

Verbs

Action verbs energize sentences. In fact, sometimes, a verb is the sentence: Run!

“I leap out of bed, thrust my feet in my sneakers, and with shoelaces flying, I’m racing through the kitchen toward the back door.”

from *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

“Steam lines had broken and the steam was hissing out.
Heat from the fire washed over us.”

from *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor

“The Thirty Mile River was wide open. Its wild water defied the frost, and it was in the eddies only and in the quiet places that the ice held at all.”

from *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London

**Verbs are words that express action or being.
A sentence must contain a verb.**

▲ Verbs have tenses.

The past tense refers to action that has already happened (broke).

The present tense refers to action that is occurring right now (break).

The future tense refers to action that will happen (will break).

▲ Verbs can be active or passive. Active: *Claire broke the window.*

Passive: *The window was broken by Claire.*

Which of the sentences below do you think is stronger?

The bored cow *stood* when Farmer George brought her a new bell.

The bored cow *danced* when Farmer George brought her a new bell.

**What other verbs could you use to express the cow’s action?
Suppose the cow hated the bell. Or what if the cow thought
the bell was silly?**

**Think of more exciting verbs to replace *moves* and *said*
in the sentences below.**

1. Thrilled by the news, she moves across the room.

2. “You’ll never believe what I just heard,” the police officer said.