

Lesson
4**Verb Phrases and Helping Verbs****Teaching**

The simple predicate, or verb, may consist of two or more words. These words are called the **verb phrase**. A verb phrase is made up of a main verb and one or more helping verbs.

A main verb can stand by itself as the simple predicate of a sentence.

The Underground Railroad helped slaves.

MAIN
VERB (ACTION)

The people involved were brave.

MAIN
VERB (LINKING)

Helping verbs help the main verb express action or show time.

Some houses could shelter many slaves at one time.

HELPING
VERB

Common Helping Verbs

Forms of <i>be</i>	is, am, was, are, were, be, been
Forms of <i>do</i>	do, does, did
Forms of <i>have</i>	has, have, had
Others	may, might, can, should, could, would, shall, will

Identifying Verb Phrases

Underline the verb phrase in each sentence. Include main verbs and helping verbs.

1. The Underground Railroad has played a special role in our history.
2. No one really was hidden underground.
3. A network of sympathetic people would help slaves to freedom.
4. These people were called conductors.
5. The hiding places along the way to freedom were called stations.
6. Runaway slaves could stop at the stations for food and clothing.
7. Conductors might show the slaves the best routes to Canada.
8. Many people today are researching the history of the Underground Railroad.
9. Some can follow the routes of the runaway slaves.
10. Most slaves did escape through Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.
11. Interested history buffs may study the lives of some conductors of the railroad.
12. One famous conductor has been called the "president of the railroad."
13. Levi Coffin may have helped more than 3,000 slaves to freedom.
14. More information will increase our understanding of this period in our history.
15. Do you know any other facts about the Underground Railroad?

Verb Phrases**More Practice****A. Identifying Main Verbs and Helping Verbs**

Underline the main verb once and the helping verb twice in each of the following sentences.

EXAMPLE Our class is studying about the Underground Railroad.

1. The Underground Railroad was operating in the mid-1800s.
2. Thousands of people were helped to freedom.
3. Many runaway slaves would walk all night.
4. During the day they might be seen by other people.
5. Most slaves had escaped with little food or clothing.
6. Without a guide, they could lose their way to the North.
7. A slave could encounter natural barriers such as rivers or lakes.
8. Stories have been written about the dangerous trip to freedom.
9. Have you read about the Underground Railroad?
10. Do you understand its importance?

B. Writing Verb Phrases

Add a helping verb to complete the verb phrase in each sentence below.

1. Sarah _____ reading about the Underground Railroad.
2. _____ you ever hear of Harriet Tubman?
3. It _____ have been frightening to escape from slavery.
4. The trip to Canada must _____ been full of danger.
5. _____ a slave be sure that a hiding place was safe?
6. _____ you have had the courage to be part of the Underground Railroad?
7. Today we _____ hardly imagine slavery.
8. Slavery _____ been gone from America for over 150 years.
9. We _____ thank the conductors of the Underground Railroad.
10. History books _____ never forget the conductors' willingness to help others.