagine, explore,
swim, cook, paint,
and much, much more.
“Wow!” said Herb.
“Verbs are great!
But I am tired,
and it is late.”
Then Herb asked the fairy as she packed up her sack, "If I get bored again, will you come back?"

Here are some other linking verbs. Can you use them in sentences?

am appear are be
been being feel
is look seem
sound was were
“Dear boy,” she chuckled.
“You don’t need a fairy.
You can find verbs galore in the dictionary.”
“So remember, next time you need a distraction just think of some verbs—you’ll be ready for action.”

Quick! How many verbs can you think of in one minute? Make a list.
As Herb fell asleep that night in his bed, visions of verbs danced in his head.
A verb is a word that shows an action or a condition.

Many verbs are action words. They describe what someone or something does. Climb, juggle, and swim are all action verbs. Remember, some action verbs describe activities you can’t really see or hear. Learn, imagine, and find are all action verbs, too.

Some verbs help the main verb describe the action. These are called helping verbs. Could and will are examples of helping verbs: He could read. I will come back.

Some verbs are not action words. A linking verb describes a condition. Was and is are examples of linking verbs: Herb was bored. It is late.

How important are verbs? Just try writing a sentence without one! You cannot write a sentence without a verb. Verbs great! makes no sense. Verbs are great! makes sense because it includes the verb are.
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