

Helping Verbs

Guided Discussion

Say this: A lot of those little words that are easy to leave out are called helping verbs. Sometimes you can get away with leaving them out, but much of the time they give very useful information, like when something happens, or if doesn't happen at all.

Write examples on the board: *am, are, is, was, were, etc.*

Give an example: You can say, "The dog eat." But I don't know if the dog is eating, was eating, or will eat.

Give another example: A teacher might ask, "Who was working while I was gone?" If you say, "Him," The teacher wouldn't know if he was working, he is working still, he wasn't working, he couldn't work, or any number of different things.

Add this, if possible: A lot of the time these little words are combined with other words, and called contractions. Instead of saying "I am hungry," you can say "I'm hungry." You can say "He's hungry," or "He is hungry." You can say "We're hungry," or "We are hungry." You just can't forget the little word or the little word part.

Review: So, why are helping verbs important?

Guided Practice Ideas

Quick Drill

Instruct student to repeat short sentences with helping verbs. Gradually change each sentence. Use whatever cues necessary, such as writing sentences, or instructing student to repeat, so that the student can orally state sentence with near 100% accuracy. Complete 10 or 15 sentences. For example,

Basic

I am hungry.
The dog is hungry.
The cat is hungry.

The dogs are hungry.
The dogs are thirsty.
The dog does bark.
The cat does meow.
The cats do meow.

Expanded

The birds have feathers.
The bird has feathers.
The bird has legs.
Chairs have legs.
The chair has a seat.
The chair doesn't have a nose.
A monkey does have a nose.
The monkey has a tail.
The monkey had a banana.
The monkey couldn't fly.
Helicopters can fly.
Helicopters have rotors.
Birds don't have rotors.

We will be studying grammar.
We won't be studying math.
We should not be absent.
He has been absent.
He should have been studying.
She should not have been talking.
She has finished her project.
She hasn't finished her book report.
We have all eaten lunch.
We couldn't have been studying while we were eating lunch.
We would have been studying grammar.
I have finished studying grammar.