

Is, Am, Are: Copula and Auxiliary Worksheet

When "be" is the whole verb, and when it is helping another verb.

MASTERED BY

Brown places the uncontractible copula ("yes, he is") at roughly 2;3 to 3;3 and t

ITEMS

41

r forms in the s

Name: _____

Date: _____

The verb "be" does two different jobs. Sometimes it IS the verb, with nothing else to help - "she is happy", "they are hungry". That use is called the copula: it links the subject to a description. Other times it is helping another verb along - "she is running", "they are eating". That use is called the auxiliary, and you can spot it because there is always another verb with -ing right behind it.

What to expect: Both forms get left out early on: "she happy", "he running". A useful thing to listen for is whether the child drops the form that can be shortened or the one that cannot. "He's happy" can contract; the "is" in "Yes, he is" cannot, because there is nothing after it to attach to. The uncontractible forms are typically produced correctly first, which is why a child may answer "Is he sleeping?" with a clear "he is" while still saying "he sleeping" in running speech.

Be as the Whole Verb (Copula)

There is no other verb in these sentences. Fill in the blank with is, am or are.

1. The soup ____ hot.
2. I ____ six years old.
3. My shoes ____ muddy.
4. That dog ____ friendly.
5. We ____ ready to go.
6. You ____ my best friend.
7. The sky ____ cloudy today.
8. My hands ____ cold.
9. I ____ hungry.
10. The twins ____ in the same class.

Be Helping Another Verb (Auxiliary)

Each sentence has another verb ending in -ing. Fill in the blank with is, am or are.

11. The baby ____ sleeping.
12. I ____ building a tower.
13. The kids ____ running outside.
14. My dog ____ barking at the door.
15. We ____ making cookies.
16. You ____ standing on my foot.
17. Dad ____ washing the car.
18. The birds ____ singing.
19. I ____ waiting for my turn.
20. My sister ____ reading in bed.

Which Job Is It Doing?

Say whether "be" is the whole verb or is helping another verb.

21. She is tired.
22. She is skating.
23. They are hungry.
24. They are eating.
25. I am cold.
26. I am shivering.
27. The cat is asleep.
28. The cat is purring.

Short Answers

Answer each question with a short answer. These are the forms that cannot be shortened.

- 29. Is the dog sleeping? (yes)
- 30. Are you ready? (yes)
- 31. Is your sister home? (yes)
- 32. Are the cookies done? (no)
- 33. Am I next? (yes)
- 34. Are they coming with us? (yes)

Shorten It

Say each sentence again using the shortened form.

- 35. She is my sister.
- 36. They are at the park.
- 37. I am almost finished.
- 38. He is running fast.
- 39. We are going home.
- 40. It is raining.
- 41. You are being silly.

Answer Key

Be as the Whole Verb (Copula)

- | | |
|--------|---------|
| 1. is | 6. are |
| 2. am | 7. is |
| 3. are | 8. are |
| 4. is | 9. am |
| 5. are | 10. are |

Be Helping Another Verb (Auxiliary)

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 11. is | 16. are |
| 12. am | 17. is |
| 13. are | 18. are |
| 14. is | 19. am |
| 15. are | 20. is |

Which Job Is It Doing?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 21. the whole verb | 25. the whole verb |
| 22. helping another verb | 26. helping another verb |
| 23. the whole verb | 27. the whole verb |
| 24. helping another verb | 28. helping another verb |

Short Answers

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 29. Yes, he is. | 32. No, they are not. |
| 30. Yes, I am. | 33. Yes, you are. |
| 31. Yes, she is. | 34. Yes, they are. |

Shorten It

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 35. She's my sister. | 39. We're going home. |
| 36. They're at the park. | 40. It's raining. |
| 37. I'm almost finished. | 41. You're being silly. |
| 38. He's running fast. | |