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Parts of Speech (←That's a Noun!)

by Rynette R. Kjesbo, M.S., CCC-SLP

What Are "Parts of Speech?"

Every word in the English language can be put into a category based on the function of the word in a sentence. The categories that words are put in are "parts of speech" or "word classes." Knowing the parts of speech and their purpose helps us to understand sentences and create sentences that make sense.

What Are the Different Parts of Speech?

There are eight main parts of speech. They are represented in the following example: "Uh-oh! Sara pulled the jammed switch forcefully and it broke off in her hand!"

- **Noun** – A *noun* is a word that names a person, place, or thing. Nouns can be proper nouns or common nouns. A *proper noun* refers to a specific person, place, or thing and is always capitalized. A *common noun* refers to a general person, place, or thing. "Sara," "switch," and "hand" are the nouns in our example sentence. "Sara" is a proper noun because it refers to a specific person. Other examples of nouns include *David* (proper noun), *sister*, *Vermont* (another proper noun), *store*, *truck*, and *pen*.
- **Pronoun** – A *pronoun* takes the place of a noun. Pronouns typically refer back to nouns that are mentioned earlier. In our example sentence, "it" takes the place of "switch," while "her" refers to "Sara." Other examples of pronouns include *me*, *him*, *our*, *I*, *you*, and *they*.
- **Verb** – A *verb* is the action of a sentence. The two verbs in our example sentence are "pulled" and "broke." Other examples of verbs include *jump*, *am*, *feel*, *do*, *sleep*, and *eat*.
- **Adjective** – An *adjective* is a describing word that tells us more about a noun. "Jammed" is the adjective in our example sentence that tells us what the switch was like. Other examples of adjectives include *blue*, *round*, *polka-dotted*, *cold*, *hard*, and *bumpy*.



- **Adverb** – An *adverb* tells us more about a verb. Specifically, an adverb tells us when, where, why, or how a verb is done. In our example sentence, “forcefully” is the adverb that tells us how Sara pulled the switch. Other examples of adverbs include *quickly, yesterday, often, patiently, later, and nervously*.
- **Preposition** – A *preposition* connects nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other words in the sentence. Prepositions often tell us about a noun’s location. In our example sentence, “in” is the preposition that tells us where the switch is in relation to Sara’s hand. Other examples of prepositions include *through, under, after, with, across, and down*.
- **Conjunction** – A *conjunction* connects words, phrases, or sentences together. A conjunction joins two or more thoughts. The conjunction in our example sentence is “and.” Other examples of conjunctions include *or, but, because, yet, nor, and so*.
- **Interjection** – An *interjection* is a word or short phrase used to show surprise or emotion. “Uh-oh!” is the interjection in our example sentence. Other examples of interjections include *ah, oh no, ouch, goodness, whoops, and wow*.



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