

* Subject and Verb Agreement

* Introduction

- * Subjects and verbs must agree in number.
- * Singular verbs end in -s.
- * You always takes a plural verb.

Plural subject

Plural verb

Example 1: The twelve princesses dance every night.

Princesses tells who did the dancing.

* Subjects and verbs must agree in number.

Singular=Singular

Plural=Plural

Example 2: One princess dances every night.

singular singular ↑ ↑

Hint: Singular verbs in -s

Note: Even though the pronoun you can be singular, it always takes a plural verb.

Example 3: You sit in that seat every day

Example 4: You find your seats by number.

Sit is the plural form of the verb even though you is referring to a single individual. Find is also plural when you refers to more than one person.

*Practice 1

Directions: Put the correct answer on your papers.

1. The children (walks/walk) to the playground every afternoon.
2. My friend (gives/give) me his potato chips at lunch.
3. She always (sings/sing) that song.
4. He (takes/take) pride in his work.
5. Gregory (fishes/fish) for bass in the lake.
6. We (is/are) tired and hungry.
7. The watermelons (was/were) sitting in the truck bed.
8. They (has/have) a blue house.
9. His aunt (goes/go) to the hospital tomorrow.
10. Angela (does/do) know the answer.
11. You (reads/read) well.
12. Their cat (hides/hide) under the bed.

*How will you see this on the test?

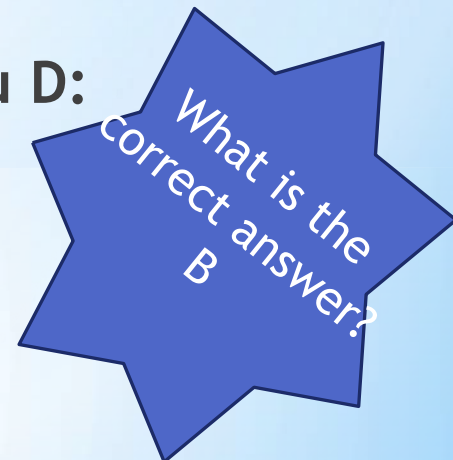
All of your questions will be in test format, so be able to recognize how to do these correctly.

Here is the question:

Which of the following sentences uses subject/verb agreement correctly?

You will then have four answer choices, A thru D:

- A. The boy walk home.
- B. He throws the ball.
- C. The cat play.
- D. The girls writes long essays.



*Practice 2

Directions: For each group, choose the correct answer and place in your notes.

1.
 - A. You is my favorite aunt.
 - B. The cat goes outside at night.
 - C. Your mother make great pies.
 - D. The trophy were taken from the case.
2.
 - A. She performs the skit well.
 - B. It were a stormy night.
 - C. We was trimming the hedges.
 - D. You has a lot of studying to do.
3.
 - A. Toren like spaghetti the best.
 - B. I wants that ring for my birthday.
 - C. Lowell constructs bridges for a living.
 - D. He call his friend every day.

* Phrases between the subject and verb

- * **BE CAREFUL**- Don't confuse the object of the preposition as the subject!
- * The subject will **NEVER** be found in the prepositional phrase.

Example: One (of my friends) is going.

singular subject

Singular verb

*Practice 3

Directions: Choose the correct verb. Find the prepositional phrase and put parenthesis around it.

1. The tiles in the corner (is/are) broken.
2. Which type of pens (was/were) your favorite?
3. The letters from Cale (has/have) been found in the drawer.
4. The forks in the drawer (was/were) bent.
5. My interest in crafts (keeps/keep) me busy.
6. Two colors of the flag (has/have) been changed.
7. The best of all the entries (was/were) yours.
8. One of the robins (has/have) an injured wing.
9. Most members of her family (is/are) artistic.
10. The pieces of furniture (is/are) antique.

*Subjects following verbs

* BE CAREFUL- The subject does NOT always come at the beginning of the sentence.

1. A phrase may come at the beginning of the sentence.

Ex. 1- Behind the door was a prize.

In this example, was is the verb and prize is the subject.

2. With questions, the verb, or part of it, can come before the subject.

Ex. 2- Does Rose go to camp?

Rose is a singular subject, and do go is a plural verb.

Ex. 3- Do her sisters go to camp?

Sisters is a plural subject, and do go is a plural verb.

3. If a sentence begins with there or here, the subject will come after the verb.

Ex. 4- Here comes the parade.

Parade is a singular subject, and comes is a singular verb.

Ex. 5- There go the floats.

Floats is a plural subject, and go is a plural verb.

Practice 4

Choose the correct answer for each.

1. There (was/were) ten gifts left.
2. Down in the forest (was/were) two rope swings.
3. Why (was/were) the young girl still on the bus?
4. Here (comes/come) the band leader.
5. (Does/Do) those men have shelter?

*Compound Subjects

1. Subjects joined by and generally take a plural verb.

Example

Justin Leonard and Annika Sorenstam are famous professional golfers.

* Singular subjects joined by or or nor take a singular verb.

* Plural subjects joined by or or nor take a plural verb.

Example:

Either a doctor or a nurse checks on the hospital patients each morning.

Either doctors or nurses check on the hospital patients each morning.

3. When a singular subject and a plural subject are joined by or or nor, the verb agrees with the subject nearer the verb.

Example:

Neither the band members nor the singer feels ready for the performance.

(singer is closest to the verb, so the verb is singular.)

Neither the singer nor the band members feel ready for the performance.

(members is closest to the verb, so the verb is plural.)

*Practice

1. James and his brother (is/are) leaving now.
2. Neither the soldiers nor their general (was/were) given credit for the victory.
3. Kisha and her friends (was/were) volunteering at the hospital.
4. Either he or his dogs (was/were) responsible for the mess.
5. For their project, Tiffany and Justin (is/are) making a model of a volcano.

* Indefinite pronouns

The following indefinite pronouns are singular:

- **Anybody, anyone, anything**
- **Each, either, everybody, everyone, everything**
- **Neither, nobody, no one**
- **One**
- **Somebody, someone, something**

Example: Everyone in the cast is at rehearsal today.

*** The following indefinite pronouns are plural:**

Both, few, many, several

Example: Several of the athletes were at the banquet.

*** These indefinite pronouns can be either singular or plural depending on their meaning in a sentence.**

All, any, more, most, none, some

Example

*** Most (of our vacation) is over. [Most refers to the singular noun vacation.]**

*** Most (of the days) have passed. [Most refers to the plural noun days.]**

1. Several of the trucks (is/are) black.
2. Everybody (was/were) in line for tickets.
3. Some of the television programs (was/were) unrated.
4. Many of the vegetables (was/were) overripe.
5. Yesterday everyone (was/were) painting the room.

 **Practice**
Indefinite pronouns

- ⦿ Collective nouns such as team, family, jury, faculty, and committee are singular when considered as a unit. These will take a verb with an -s ending.

Examples

My family drives to California each year.

The faculty recommends that the new handbook be approved.

* Collective Nouns

- ⦿ If individual members or parts of a group are considered separate, a plural verb without an s is needed. (in very few cases.)

Examples

The dance team buy their own costumes.

The Honor Society compete in the math competition.

- ⦿ Nouns such as scissors, tweezers, trousers, and shears require plural verbs.
(There are two parts to these things.)

Example:

These scissors are dull.

Those trousers are made of wool.

1. The rugby team (practice/practices) three times a week.
2. The soccer team (practice/practices) their skills individually when they meet with the coach one-on-one.
3. The class (contribute/contributes) different amounts depending on how much candy they sell.
4. My class (is/are) the largest in the school.

* Practice
Collective Nouns