**2.3 SUBJECT – VERB – AGREEMENT**

**Introduction to the Topic**

The topic SVA talks that a verb or compound verb states something about the subject of the sentence. Hence, the verb should agree totally with the subject it talks about in the sentence.

**Relevance in CAT**

A thorough understanding of the topic SVA will help students to solve complex questions pertaining to this topic in the sentence correction questions of the CAT.

**SUBJECT – VERB – AGREEMENT**

SVA simply means the subject and verb must agree in number – Either both should be singular or plural…

e.g.→ The boy studies all day. (singular subject)

The boys study all day. (plural subject)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Singular Subject | → | Singular Verb |
| Plural Subject | → | Plural Verb |

**Important exceptions to SVA :-**

I. Agreement only applies when the verb is in the present tense.

In the past tense, there is no overt agreement between the subject and the verb,

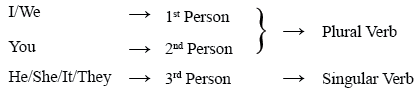
e.g. The boy studied whole day.

The boys studied whole day.

II. Agreement applies only to third person subject. There is no distinction between a first person singular subject and a first person plural subject.

e.g. I study whole day.

We study whole day.



**■ Basic Rules**

●

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Each, Each one, Either, Everyone,  Somebody, Someone,  No one, Neither, Nobody | → | Singular | → | Requires  Singular  Verbs |

e.g. Each of these bananas is rotten.

Either is wrong.

● When two or more subjects are joined with ‘Either-or’ or Neither-nor’, the verb will be according to the nearby subject.

e.g. Neither Neha nor Sakshi has a clue about this.

Either Neetu or Prem is working.

Neither the teacher nor the managers are coming.

**Exception:-** When I is one of the two subjects connected by either / or or neither / nor, put it second and follow it with the singular verb ‘am’.

e.g. Neither he nor I am going to school.

● Uncountable Noun → Singular Verb.

**Exception:-** In case, uncountable nouns are used with words or phrases that make them countable then plural verb.

e.g. “A few pieces of car are lying.”

“Four packets of milk are spoilt.”

● Collective nouns are words that imply more than 1 person but are considered singular and take a singular verb such as:- group, team, committee, class & family.

e.g. The family has a long history of photographers.

The team has prepared the presentation.

**Exception:-** collective nouns which are collective names given to a group. For e.g. jury. They may refer to the

unit without any reference to the members (they take a singular verb) or they may be used to refer to the members, in that case they take a plural verb.

e.g. The jury has taken a decision.

The jury are divided over their opinion.

● Whenever we combine two or more subjects by ‘and’ it becomes a plural subject.

e.g. The teacher and the student together plan the event.

She and her friend are at the fair.

In some case even when we use ‘and’ as a conjunction. When we seem to be talking about two people or two things but it is actually two qualities or things done by the same person.

\* The actor and singer was rewarded.

Because only one article is used in the sentence that means it is talking about one person.

\* Certain things/ proverbs that come together because they are always used as a single entity we use the singular form.

e.g. Bread and better is his only living.

Slow and steady wins the race.

Time and tide, honour and glory, rise & fall.

\* When ‘and’ is used with two different nouns but they go into the making of one thing. Then it is used in the singular form. The sentence tells that it is one but different aspect of one.

e.g. “Rice and fish curry is the staple food of Kolkata.”

It’s a single dish which exists, rice and fish curry as its content.

\* The teacher, as well as the students, is going to the seminar.

● When we join two subjects with phases like “along with”, “win” “together with”, “as well as”, “accompanied by”, in these cases the verb agrees with the primary subject.

e.g. The original document, as well as all the subsequent copies she made, was lost.

The girls, together with their friends, are going for a lunch.

● While joining two subjects with the help of words ‘or’ and ‘nor’, the verb will agree with the subject closer to it.

e.g. The teacher or the students are going for a seminar.

\* All words ending with ‘s’ one not plural subjects, diseases and sports like civics, maths, physics, memps, measles, bronchitis, tennis, billiards, gymnastics weight end with

‘s’ but are always singular.

\* Words like pants, trousers, spectacles, tongs, scissors etc. are always considered to be a plural subject as they are made up of two different parts.

e.g. My pair of trousers are of cotton.

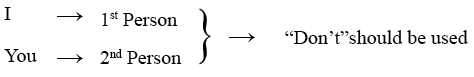
\* Doesn’t is a contraction of does not and should be used with a singular subject. Don’t is contraction of do not and should be used only with a plural subject. However with 1st/2nd person pronouns I and You, don’t should be used.

I, You, They, We → don’t

He, She, It → doesn’t

● **Doesn’t** is a contraction of **does not** and should be used only with a singular subject. **Don’t** is a contraction of **do** **not** and should be used only with a plural subject.

**Exception:**



e.g. → She doesn’t love it.

They don’t love it.

**Important Note:**- When ‘does’ or ‘doesn’t’ is used in third person singular, use of ‘s’ or ‘es’ with verb is strictly prohibited.

● We should not be misled by a phrase that comes between the subject and the verb. The verb agrees with the subject not with a noun or pronoun in the phrase.

e.g. One of the cupboard is open.

The people who listen to that song are few.

● In some special cases like “dollars” “rupees”. It can be singular as well as plural.

Twenty thousand rupees is a good money.

Rupees are often used in Nepal instead of rupiah.

When talking about rupees as an amount of money, it requires a singular verb, but when referring to the rupees themselves i.e. currency, a plural verb is required.

● In sentences beginning with ‘there is’ or ‘there are’, the subject follows the verb. Since there is no subject. The verb agrees with what follows.

e.g. There are many files.

There is a file.

● With the word ‘means’, when it refers to income will always be plural or else it will be plural as well as singular.

e.g. The means you employed is sufficient.

All possible means have been taken.

My means are enough to take care of my family.

● Fractions and percentages → depends on what follows them.

e.g. Sixty percent of India’s population is engaged in farming.

[population → uncountable → singular verb]

But,

Fifty percent of the villagers are engaged in farming.

[villagers → countable noun → plural verb]

**Note:-** Hyphenate all spelled – out fractions.

e.g. All of the cake pie is eaten.

Some of the pies are missing.

One-third of the workers are gone.

● The **relative pronouns** (who, whom, which and that) are either **singular** or **plural**, depending on the words they refer to.

e.g. The sales manager is a good researcher who spends a great amount of time surfing the Web for informa- tion.

**Subject:** the sales manager

**Verbs:** is, spends

She is the chairman of a big company who writes the novels.

**Subject:** She

**Verb:** is, writes

● Use a singular verb with sums of money or periods of time.

e.g. Ten dollars is a high price to pay.

Five years is the maximum sentence for that offense.

Five dollars is a high price to pay for this article.

**Points To Remember**

● Singular subject takes a singular verb, while a plural subject takes a plural verb.

● The subject can be a single word or a group of words (phrase or clause)

● **‘Am’** agrees with the subject close to it, **‘I’**.

● If the nouns suggest one idea to the mind, or refer to the same person or thing, the verb is singular.

e.g. Time and tide waits for no man.

● With sums of money or periods of time singular verb is used.

**Practice Exercise – Easy**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 − 31):** *In the sentence given below, find the part which has an error.*

1. The depletion of coal reserves, and rapid increase in

A

utilization of coal in various activities, have encouraged

B

many nations to conserve energy. No error

C D

2. There is, without a doubt, many good reasons to dance.

A B C

No error

D

3. The neighbours told SIT that neither Jennifer nor her

A B

mother are capable of telling the truth. No error

C D

4. The dog with the brown tail run out of the house.

A B C

No error

D

5. The development of a electric bike based on expected

A B

performance parameters will be able to travel 500 km

C

without charging the battery. No error

D

6. When the cluster heads left, the Branch manager who

A B

had been interviewed was glad. No error

C D

7. Buzzo, the dog once considered one of the favorites

A B

were taken away. No error

C D

8. Mathematics, in addition to English and Science are

A B

a required subject. No error

C D

9. Neither the coach nor the players are in favour of playing

A B

match on this rugged pitch. No error

C D

10. Some of the money was stolen from my bag. No error

A B C D

11. Any of these men are a suitable candidate for marriage

A B

to my daughter. No error

C D

12. The number of talented students in this batch are quite

A B C

large. No error

D

13. Half of the pie is chocolate and half of the slices are

A B C

already gone. No error

D

14. The neighbours were dismayed to learn that neither her

A B

sons nor her daughter were interested in moving.

C

No error

D

15. I was so thirsty that either of the two mocktails were fine

A B C

with me. No error

D

16. According to my teacher, there is, many tests of CAT

A B

entrance exam are available to me. No error

C D

17. Either her mother or her friends

A B

are replying to my messages. No error

C D

18. A new text book focused on recent discoveries in space,

A B

assigned by our mentor. No error

C D

19. Just around the corner is a fantastic wine and beer shop

A B

and a small supermarket. No error

C D

20. Whoever rented these shows has to take them back

A B C

before midnight. No error

D

21. After getting tired of practicing, the dancing troope de-

A B

cided to walk out on their astonished mentor. No error

C D

22. The chief minister together with his two personal assis-

A B

tants are going to be indicted for accepting bribes.

C

No error

D

23. All department teachers but not the chairman have

A B

decided not to teach on Valentines Day. No error

C D

24. It was the principal, not his ideas that has provoked the

A B C

pupils to riot. No error

D

25. Either the orthopedician in this hospital or the head of

A B

the department is going to make a decision.

C

No error

D

26. Dhyan Chand, together with his teammates, present a

A B

formidable opponent on the hockey ground. No error

C D

27. There has to be some people left in that city

A B

after yesterday’s earthquake. No error

C D

28. Three quarters of the student body is against the school

A B C

fee hike. No error

D

29. The Tatas, as well as the Birlas and the Ambanis, are go-

A B

ing to start a new venture. No error

C D

30. Each and every member and instructor in this building

A B

hope for a new yoga center by the next year. No error

C D

31. Rice and curry, my favourite dish remind me of my

A B C

home town. No error

D

**Practice Exercise – Medium**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 − 3):** *Find the incorrect part of sentence.*

1. A. I doesn’t have this medicine so,

B. please follow my rules and regulations

C. to operate this fungal disease of your brother

D. otherwise there will be a great trouble.

a. A b. B

c. C d. D

2. A. But they panic and feels themselves weak.

B. So they make statements in a hurry

C. and three of them unite themselves

D. because each of them is afraid to articulate certain words.

a. A b. B

c. C d. D

3. A. We shall struggle that even people living in the far countryside understands

B. that in Ukraine there is good as well as evil and which way

C. they should vote so that their life is not a failure. We shall do everything

D. possible and we are sure that the victory will belong to the single opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko.

a. A b. B

c. C d. D

**Directions (Q. Nos. 4 − 15):** *Choose the grammatically correct option for the underline part of the sentence.*

4. Politics are not my cup of tea.

a. Politics have been not

b. Politics is not

c. Politics were not

d. Politics had not

5. He asked me whether either of the applicants were suitable.

a. Whether either of the applicants are suitable.

b. Whether either of the applicants have suitable.

c. Whether either of the applicants was suitable.

d. Whether either of the applicants were suitable.

6. Silver, as well as cotton, have fallen in price.

a. as well as cotton, has fallen

b. as well as cotton, were fallen

c. as well as cotton, fallen

d. as well as cotton, have fallen

7. Neither my brother nor my parents stays in Mumbai.

a. my parents were staying in Mumbai.

b. my parents stay in Mumbai.

c. my parents is stayed in Mumbai.

d. my parents has stay in Mumbai.

8. Cows are among the gentlest of living creatures; none shows more passionate tenderness to their young.

a. none show more passionate tenderness

b. none has showed more passionate tenderness

c. none was showing more passionate tenderness

d. none showing more passionate tenderness

9. The Arabian Nights is one of the famous book among the readers.

a. are one of the famous book

b. is one of the famous book

c. is the famous book

d. another of the famous book

10. Each student, helped by the parents and teachers, setting the goal that fits him or her so, the motivation stays high.

a. set the goal that fits him or her

b. setted the goal that fits him or her

c. sets the goal that fits him or her

d. set the goal which fits him or her

11. A study has shown that topical creams containing the retinoids tretinoin and tazarotene treats acne and scars.

a. topical creams containing the retinoids tretinoin and tazarotene treat acne and scars.

b. topical creams containing the retinoids tretinoin and tazarotene treated acne and scars.

c. topical creams containing the retinoids tretinoin and tazarotene treating acne and scars.

d. topical creams containing the retinoids tretinoin and tazarotene has been treating acne and scars.

12. The slaughter of elephants for their trunks have caused the elephant population to decline drastically.

a. elephants for their trunks has caused the elephant population

b. elephants for their trunks were caused the elephant population

c. elephants for their trunks is caused the elephant population

d. elephants for their trunks have caused the elephant population

13. Ten years is the maximum sentence for that offence.

a. are the maximum sentence for that offence

b. were the maximum sentence for that offence

c. have the maximum sentence for that offence

d. is the maximum sentence for that offence

14. Rice and beans, my favourite dish, reminds me of my village Gannaur.

a. my favourite dish remind, me of my village Gannaur

b. my favourite dish recall, me of my village Gannaur

c. my favourite dish thought, me of my village Gannaur

d. my favourite dish reminds, me of my village Gannaur

15. A system of stringent procedures control the experiment.

a. stringent procedures controls the experiment

b. stringent procedures had controlled the experiment

c. stringent procedures controlling the experiment

d. stringent procedures control the experiment

**Directions (Q. Nos. 16 − 30):** *Choose the grammatically correct sentence.*

16. A. Does he eat chicken?

B. Have you seen the show?

C. The questions on the test was very difficult.

D. People from the North are very friendly.

a. C only b. A, B & D c. A & D d. B & D

17. A. Rohit, as well as his cousins, are going to USA.

B. Everyone need to be loved.

C. My some part of income goes to a Cancer NGO.

D. Mathematics hasn’t been revised as a course.

a. C & D b. A & B c. A & D d. B & C

18. A. You and I are supposed to clean the classroom before teacher gets in.

B. Either the mother or my brother has signed the report card.

C. Be careful. Father’s scissors are very sharp.

D. Neither of the statements are false.

a. A only b. A, B, C & D

c. D only d. A, B & C

19. A. Neither the professor nor the students seems to understand this question.

B. One of my cousin who is a doctor in a well renowed hospital has written a letter of recommendation for me.

C. Delhi is one of those cities that is working hard to solve its sewage problem.

D. Some of the drinks has already gone bad.

a. A & B b. B, C & D c. C & D d. A, B & D

20. A. One of these children have obviously cheated in the exam.

B. Either Newzealand or India are going to be the World Cup champion this year.

C. Several of girls have decided to complain against a professor.

D. Have either Tanya or her parents written to Priyanka?

a. C & D b. A & B

c. A, B, C & D d. A & D

21. A. Everyone have eaten his or her lunch.

B. Either my father or my sisters are leaving for Mumbai tomorrow morning.

C. The news on the front page of the newspaper are bad.

D. The common man’s earnings have gone up substantially after this year’s annual budget.

a. A & C b. B & D c. A & B d. C & D

22. A. A large percentage of the young population is in favour of him being elected India’s PM.

B. One and one is two.

C. Not only the teammates but also their captain have been called to the BCCI’s office.

D. Seven years is a long time to stay away from your home country.

a. B, C & D b. A, B & D

c. A, C & D d. B & C

23. A. The student should decide which one of the four choices A, B, C or D best answer the question.

B. One of the most intelligent students who score full marks in every exam is Divya.

C. 500 kms are a long distance.

D. None of my schoolmates were there.

a. A & C b. A & B

c. C & D d. B & D

24. A. The price of this branded jeans is reasonable.

B. curd and rice are our daily food.

C. The famous director and producer have arrived.

D. Many a people have made a same mistake.

a. A, B, C & D b. A only

c. C only d. B only

25. A. Petrol, as well as diesel have recently risen in price.

B. My aunt as well as her two sons have been robbed by the robber.

C. Neither parent is fond of playing chess.

D. Neither his sister nor his mother is good at cooking.

a. C & D b. A, B & C

c. B, C & D d. C only

26. A. One of my brothers is shifting to the USA permanently.

B. Rohit and Keshav doesn’t want to go for the party.

C. Nobody know the situation I’ve gone through.

D. The President, together with his wife greet the audience cordially.

a. A only b. B only

c. C only d. D only

27. A. The team raises these questions carefully.

B. The actors live very different lives in private.

C. There were ten chocolates in that bag. Now there are only one left!

D. Social studies is Priya’s favourite subject, while civics is Neha’s favourite subject.

a. B, C & D b. B & C

c. C & D d. A, B & D

28. A. Do you need a good criminal lawyer?

B. Do the earrings in Shreya’s ear rust when she takes bath?

C. He always shares his lunch with me.

D. The teacher seem to be very upset with the students.

a. B & C b. A, B & C

c. D only d. A, B, C & D

29. A. The football roll across the ground.

B. His dog growls when someone enters his house.

C. The phone beeps when it rings.

D. My dog leap onto the tranpoline.

a. A & B b. C & D

c. B & C d. C only

30. A. Neither the teacher nor the students but the school director is in favour of cutting down the huge tree in the school garden.

B. Of all the electricians in the town, Ron do the best work.

C. It’s not the teacher but the principal of the school who decides on the course schedule.

D. Everyone at the mall were looking for the missing boy.

a. A, B, C & D b. A & C

c. B & C d. C & D

**Practice Exercise – Difficult**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1 − 5):** *Choose the grammatically correct sentence.*

1. a. Long term unemployment are the norm because high minimum wages, payroll takes, and labour protection laws make employees loath to hire those whom they cannot easily fire and whom they must pay beyond what their skills are worth.

b. Finland’s expenditure on primary and secondary education is slightly higher than the European average but lower than some of its Nordic neighbours.

c. Hollywood has begun turning to a growing cadre of military veterans like Humphries who use their contact and expertise to bring truth to a picture.

d. Over the last few years there has been a couple of very positive developments towards the con- secution of the endangered Tigers.

2. a. Vegetables and fruits is high in antioxidant vitamins, which help maintain the immune system, so you stay healthy.

b. A study has shown that topical creams containing the retinoid tretinoin an d tazarotene treat brown spots and wrinkles.

c. Shveta, as well as Ankita, are working hard to support the family.

d. The shortage of male teachers make it even more important for dads to play an active role at home.

3. a. The committee is divided on one minor point.

b. People like him doesn’t care about any one.

c. Gulliver’s travels was written by Swift.

d. Neither my friend nor I is at work.

4. a. You are drawn to the deal immensity purely, simply, irresistibly, by a power that comes from the thing itself and from your desire to fed the power.

b. The simple role that traffic beep to one side or the other has a long history that reaches well beyond the appearance of the first automobile.

c. Five years are the maximum sentence for that offence.

d. Neither John nor Abraham are available.

5. a. The boys, together with their friends, is going for a picnic.

b. White teeth, healthy gums and fresh breath creates a germ free oral environment and a base to good health.

c. Apart from being a role model and mentor to the young, our President also have his passion for knowledge and a life based on the right values.

d. Simple procedures such as making a U-turn become extremely troublesome because you house to shift gears with a hand other than the one you normally use.

**Directions (Q. Nos. 6 − 10):** *Choose the grammatically correct option of the underlined part of the sentence.*

6. Nobody denies that two hours in the playhouse feels in- fact, perfectly great.

a. Nobody denies that two hours in the playhouse feel

b. Nobody denies that the feeling in the playhouse for two hours

c. Nobody denies that two hours feeling in the playhouse

d. Nobody can deny how everybody feels in the playhouse for two hours

7. Neither the producers nor the director in the sequel forecast that it will earn less money than the first time, but they are perplexed by the box-office receipts on its opening weekend.

a. Neither the director in the sequel nor its producers forecast

b. The producers of the second, along with its director, forecast

c. Neither the director nor the producers of the second sequel forecasted

d. About the second sequel, neither the producer nor the director predict

8. Most of the candidates who comes out of the interview hall have confused and disturbed facial expressions.

a. Most of the candidates who come out of the interview hall.

b. Mostly candidates who come out of the interview hall.

c. Mostly candidates comes out of the interview hall

d. Most of the candidate come out of the interview hall

9. If R. K. Narayan’s Malgudi Days attract few readers than

it did in the 20th century, perhaps the reason is that modern readers do no know enough to appreciate the irony.

a. attracts lesser readers than it did in the 20th century,

b. attracts few readers than it did in the 20th century,

c. attracts fewer readers than he did in the 20th century,

d. attract less reading than it did in the 20th century,

10. If the majority of your competitors have dominance, you may lose.

a. If the majority of your competitors take dominance, you may lose.

b. If the majority of your competitors assume dominance, you may lose.

c. If the majority of your competitors has dominance, you may lose.

d. Most of your competitors will have dominance, and you may lose.