

Parts of Speech



Words are the building materials for the construction of sentences. Every word, without exception has a name, a position and a function in a sentence. In order, therefore, to gain mastery over the building material it is imperative that the students should understand the functional areas of the words.

In all there are eight parts of speech and all words can be brought under these eight classes or categories of words.

Note : The three articles (a, an, and, the) which previously formed the ninth part of speech are now treated as "Demonstrative Adjectives".

The *eight* parts of speech are listed below :

1. Nouns 2. Pronouns 3. Adjectives 4. Verbs 5. Adverbs 6. Prepositions 7. Conjunctions
8. Interjections.

1. THE NOUN

Study the following sentences :

1. *Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru* was the first Prime Minister of India.
2. *Shimla* is the capital of *Himachal Pradesh*.
3. The *Ramayana* is my favourite book.
4. This *chair* is made of *wood*.
5. He is known for his *wisdom*.
6. *Sugar* tastes sweet.

In the above sentences the words in italics are "Nouns". A noun is the name of a person, place or thing. The word 'thing' denotes something we can see, taste, touch, smell or think of.

2. THE PRONOUN

Consider the following sentences :

1. Sita is sad because *she* has failed.
2. *I* am happy because *my* brother has come.
3. *My* brother broke journey on *his* way to Delhi.
4. *You* were punished because *you* told a lie.

In the above sentences, the words in italics are "Pronouns". It is clear that a 'Pronoun' is a word which is used instead of a 'Noun'.

3. THE ADJECTIVE

Examine the following sentences :

1. Mohan made a *brilliant* speech.
2. Nehru was a *great* leader.
3. I have read *three* books.
4. The government has just brought out a *white* paper on Panjab.
5. I have *many* friends.

In these sentences the words in italics are 'adjectives'. An adjective is a word which qualifies a noun. It adds something to the meaning of a noun.

4. THE VERB

Study the following sentences :

1. He *made* a brave attempt.
2. Dharmasala *is* a beautiful place.
3. I *finished* my work in time.
4. They *ran* a race.
5. He *speaks* the truth.

In these sentences the words in italics are 'verbs'. A verb tells something about the subject and there can be no sentence without a 'verb'.

5. THE ADVERB

Read the following sentences :

1. He *talks gently*.
2. Ram spoke *well*.
3. His hand-writing is *very* beautiful.
4. I can speak English *very fluently*.
5. He *ran fast*.

In above sentences the words in italics are 'Adverbs'. An adverb is a word which modifies the meaning of a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

6. THE PREPOSITION

Examine the following sentences :

1. I am fond *of* milk.
2. We are sitting on a bench *under* a tree.
3. He came *into* the room and sat *on* a chair.
4. I shall go *with* you *in* your car.

In these sentences the words in italics are 'prepositions'. A preposition is a word placed before a noun or pronoun to show its relationship with something else.

7. THE CONJUNCTION

Read the following sentences :

1. Reeta *and* Geeta are real sisters.
2. He worked hard *but* failed.
3. I could not attend the marriage *because* I was ill.
4. We must solve the bread *and* butter problem of the poor.

In the above sentences, the words in italics are 'conjunctions'. A conjunction is a word which joins two words, phrases, clauses or sentences.

8. INTERJECTION

Study the following sentences :

1. *Hurrah* : we have won the match.
2. *Oh* ! what a lovely sight.
3. *Alas* ! she is no more.
4. *Brave* ! a good hit.

In the above sentences the words in italics are 'interjections'. An interjection is a word which expresses some sudden feeling of grief, joy, surprise or approval.



Note : The three little words namely (a, an, the) are called articles as already mentioned.

EXERCISE-IV

(a) What part of speech is each word in the following sentences ?

Give the kind of each sentence.

1. I live in a village.
2. I have reserved a seat for you.
3. He carries an old head on young shoulders.
4. He had to leave England for good.
5. Hurrah ! I have passed with distinction.
6. May you prosper in life !
7. Our team played well.
8. He is leading a very busy life.
9. The earth is round.
10. Boys are making a noise.

(b) Fill in the blanks with words from the list given below :

whose, with, is, the burnt, alas, fall, very.

1. She is the girl purse has been lost.
2. A child dreads the fire.
3. He has no knife to cut
4. ! His father is dead.
5. Walk carefully lest you should
6. He is a fine speaker.
7. The higher you go cooler it is.
8. The horse and carriage at the gate.

(c) Use the following structures in your own sentences and mention what part of speech each is, in the context used above :—

when, or, and, if, well, good, because, man, intelligently, fast, very, but, play, bread.