

Verb Subclasses in English The first subdivision is drawn between auxiliary and lexical verbs. Wrote is a lexical verb. The distinction between lexical and auxiliary verbs is drawn on the basis of three grammatical processes: Interrogation, negation and proform. The lexical verb is the head element and comes last in the complex noun phrase; the elements preceding the head are auxiliaries. (A) Interrogation In Interrogative sentences the auxiliary verb is placed before the subject. (B) Negation In negative sentences, 'not' is placed after the auxiliary. 'will' is an auxiliary verb because it can be placed before the subject 'she'. In (4) the verb 'wrote' cannot be placed before the subject; it is therefore not an auxiliary. In such sentences the form 'Do' is used as auxiliary. In (7) It is not possible to place 'not' after the verb and turn the sentence into negative; the verb is not auxiliary. In (3) 3. She will read this story. Will she read this story? When will she read this story? 4. She wrote a letter. \*Wrote she a letter? 5. Did she write a letter? What did she write? 6. She will read this book. She will not read this book. 7. She wrote a letter.