

The Vowel Sounds

Vowel sounds are those sounds that we produce without any obstruction of the air that flows from the lungs. Like we pointed out earlier, there are 20 vowel sounds and they are further categorized into monothongs and diphthongs. The monothongs which are also called the pure vowels are 12 while the diphthongs which are also called the impure vowels or the glides are 8. The pure vowels are further divided into:

A. LONG VOWELS:

1. /i:/: see, heed, bead, meal, wheel, key, bee, preach, reach, eerie, feature, cream
2. /u:/: boom, wound, tomb, loom, moon, youth, woo, rude, suit, zoo, who,
3. /a:/: heart, car, star, market, mar, lark,
4. /ɔ:/: port, core, sore, raw, gore, gory, bore,
5. /ɜ:/ girl, purpose, nerve, word, earn, learn, concern

B. SHORT VOWELS:

6. /ɪ/: sit, bucket, pit, list, lit, bit, dig, thin
7. /e/: egg, mend, den, said, when, hen, generation
8. /æ/: hand, man, land, band, bag, thank, wad
9. /ɒ/: pot, cot, rot, bond, song, long
10. /ʊ/: push, put, pull, full, bush, bull
11. /ʌ/: cup, enough, love, flood, money, sun
12. /ə/: ago, about, father, a lot, mother, pepper, paper

THE DIPHTHONGS

13. /ai/: site, sight, sigh, ice, eye, lie, guy, buy, why
14. /ei/: bake, baby, lady, say, may, case, brake, day
15. /əʊ/: go, so, road, soap, bold, load, moan, bone
16. /uə/: poor, sure, door, roar, sour, pure
17. /ɔɪ/: boy, coil, coy, soy, soil, boil, oil
18. /iə/: here, where, tear(noun) bear(noun)
19. /eə/: bear (verb) fair, fare, were, rare
20. /aʊ/: how, bow, cow, sound, down, wound(verb)

- **Countable (Count) Nouns:** Simply put, this kind of nouns can be counted. In other words, they can go with an indefinite article a/an or any of the determiners like every, each, another etc in their singular form; when in plural, they admit such determiners as few, many, these, those several etc. Examples book, man, ruler, student, teacher etc.
- **Uncountable (Non-count) Nouns:** As the name implies, this kind of nouns cannot be counted. That is to say that they are thought of as a quantity or mass. Two outstanding features of these nouns are that they are not to be pluralised, nor used with an indefinite article a/an. Grammatically, they are regarded as singular nouns, and hence take a singular verb. To show a sign of singularity or plurality, uncountable nouns are used with partitives, namely some, little, much, a lot, a piece of or pieces of, an item of, items of, a bit etc. Examples are furniture, advice, news, information, homework, equipment, luggage, progress, permission, poetry, money, bread, grass, clothing, behaviour, vocabulary, alphabet etc. *Note that some words can be both countable and uncountable, with a relative difference in sense. Consider interest, grass, language, money, behaviour, education, damage etc. *Note also that almost all the abstract nouns are uncountable nouns.

- **Functions of Nouns**

- **As subject of a verb:** Luke is a handsome man. The students have all resumed. Godfrey Okoye University is in Forsters Corner, Enugu. The underlined nouns/noun phrases are all subjects of verbs in their respective sentences. As subject, the nouns answer the question of 'who/what.'
- **As object of a transitive verb:** Chukwu married Jane. Calistus drank a bottle of beer. Do you know his name? The nouns/noun phrases underlined are objects of their sentence. They all answer the 'whom/what.' A noun also functions as an indirect object of a verb; in such case, we can have: He did his friend a great service. My Daddy bought Johnson a pair of shoes.
- **As subject and object complement:** A complement is a word or a group of words which is used to complete the meaning of a sentence. It always follows linking verbs like the verb 'to be', seem, appear, look, and such verbs as make, appoint, elect, nominate etc. Examples: Chisom is a dancer. We appointed Udoka the secretary. In the first case, we have noun as a subject complement; in the second, it is the object complement. *Note that a complement differs from object. When we talk of complement, we are referring to the same person/thing; hence it is said that a complement is another name for the subject or object. But in object, we are referring to two distinct persons or things. Refer to the examples above for clarification.
- **As object of a preposition:** Every noun that comes after a preposition is the object of the preposition, in that preposition governs nouns in the objective case. Examples: He jumped across the fence. Uche kicked the ball over the net.
- **As apposition:** An apposition is a nominal which describes another noun. A noun can be in apposition to the subject or object, as can be respectively seen in the following examples: Jide, the coordinator, just arrived; We met Hon.

- **Intransitive Verb:** The action expressed by intransitive verbs remains with the subject; in other words, they do not take objects. Examples: Did you swim? Ifechi cries every day.
- **Ergative Verb:** This kind of verbs are both transitive and intransitive in that they take object in some cases and do not in some others. Examples: He killed a rat (transitive). He kills (intransitive). My sister is cooking rice (transitive). I don't know how to cook (intransitive).
- **Auxiliary Verb:** This is otherwise called helping verb, for it assists the main verb in the formation of tense. Auxiliary verbs are divided into primary auxiliary and modal auxiliary.
 - **Primary Auxiliary:** There are three primary auxiliaries, namely have, do and be. Examples: I have seen the watch. He does go to church when the father is around. I am working on a project. What is peculiar about primary auxiliaries is that they can as well function as a main verb when used alone in a sentence. For example, I am here. He has the book. Emeka did the assignment.
 - **Modal Auxiliaries:** These verbs show whether the action expressed by the main verb is possible, probable, certain, necessary, permissible or hypothetical. They cannot stand on their own; hence they are said to be the true auxiliaries. Modal verbs are will, would, can, may, could, might, shall, must, should, need, ought to etc. Examples: It may rain tonight (possibility). I must leave now (necessity). She can't be a murderer (certainty).
- **Non-finite Verb:** This category of verbs do not observe any change in the sentence; they remain in the same form, whether the subject changes from singular to plural, or the action from present to past. They have both verbal non-verbal attributes; being verbal derivatives, they do not function as verbs but perform the functions of other parts of speech. The non-finite verbs are mostly referred to as *verbals*, and include infinitive, participle and gerund.
 - **Infinitives:** These are divided into two viz full infinitive and bare infinitive. The full infinitive verbs take 'to' while bare infinitives do not. Such verbs as allow, want, enable, come etc are full infinitives. Hence it is wrong to say, 'The plan will enable us achieve the desired results'; instead, 'The plan will enable us to achieve the desired results'. I will not allow you to go (not 'go') away. For bare infinitives, we have make, let, hear, watch, see etc. The manager will make everybody finish (not 'to finish') their work. Can you let me have it (not 'to have')? While the distinction is clear, some verbs can both be full infinitive and bare infinitive. Examples are help and dare. I will help you to do (or do) the assignment. 'Dare' takes full infinitive in a positive sentence and bare infinitive in a negative sentence. He dared me to slap him. You dare not hit me.

Read up the grammatical functions of infinitives

- **Participle:** The participle is derived from verb but functions as adjectives. They are divided into present and past participle, which ends in '-ing' and '-ed' or '-en' respectively. Examples: This is an interesting joke. Jude is a dedicated student. We had a class on spoken English this morning.
- **Gerunds:** These are usually called the verbal nouns, in that they are verbal in form but nominal in function. Gerunds have the same form as the present

- **Proper Adjectives:** These adjectives result from using a proper name to describe another noun. Examples, Chinese food, Nigerian shoes, English language etc.
- **Order of Adjectives:** This has to do with the arrangement of adjectives when they occur in a series. The usual order for the arrangement is summed up in this mnemonic, QSSACON:
 - Q = Quality
 - S = Size
 - S = Shape
 - A = Age
 - C = Colour
 - O = Origin
 - N = Noun

For example, I saw a beautiful, tall, young, fair Yoruba lady.

Read up the difference between gradable and non-gradable adjectives.

4. Adverbs

- **Definition:** Adverbs are words that modify verbs, adjectives, other adverbs or the entire sentence. Examples: Emma runs to the bank quickly. He is shockingly arrogant. Chameleons move very sluggishly. Truly, I am innocent.
- **Classes of Adverbs:**
 - **Adjuncts:** These supply additional information in a sentence by answering the questions, where, when, to what extent, how, and how often. In how many of this, adjuncts have been classified into place, time, degree, manner and frequency respectively. Examples: The boy went upstairs/out/there (place: where?). I will see you soon/tomorrow/next year (time: when?). He does go there often/sometimes/always (frequency: how often?). Ngozi is very/nearly/almost snobbish (degree: to what extent?). She sings well/gently/silently/melodiously (manner: how?).
 - **Conjuncts:** These are otherwise called conjunctive adverbs. They serve as both conjunction and adverb at once; as conjunction, they introduce new sentences or link new ideas to what has been said before; as adverb, they modify the sentence or the independent clause in which they appear. Examples are accordingly, additionally, also, as a result, besides, hence, consequently, then, therefore, on the contrary, yet, thus, however, furthermore etc.
 - **Disjuncts:** These are adverbs that show the speaker's attitude towards his subject; for example, frankly, honestly, sincerely, truly, fortunately, perhaps, certainly, probably etc.

Read up other classes of adverbs (relative, interrogative and negative) and the formation of adverbs.

➤ The Minor Parts of Speech and their Grammatical Functions

5. Pronouns

- **Definition:** A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun so as to avoid an unnecessary repetition of nouns in the sentence. They are he, she, you, I, they, it, certain, own, some, anyone, one etc.

- **Types of Pronouns:**

- **Personal Pronoun:** This sort of pronouns are used to replace names of things in a sentence. They include he, she, it, they, her, him, we, I, them, us, you and me.

✓ **Classification of Personal Pronouns:** Personal pronouns are classified, first, according to person; second, according to case; and third, according to number.

❖ **According to Person:**

1st Person	2nd Person	3rd Person
I, we (the person speaking)	You (the person to whom is spoken)	He, she, they, it (the person or thing spoken about)

❖ **According to Case:**

Subjective/Nominative case	Objective case
I	Me
We	Us
He	Him
She	Her
They	Them
It	It

*Note that pronouns in their objective case are not used to begin a sentence, just as those in their subjective case are not to be used after a preposition or as an object of a transitive verb.

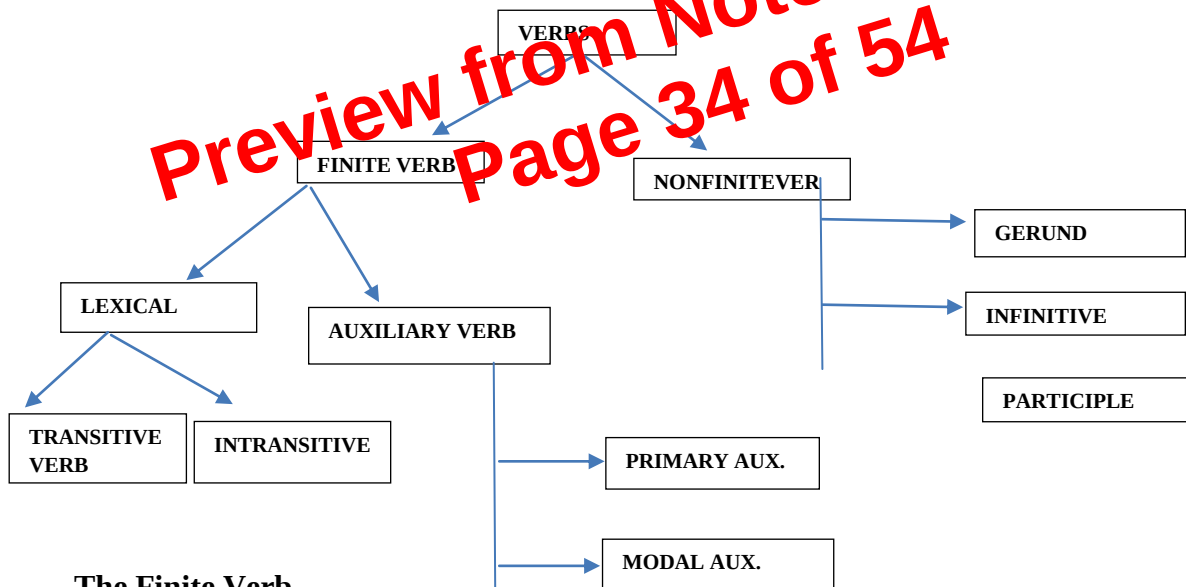
❖ **According to Number:**

Singular	Plural
I	We
You	You
He, she, it	They

VERBS/TENSES AND ASPECTS

In the English language, there are words that assign names to things. These words are called nouns. For instance, words like 'clock', 'school', 'man' and 'road' are all words that designate certain entities. There is another class of words that rather than name things, assert what those things do, what they are or how they are. If we say 'the clock ticks', the word 'ticks' states what the clock does; but if we say 'the man is dead', the word 'is' states how the 'man' is; in 'the house is a school', 'is' states what the house is. These words that assert action, being, or state of being of their subjects are called **verbs**.

what we have done so far serves to illustrate the basic function of the verb in a sentence. If a verb asserts the action, being or state of being of a person or thing (a person or thing named by a noun) in a sentence, such a thing in question will in turn serve as the subject of the verb. This is why we say nouns serve as the subject of the verb. In the sentence 'the clock ticks', the verb 'ticks' asserts the actions of the noun 'clock', hence 'clock' is the subject of the verb 'ticks'. Every finite verb relates with a noun in this way. When this happens, we say that the verb in question agrees with its subject (the noun). Hence 'tick' agrees with the noun 'clock'. Verbs that agree with their subjects are called the **finite verbs**, whereas those ones which do not have this kind of relationship with nouns are called the **non-finite verbs**. We note also that the only grammatical function of verb is to agree with its verb.



The Finite Verb

If one considers the term 'finite verb' literally, one may very likely think of a verb whose operation in a sentence is limited in some sense and respect. Indeed, that is basically what the term implies. A finite verb is a verb whose operation is limited by its subject. In other words, every finite verb has a subject which it agrees with in number. This, like we have pointed out already, is the major distinction between the finite and the non-finite verb, for once we see in a sentence a verb that does not agree with any subject (that is to say a verb whose operation is not

limited by a subject) we know that such a verb has become non-finite. Let us consider the following sentences:

He **sleeps** noiselessly.
They **sleep** noiselessly.
She **spends** recklessly.
They **spend** recklessly.

One thing we cannot fail to observe is how the verbs in those sentences change as the subjects change. In the first two sentences, the verb 'to sleep' changes from 'sleeps' (singular) to 'sleep' (plural) as the subject changes from 'he' (singular) to 'they' (plural). The same thing happens in the sentences that follow. The change occurs because those finite verbs needed to agree with their subjects in number. We can imagine the awkwardness we would have felt had the verb in the second sentence retained its form as in the first sentence: 'they sleeps noiselessly'.

Classification of Finite Verbs

The finite verb has two broad categories: lexical verbs and auxiliary verbs. Lexical verbs are verbs that express content meaning in relation to their subjects in a sentence; they express the action, state or state of being of their subjects. The auxiliary verbs on the other hand express only grammatical meaning regarding what the lexical verb states about the subject. We shall illustrate this with the following sentences:

Ikem Osodi **does** not like politics.
They **do** not like politics.

'Like' in the two sentences is the main verb since it is what asserts something about the subject (Ikem Osodi). 'Do' and 'does' on the other hand express such grammatical functions as tense, number, negation and so on.

Forms of Finite Verbs

Regular Verbs

Randolph Quirk et al define regular verbs as those verbs which take 'the predictable -ed inflection' in forming their past tense and past participle (*A Grammar of Contemporary English* 96). Their past tense form and past participle form are identical. We find examples below:

Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
walk	walked	walked
talk	talked	talked
drop	dropped	dropped
toss	tossed	tossed
finish	finished	finished

Irregular Verbs

LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY TEXTS AND DISCUSSION OF LITERARY TERMS

ELEMENTS OF A STORY

Elements of a story are important features without which a story is incomplete. They are: plot, character, theme, setting, and diction.

PLOT

The plot is the sequence of events. It is the logical progression of occurrences in the story, not necessarily chronologically but in the way the author has arranged them. Key parts of the plot include the conflict, the climax, and the resolution. The conflict, which is introduced early in the story, is the clash of ideas or interests that drives the characters' efforts to get what they want. In Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, the conflict is the rivalry between Baroka and Lakunle over who will marry Sidi.

The climax is the point in the story when the stakes are highest, and it usually features a big revelation or characters confronting each other. In Chimamanda Ngozi Achebe's *Purple Hibiscus*, the climax is when Mama tells Kambili and Jaja that she poisoned Papa.

The resolution, which comes towards the story's end, is the point at which the conflict ends, through either a compromise or outright victory of one side over the other. In Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, the resolution comes with Okonkwo's suicide.

CHARACTER

A character is a participant in a story. Depending on the kind of story in focus, the character can be human, animal or inanimate—its status as a character rests on how it is presented by the author and the extent to which it contributes to the movement of the plot. In *Things Fall Apart*, the characters are human: Okonkwo, Nwoye, Ikemefuna. In George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, there are human as well as animal characters: Mr Pilkington, Napoleon the pig, Boxer the horse.

FLAT CHARACTER

A flat character shows no growth throughout the story. At the end of the story, the character remains the person she or he is at the beginning. A flat character is also called a two-dimensional character because she or he is so defined by a few traits that they come up with the same response each time they are triggered. An example is Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*, who is defined by his anger and pride.

ROUND CHARACTER

Unlike a flat character, a round character demonstrates growth in the story. At the end of the story, such characters are no longer the persons they are at the beginning. They are also called three-dimensional characters because they present a variety of responses when triggered. An example is Ezeulu in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, whose responses to situations are unpredictable.

An apostrophe is an address to an inanimate phenomena as though it would hear the speaker. Example: "This silly phone, you always develop service issues when I want to browse."

- **Euphemism**

Euphemism is the substitution of unpleasant or unpalatable words for less crude terms. Examples include the use of "passed away" instead of "died," "slept together" instead of "had sex," and "correctional facility" instead of "jail."

- **Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is an exaggeration done for emphasis. Example: "Your hair is a forest."

- **Pun**

Pun is a play on words for effect. Example: "I looked left and they left me."

SELECTED LITERARY TEXTS

Prose (short story)

1. *Civil Peace* by Chinua Achebe
2. *The Story of an Hour* by Kate Chopin

Poems:

3. *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost
4. *Free Will* by Amaka Chime

CIVIL PEACE BY CHINUA ACHEBE

Jonathan Iwegbu counted himself extraordinarily lucky. 'Happy survival!' meant so much more to him than just a current fashion of greeting old friends in the first hazy days of peace. It went deep to his heart. He had come out of the war with five inestimable blessings--his head, his wife Maria's head and the heads of three out of their four children. As a bonus he also had his old bicycle--a miracle too but naturally not to be compared to the safety of five human heads. The bicycle had a little history of its own. One day at the height of the war it was commandeered 'for urgent military action'. Hard as its loss would have been to him he would still have let it go without a thought had he not had some doubts about the genuineness of the officer. It wasn't his disreputable rags, nor the toes peeping out of one blue and one brown canvas shoes, nor yet the two stars of his rank done obviously in a hurry in biro, that troubled Jonathan; many good and heroic soldiers looked the same or worse. It was rather a certain lack of grip and firmness in his manner. So Jonathan, suspecting he might be amenable to influence, rummaged in his raffia bag and produced the two pounds with which he had been going to buy firewood which his wife, Maria, retailed to camp officials for extra stock-fish and corn meal, and got his bicycle back. That night he buried it in the little clearing in the bush where the dead of the camp, including his own youngest son, were buried. When he dug it up again a year later after the surrender all it needed was a little palm-oil greasing. 'Nothing puzzles God,' he said in wonder. He put it to immediate use as a taxi and accumulated a small pile of Biafran money ferrying camp officials and their families across the four-mile stretch to the nearest tarred road. His standard charge per trip was six pounds and those who had the money were only glad to be rid of some of it in this