

# Finite and Non-finite Verbs

## Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the difference between finite and non-finite verbs.
- They will identify and use infinitives, gerunds, and participles in sentences.
- They will recognize the role of non-finite verbs in sentence construction.



## Lead in

See the picture and read the sentences. Tick (✓) the sentence that has object and cross (✗) that which does not have.

(a)



The girl is singing. ☐

(b)



The children are playing football. ☐

## Finite Verbs

Verbs that change with the change in person, number and tense are called **Finite Verbs**.

**Example :** I **eat** a mango. (1st person, singular, present tense)

In the above sentence, the highlighted word is a finite verb.

➤ **Is, am, are, was and were** are **finite forms** of the verb.

**Example :** India **is** a big country. (3rd person, singular number, present tense)

➤ The modal auxiliaries **will, shall, can, may** etc. do not change with the number and person of the subject. But they are finite verbs.

**Example :** I **can** fly a kite.

## Non-finite Verbs

Verbs that do not change with the change in person, number and tense are called **Non-Finite Verbs**.

**Examples :** 1. He wants **to sing** a song. 2. He wanted **to sing** a song.

The verb '**sing**' in the sentences does not change with the change in person, number and tense. So, **sing** is a non-finite verb.



**A. Circle the finite verbs and underline the non-finite verbs in the following sentences.**

1. Sumit paints a picture.
2. Father asked her to bring a glass of water.
3. My uncle drives a new car.
4. They like to sing.



**Kinds of Non-finite Verbs**

There are three kinds of non-finite verbs:

1. The Infinitive
2. The Participle
3. The Gerund

**1. The Infinitive**

The infinitive is the base form of the verb. It is often used with a **to** before it. But it can be used with or without **to**.

**Example :** I like **to** sleep.

**2. Bare Infinitive**

The infinitive without **to** is called a **bare infinitive**.

- The **bare infinitive** is used with modal verbs.

**Example :** You **can do** it.

- The bare infinitive can be used with verbs such as **let, see, make, need**.

**Examples :** **Let** me **go**.

- Some verbs like **hear, see, fell, watch**, etc. are followed by a bare infinitive of present participle.

**Examples :** 1. Raj saw him **steal** the mobile. (bare infinitive)  
2. We saw him **beating** the man. (present participle)

**B. Complete the following sentences by using 'to-infinitive'.**

1. This soup is \_\_\_\_\_
2. He arrived \_\_\_\_\_
3. There is \_\_\_\_\_
4. He wants \_\_\_\_\_
5. They want \_\_\_\_\_

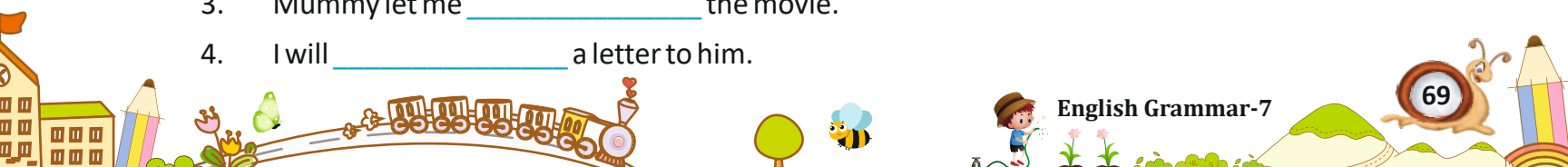
**C. Fill in the blanks by using the suitable bare infinitive or present participle of the verb given in the box.**

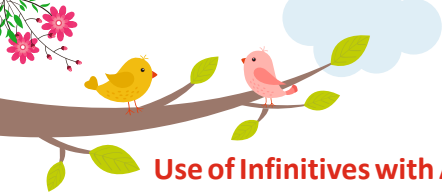
write, respect, cry, watch

1. We should \_\_\_\_\_ our teachers.
2. I heard the child \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Mummy let me \_\_\_\_\_ the movie.
4. I will \_\_\_\_\_ a letter to him.



**Skills/Level**  
WRITING/B2





## Use of Infinitives with Adverb Too

Look at the following examples:

1. He is very busy. He can't meet you.
2. He is so busy that he can't meet you.

We can express the same idea by using the **too...to** pattern.

He is **too** busy **to** meet you.

### D. Rewrite the following sentences using too...to pattern.

1. The coffee is very hot. You can't drink it.

---

2. It's early. She won't go to bed.

---

3. The chair is very heavy. He cannot lift it.

---

4. He is very sick. He cannot walk.

---



**Skills/Level**  
READING & WRITING/B2



## The Participle

The participle is of three types.

- Present participle
- Past participle
- Perfect participle



## Grammar Byte

- *Participles can denote an ongoing action, state or a completed action/state.*

The participle has both finite and non-finite forms.

In finite form, it occurs in all progressive tenses.

The past participle occurs in the passive and perfect active sentences.

In its non-finite form, the participle functions partly as a verb and partly as an adjective.

So, it is also called a verbal adjective.

Now look at the following sentences:

1. He was **reading** a novel. (finite verb)
2. The movie is **boring**. (non-finite adjective)

### The Present Participle

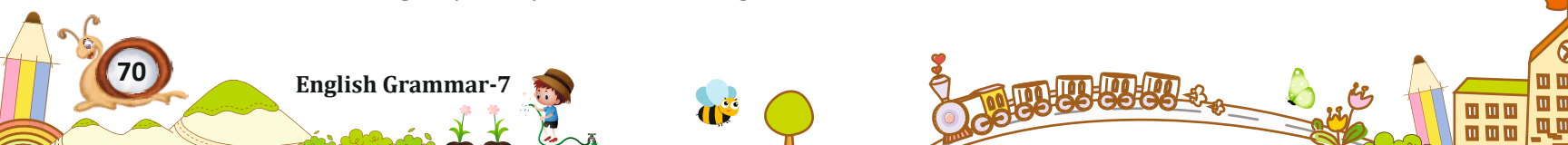
- The present participle is formed by adding **-ing** to the root form of the verb.

**Example :** barking, burning.

- The present participle describes an incomplete action or state.

**Examples :**

1. The barking dog (the process of barking continues)
2. The sinking ship (the process of sinking continues)





- The present participle may be used as **Subject Complement**.  
**Example :** They saw him climbing a tree.
- The present participle **can come after the verb**.  
**Example :** We went laughing.
- The present participle **can be used when one action occurs after the other**.  
**Example :** Seeing the cat, the rat ran away.
- The present participle functions **as an adjective** in the following sentences:  
**Example :** A barking dog seldom bites.
- The present participle is active in form.
  1. The weeping child (The child was weeping - active)
  2. The running bus (The bus was running - active)

### The Past Participle

- The past participle usually ends in **-ed, -d, -t, -n, or -en**.  
**Examples :** disappointed, tired, burnt, broken, etc.
- The past participle denotes **a complete action or a state which is over**.  
**Examples :**
  1. The burnt house. (The process of getting burnt is complete)
  2. The disappointed man. (The process of getting disappointment is complete)
- The past participle can function **as an adjective**.  
**Examples :**
  1. He is very disappointed.
  2. The tired visitor rested under a tree.
- The past participle can be used **as Subject Complement**.  
**Examples :**
  1. She felt irritated.
  2. Father seemed worried.
- The past participle can be used as an **Object Complement**.  
**Examples :**
  1. I found the glass broken.
  2. We saw her worried.

### The Perfect Participle

The perfect participle is used to join two sentences when one action is immediately followed by the other. The subject of both the sentences is the same. The perfect participle is formed by using **having + past participle form of the verb**.

#### Examples :

1. He finished his homework. He went to play.  
Having finished his homework, he went to play.
2. She saw her brother. She returned home.  
Having seen her brother, she returned home.





#### D. Put a suitable present or past participle to the following.

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. _____ movie | 2. _____ glass |
| 3. _____ house | 4. _____ purse |

#### Joining Sentences by Using Participles

Pairs of sentences can be joined by using participles.

**Example :** I saw an aeroplane. The aeroplane was flying in the sky.

In the above sentence, the object of the first sentence is subject of the second sentence. Such sentences are very easy to join. I saw an aeroplane flying in the sky.

In the above example, actions mentioned in the two sentences occur simultaneously.

In example, my seeing the aeroplane and the aeroplane flying in the sky are taking place simultaneously. So, we use the continuous form of the participle. But sometimes the second action begins only after the first one has been completed. In such cases, we need to convert the verb denoting the first of the actions into a perfect participle.

**Examples :** He had eaten all his food. He asked for some more.

Having eaten all his food, he asked for some more.

#### E. Combine the following pairs of sentences by using participles.

1. He realised that he had missed the last train. He began to walk.
2. He found no one at home. He left the house in a bad temper.
3. He got off his horse. He began searching for something on the ground.
4. I saw some children. They were flying kites.

#### The Gerund

Words that are formed with verbs but act as nouns are called **gerunds**. It is a verb in its **ing** form (present participle) functioning as a noun that names an activity rather than a person or a thing. Gerunds are also called **verbal nouns**.

**Example :** Reading is a very useful habit.

In the above sentence, the word reading is formed from the verb read, by adding ing to it. We also notice that reading here stands for the action of reading. It is used as the subject of the verb is. It therefore does the work of a noun.

The word reading is, therefore, both like a verb and a noun. In other words it is a verbal-noun or a gerund.

**A gerund is a verbal noun and participle is a verbal adjective.**

**Some other examples of gerunds.**

1. **Swimming** is a good exercise.
2. **Dancing** is good for health.

In sentences 1 and 2 the gerund is used as the subject of the verb.

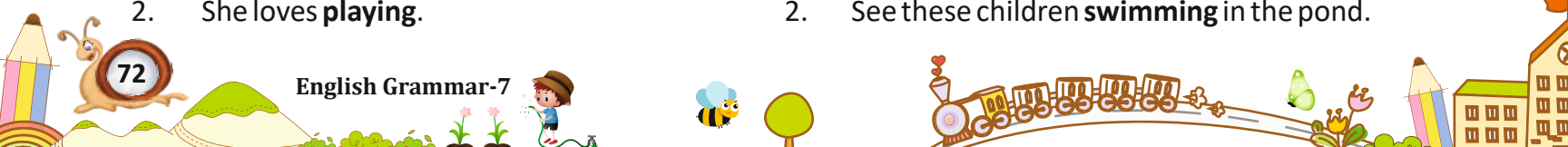
Both the gerunds and the participles end in **-ing**. Then how can we identify the two?

##### Gerund

1. **Reading** is a good habit.
2. She loves **playing**.

##### Participles

1. I met a boy **weeping**.
2. See these children **swimming** in the pond.







**F. Underline the gerunds in the following sentences.**

1. My grandpa is fond of smoking.
2. I love reading.
3. Dancing gives her joy.
4. Collecting stamps is his hobby.

**G. Underline the participles and gerunds in the following sentences. Write 'P' for the participles and 'G' for the gerunds.**

1. My sister does not like cooking.
2. Gambling is a bad habit.
3. We saw her playing with the ball.
4. She enjoys sleeping.

**H. Fill in the blanks with correct gerund or infinitive form of the verbs given in the brackets.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is a bad habit. (cheat)
2. He is fond of \_\_\_\_\_. (walk)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is a healthy habit. (swim)
4. She prefers \_\_\_\_\_ tea to coffee. (drink)



**Skills/Level**  
WRITING/A2



## Points to Remember

- Verbs that change with the change in person, number and tense are called **Finite Verbs**.
- Verbs that do not change with the change in person, number and tense are called **Non-Finite Verbs**.
- There are three kinds of non-finite verbs— **The Infinitive, The Participle, The Gerund**.
- The Infinitive** is the base form of verb.
- The infinitive without **to** is called **Bare Infinitive**.
- The participle is of three types— the **Present participle**, the **Past Participle**, the **Perfect Participle**.
- Words that are formed with verbs but act as nouns are called **Gerunds**.



## My EeeBee Interactive Activities



Listening



Speaking



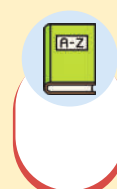
Reading



Writing



Grammar



Vocabulary

WRITE YOUR SCORE

Practice your LSRW Skills



on Communication Lab

