Verbals at Work

Track how verbals do different jobs in a model text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1a "Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each verbal phrase, write G, P, or I above it, and draw an arrow to the word or action it works with.

The Library Garden

1. On Saturday, the Riverside Garden Club began restoring an empty lot beside the library. Clearing broken glass was the first task, and volunteers wore thick gloves. To protect young plants, Maya measured each bed before digging. The group hoped that growing vegetables would give neighbors fresh food and a reason to meet outdoors. By noon, a row of marigolds brightened the fence, attracting bees that had circled the dusty ground. The volunteers paused to study the insects before carrying water from the library faucet.

2. At the next meeting, members discussed building a rain barrel from a clean plastic drum. Their goal was to collect water from the library roof during storms. Luis, holding a sketch of the gutter, explained the plan to the group. The sketch showed a screen designed to keep leaves out of the barrel. Listening carefully, the volunteers noticed one problem: a full barrel would be too heavy to move alone. They decided to place it near the garden, reducing the distance needed for watering.

3. By late summer, the garden had become a place for sharing skills. Families came to learn composting, and students enjoyed recording the height of sunflower stalks each week. A small sign near the gate invited visitors to return tools after using them. Tired but proud, Maya watched as children carried baskets of tomatoes to the library kitchen. She believed that working together had changed more than the empty lot. It had created a space where neighbors could solve problems by talking, planning, and caring for one another.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what type of verbal is "Clearing broken glass," and what job does the phrase do in the sentence?

2. In paragraph 2, what type of verbal is "holding a sketch of the gutter," and which noun does it modify?

3. Both "To protect young plants" and "to meet outdoors" are infinitive phrases. Explain how their jobs are different.

4. In paragraph 3, what type of verbals are "talking, planning, and caring for one another," and what is their function after the word "by"?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about improving a shared school space. In the first sentence, use a gerund phrase as the subject. In the second sentence, use a participial phrase that modifies a noun and an infinitive phrase that shows purpose, then label each phrase and its function.

Verbals at Work

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each verbal phrase, write G, P, or I above it, and draw an arrow to the word or action it works with. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, what type of verbal is "Clearing broken glass," and what job does the phrase do in the sentence?	**It is a gerund phrase that serves as the subject of the sentence.**
2	In paragraph 2, what type of verbal is "holding a sketch of the gutter," and which noun does it modify?	**It is a participial phrase that modifies Luis.**
3	Both "To protect young plants" and "to meet outdoors" are infinitive phrases. Explain how their jobs are different.	**"To protect young plants" shows the purpose of Maya's measuring. "To meet outdoors" modifies "reason" by telling what the reason is for.**
4	In paragraph 3, what type of verbals are "talking, planning, and caring for one another," and what is their function after the word "by"?	**They are gerunds that function as objects of the preposition "by."**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

1. Planting native flowers improves the courtyard. [Gerund phrase: "Planting native flowers"; function: subject] 2. Students carrying watering cans visit the courtyard to care for the new plants. [Participial phrase: "carrying watering cans"; function: modifies students. Infinitive phrase: "to care for the new plants"; function: shows why they visit.]

Accept accurate identifications of gerunds, participles, and infinitives, along with clear explanations of what each phrase modifies or how it functions. For the open response, accept varied topics and wording if both sentences meet the required verbal and function requirements.