

THE REPLACEMENT TEST

Remember. All words fit into *lexical categories* such as:

- NOUNS like *octopus*, *(a) time*, *Ottawa* and *John*.
 - Often described as “a person, place or thing.”
- VERBS like *to see*, *to have*, *to trip* and *to be*.
 - Often described as “action words or things you can do.”
- ADJECTIVES like *hungry*, *funnier*, *solid* and *green*.
 - Often described as “words that describe nouns.”
- PREPOSITIONS like *at*, *over*, *on*, and *beyond*.
- FUNCTION WORDS like *a*, *if*, *when*, and *these*.

Definition. The replacement test helps you determine a word’s *lexical category*. To apply it, we replace a new word with one we already know. If the replacement makes sense in a sentence, they have the same *lexical category*. It doesn’t even matter if we know what the new word meant!

Example. What part of speech is the word *scorch*?

1. Try a sentence: “I scorch my hand.”
2. Replace *scorch* with a different word: “I *see* my hand”
3. *See* is a VERB. So, *scorch* must be a verb too!

Example. What part of speech is the word *to*?

1. Try a sentence: “Marching to Pretoria.”
2. Replace *to* with a different word: “Marching *in* Pretoria.”
3. *To* is a PREPOSITION. So, *to* must be a verb too!

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Practice. Apply the test and determine the lexical category.

1. *Welcome* in “Welcome to New York.”
2. *On* in “I’m leaving on a jet plane.”
3. *Life* in “It’s a wonderful life.”
4. *Wonderful* in “It’s a wonderful life.”
5. *That* in “She’s all that.”
6. *Love* in “Love what you do.”
7. *Love* in “Love is like the wind.”
8. *Glisters* in “All that *glisters* is not gold.”
9. *Jabberwock* in “Beware the Jabberwock, my son!”