helping verbs are **had** and **been**.

The main verb in a verb phrase is always the last word. The main verb may show action or being.

Action: had been **eating**
Being: may have **been**

Learn these helping verbs.

1. Forms of **be** can be helping verbs or main verbs.
   Helping verbs: **am** seen, **is** held, **are** kept, **was** told, **were** sent, will **be** won, has **been** sold, was **being** put
   Main verbs: Sue **is** here. She **was** absent.
2. Forms of **have** can be helping verbs or main verbs.
   Helping verbs: **have** walked, **has** run, **had** driven
   Main verbs: I **have** a dog. Bob **has** a rabbit.
3. Forms of **do** can be helping verbs or main verbs.
   Helping verbs: **do** care, **does** need, **did** listen
   Main verbs: We **do** our best. Kay **did** her work.
4. Some verbs can be helping verbs but not main verbs. One set is the three forms of **may**: **may**, **might**, and **must**. Three other sets come in pairs: **can—could**, **shall—should**, and **will—would**.
   may leave, **might** fall, **must** obey
   can help, **could** work
   shall write, **should** answer
   will think, **would** know

Remember: A group of words working together as one verb is a verb phrase. The last word in a verb phrase is the main verb. A main verb can be an action verb or a form of *be*.

Teach the following points.

1. A group of words working together as one verb is a verb phrase. Write the following examples on the board.

have cleaned
has been working
are singing

2. A verb phrase is made up of a main verb and one or more helping verbs. Show students which is which. Underline the helping verbs in the phrases you wrote on the board. Underline each main verb a second time.

3. The main verb is always the last word in a verb phrase. Ask students to give the main verb in the following phrases as you read them. Write some of the phrases on the board. Have students underline each helping verb and circle each main verb.

have been
can go
has run
did see
would have done
may leave
will be
should come
might have been

Have students learn the helping verbs. As a memory aid, show that there are three sets of triplets and three sets of twins.

the *h* triplets: have, has, had
the *d* triplets: do, does, did
the *m* triplets: may, might, must

The three sets of twins may be called "rhyming twins."

can—could
shall—should
will—would

These are called rhyming twins because *could*,