Finite and non-finite verbs

Class 9 grammar

Verbs can be **finite** or **non-finite**. Finite verbs change their form when there is a change in the subject or the tense. Study the examples given below.

- **I work** hard for my family.
- The verb work becomes **works** when the subject is a singular noun/pronoun.

- **Maya works** hard for her family.
- **He works** hard for his family.

*Work* becomes **worked** when the sentence is in the past tense.

- **I worked** very hard yesterday.
- **He worked** very hard yesterday.
- **Maya worked** very hard yesterday.

Such verbs which change their form depending on the subject/tense, are called **finite verbs**.

**Non-finite verbs** do not change their form when there is a change in the number or person of the subject. Examples are: to-infinitives and –ing forms.

**Non-finites** are of three types: **gerunds, infinitives and participles**

*Gerunds*

Gerunds end in –ing. Examples are: *singing, dancing, running, working, looking etc.*

*Infinitives*

Infinitives are the first form of the verb. They are usually used with the marker ‘to’. Examples are: *to sing, to dance, to run, to work, to look etc.*

*Participles*

There are two types of participles – **present participles** and **past participles**

*Present participles* also end in –ing. Examples are: reading, writing, teaching, listening, singing etc.

*Past participles* usually end in –ed, or –en. Note that there are several exemptions to this rule.
I need a pen to write.
He needs a pen to write.
Rani needs a pen to write.
Ravi needed a pen to write.

Here the verb need is finite because it has different forms (need, needs, needed) whereas the verb to write is non-finite.

More examples are given below.

- Supriya enjoys swimming.
- I enjoy swimming.
- Do you enjoy swimming?
- I enjoyed swimming when I was a child.

Can you identify the finite and non-finite verbs in the sentences given above?

Enjoy is finite whereas swimming is non-finite.

Exercises:
1. Identify all the finite and non-finite verbs in the following sentences and tabulate them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finite</th>
<th>Non-finite</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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1. My son likes to watch TV for hours on end.
2. She did not recognize him at all.
3. She said that she was coming.
4. The injured women were taken to the hospital.
5. I want you to finish the job before you go home.
6. She does not want to waste time watching TV.
7. The dog wagged its tail to show its happiness.
8. I went to the market with my father to buy some clothes.
9. Have you ever wanted to live in another country?
10. Mother is baking a fresh batch of pastries.
11. The hawkers shouted at the top of their voice to attract customers.
12. I wish I had studied medicine.
2. Complete the following sentences with *infinitives, present participles or gerunds.*

**Infinitive: to + verb**

*Present participle: verb+ ing*

*Gerund: verb+ ing*

1. I want water ________. (drink)
2. _______ is his favourite pastime. (sing)
3. I am sorry ______________ this. (hear)
4. We drank the _____ water. (sparkle)
5. She was depressed ____________ the news. (hear)
6. Trespassing is prohibited. (trespass)
7. ____________ his father’s footsteps, he became an advocate. (follow)
8. A _______ stone gathers no mosses. (roll)
9. Would it be easy for you ________ me tomorrow? (phone)
10. I will be happy _______ you. (help)
11. I dislike people ______ me what ______. (tell, think)

3. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb given in the brackets.
1. I …………… (forget) ………………… (post) the letters yesterday.
2. The doctor ………… (advise) him ………………….. (quit) smoking.
3. My landlady ……………… (tell) me …………………… (play) music at low volumes.
4. Raju ……… (go) abroad ……………… (pursue) higher education.
5. She ……………….. (run) into the room ……………… (cry)
6. My brother …………………… (like) ……………….. (read) detective novels.
7. My children ………………… (not like) ………………….. (get) up early in the morning.
8. She ……………………… (request) me ……………….. (help) her with the homework.
9. They children are busy …………………. (do) their homework.
10. I still ………………….. (remember) ……………….. (buy) my first bicycle.
11. She ………………… (remind) me of a girl I was at school with.
12. ……………….. (have) lost much blood, the driver ………………. (struggle) with the controls.