

MEETING I

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT AND PARTS OF SENTENCE

A. OBJECTIVES

After studying this material, students are able to:

- 1.1 To analyze a subject-verb agreement
- 1.2 To analyze parts of sentence

B. MATERIAL DESCRIPTION

Read the following text and identify the subject-verb agreement.

Andrew Smodley *is* a natural worrier. It *is* something he has inherited from his father—the king of all worriers. But then there are those who are never happy unless they *have* a problem to solve. Andrew worried about the weather, the state of the pound, his health, the cost of living and once he even worried because he thought he wasn't worrying enough. But that was in the past. Things have changed because something happened to him exactly two years ago. It was in the spring when leaves *appear* on trees and nature *prepares* herself for renewal. Other things *happen* too— people often *fall* in love. Now Andrew *doesn't have* a romantic disposition. He never *looks* up at the leaves starting to grow, *sighs* and *says*: «Ah here *comes* the spring!» He simply *thinks* to himself: «I *live* in a small village by a little stream and around this time of year lots of creatures *start* to wake up and *make* a lot of noise.» In London, which *stands* on the River Thames, people *make* a lot of noise all the time? »

I *apologize* for the simplicity of these statements but I *want to* illustrate the unimaginative nature which Andrew possesses. Towards the end of this story I *give* examples to show the extent of the change that he underwent. The other character in this anecdote *is* a young woman called Sally Fair-weather. She too *lives* in this tiny and remote village where Andrew *has* his cottage. Now Sally *is* an entirely different kettle of fish. Her philosophy *runs* as follows: «Worrying never *gets* you anywhere and life *is* too short to waste time imagining the worst. »In a word she *is* the complete opposite in temperament of Andrew. Here *comes* another cliché: Opposites attract. But you *must remember* that two years ago the two main characters hadn't met, which was surprising when you *consider* the proximity of Andrew's cottage and Sally's flat. If you *take* the first left after the post office, you *come* to Sally's place and if you *take* the second turning to the right after that you *come* to the cottage where Andrew *lives*.

Source: English Grammar through Stories by Alan Townend

1. Subject-verb agreement

Subject verb agreement simply means the subject and verb must agree in number. This means both need to be singular or both need to be plural.

Agreement (noun): in language, the *form* of one word being decided by the *form* of another word. Also known as "concord".

What is Subject-Verb Agreement?

- Subject-verb agreement means your subject and verb must match, or agree, in number.
 - If you have a singular subject, then you must use a singular verb.
 - The dog barks at every sound he hears.
 - If you have a plural subject, then you must use a plural verb.
 - The dogs bark at every sound they hear.



Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #1 (Basic Rule)

The subject and verb must agree in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, whereas a plural subject takes a plural verb.

Subject verb agreement examples:

A good medicine tastes bitter.

He goes to work by bus.

They visit us every other week.

Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #2

The subject is separated from the verb by “with”, “as well as”, “together with”, “along with”. These words and phrases are not part of the subject. The verb agrees with the subject.

The politician, along with the newsmen, is expected shortly.

Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #3

Two subjects joined by “and” are plural.

Mary and Joan are quite different.

Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #4

Two subjects joined by “or/not”, “either...or/neither...nor”, “not only...but also” take the verb that agrees with the subject closest to it.

Subject verb agreement examples:

Neither my mother nor my father goes to university.

Either my father or my brothers are coming.

Not only you but also I am planning to go.

Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #5

With collective nouns, the verb might be singular or plural (UK), depending on meaning.

Subject-verb agreement examples:

The audience was clearly enchanted by her performance.

The audiences are strangely subdued, clapping politely after each song.

Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #6

In sentences beginning with “here” or “there”, the true subject follows the verb.

There is a bush near the school playground.

Here are the keys.

Subject-Verb Agreement RULE #7

The verb is singular if the subject is a singular indefinite pronoun such as each, either, neither, one, no one, every one, someone, anyone, nobody, somebody, anybody, everybody, one, no.

Nobody gets rich from writing nowadays.

Either of the plans is equally dangerous.

The verb is plural if the subject is a plural indefinite pronoun such as several, few, both, and many.

Several villages have been isolated by the heavy snowfall.

And, some indefinite pronouns (some, any, all, and most) may be either singular or plural, depending upon their use in a sentence: with uncountable, use singular; with countable, use plural.

Some of the books are out of place. Please put them in the right order.

(Books are countable.)

Some of the music was weird.

(Music is uncountable.)

Subject Verb Agreement RULE #8

Use a singular verb for expressions of measurement, time, money and weight when the amount is considered one unit.

Fifty dollars seems a reasonable price.

Three miles is too far to walk.

BUT:

Five dollars were scattered on the ground.

Subject Verb Agreement RULE #9

Plural form subjects with a singular meaning take a singular verb (such as mumps, home economics, social studies economics, measles, calisthenics, statistics, civics, physics, gymnastics, phonics, news, acrobatics, aesthetics, thesis, mathematics ...).

Gymnastics is his favorite sport.

Mathematics is the science of pure quantity.

Subject Verb Agreement RULE #10

Titles of single entities (books, organizations, countries, etc.) are always singular.

Harry Potter is an interesting novel.

Subject Verb Agreement Rules

1 The subject and verb must agree in number.

He **goes** to work by bus.

They **visit** us every other week.



2 The words and phrases "with", "as well as", "together with", "along with" are not part of the subject and the verb agrees with the subject.

The **politician**, along with the newsmen, **is** expected shortly.

3 Two subjects joined by "and" are plural.

Mary **and** Joan **are** quite different.

Exceptions:

Bacon **and** eggs **is** my favourite dish.



4 With collective nouns, the verb might be singular or plural, depending on meaning.

The **audience** **was** clearly enchanted by her performance.

The **audience** **are** strangely subdued, clapping politely after each song.

5 2 subjects joined by "or/not", "either...or/neither...nor", "not only...but also" take the verb agrees with the subject closest to it.

Neither my mother **nor** my father **goes** to university.



6 In sentences beginning with "here", "there", the true subject follows the verb.

There **is** a **bush** near the school playground.

7 The verb is singular if the subject is a singular indefinite pronoun such as each, either, no one, every one, etc.

Nobody **gets** rich from writing nowadays.

The verb is plural if the subject is a plural indefinite pronoun such as several, few, both, many.

Several villages **have been isolated** by the heavy snowfall.



Some indefinite pronouns may be either singular or plural, depending upon their use in a sentence.

Some of the **books** **are** out of place. Please put them in right order. (Books are countable.)

Some of the **music** **was** weird. (Music is uncountable.)



8 Use a singular verb for expressions of measurement, time, money and weight when the amount is considered one unit.

Fifty dollars **seems** a reasonable price.

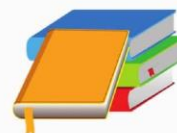
But: **Five dollars** **were** scattered on the on the ground.

9 Plural form subjects with a singular meaning take a singular verb such as mumps, measles, calisthenics, statistics, civics, etc..

Gymnastics **is** his favourite sport.

10 Titles of single entities (books, organizations, countries, etc.) are always singular.

Harry Potter **is** an interesting novel.



2. The Parts of the Sentence

What Are the Parts of a Sentence?

A sentence must minimally have a subject and a verb. Sometimes the subject can be omitted if it is understood. Examples as follow: Bold for Subject and Italic for Verb.

Tom *walks*.
We *met* Susan.
They *are washing* the dishes.
Lisa *will arrive* soon.
She *is* nice.
There *is* food on the table.

The parts of the sentence are a set of terms for describing how people construct sentences from smaller pieces. There is not a direct correspondence between the parts of the sentence and the parts of speech -- the subject of a sentence, for example, could be a noun, a pronoun, or even an entire phrase or clause. Like the parts of speech, however, the parts of the sentence form part of the basic vocabulary of grammar, and it is important that you take some time to learn and understand them.

Sentences consist of a number of parts, using different parts of speech. The most important parts of speech are:

The subject, which is either a noun phrase or a pronoun. Normally the subject comes before the verb phrase in a sentence.

The girls had been swimming.
The new teacher came in.
They had finished.

The verb phrase, which includes the main verb and which may have auxiliary verbs to go with it.

The girls had been swimming.
The new teacher came in.
They had finished.
She uses her skateboard quite a lot.
Rajiv was reading a new novel.
She is riding someone else's horse.

The object, which is a noun phrase or a pronoun.

She used her old skateboard.

*Rajiv was reading a new novel.
Josh found it.*

Not all verbs need an object. When there is one, the object normally comes after the verb phrase. Some verbs may also need an indirect object.

*Hamish gave me a party invitation.
Ruth gave Lauren a nice bunch of flowers.*

An adverbial, or adjunct, which is an optional part of the sentence.
This may be:

*a single word, an adverb.
Suddenly, it started to rain heavily.*

An adverbial phrase, a group of words that functions as an adverb.
*In the morning, the sky was clear.
You probably won't notice it after a while.*

An adverbial clause, a group of words including a verb, which functions as an adverb.

*I'll get some biscuits for you when I've poured the drinks.
When I've poured the drinks, I'll get some biscuits for you.
Mark played while Isabel sang.*

Though some adverbials have a fixed position, most can be added to a sentence in several places. Any number of them can be added, limited only by the sense of the sentence.

*In the winter, the roads get very slippery.
The roads get very slippery in the winter.*

A complement. With certain verbs, such as be and seem, a complement takes the place of an object. A complement can be either an adjective or a noun phrase. Complements provide further descriptive detail about the subject.

*He became a doctor in 2005.
Andrew is a motor-mechanic.
He felt a bit silly when he realized what he'd done.
They became good friends despite the mistake.*

C. EXERCISES

EXERCISE 1

A. Directions: Underline the correct verb in these sentences.

1. Sally (run, runs) to the park every day.
2. The dogs (bark, barks) at strangers.
3. Ted and Mary (is, are) going to the movies.
4. The game (was, were) exciting.
5. They (worry, worries) too much.
6. She (study, studies) every night.
7. Black or white (is, are) your choice.
8. That (was, were) incredible.
9. Those (is, are) pretty shoes.
10. The cat or dog (is, are) in the yard.

B. Directions: Put a C if the sentence is correct, an X if it is not correct.

1. ____ They have been waiting a long time.
2. ____ The pen or the pencil are lost.
3. ____ Someone don't understand.
4. ____ Those has been cheaper in the past.
5. ____ Randy and Juan like sports.
6. ____ These are really special.
7. ____ You rides with me.
8. ____ All of them goes to school.

9. ____ Tony likes Mary.
10. ____ That movie was awesome.

EXERCISE 2

A. Directions: Underline the correct verb in these sentences.

1. The girl or her sisters (watch, watches) television every day.
2. Rob and his brothers (doesn't, don't) like sports.
3. His classmates (study, studies) before a test.
4. One of the cookies (is, are) missing.
5. A lady with 10 cats (live, lives) in that big house.
6. Mumps (is, are) very serious.
7. The committee (decide, decides) when to adjourn.
8. Our team (is, are) the best.
9. Everybody (enjoy, enjoys) a good song.
10. Either (is, are) suitable.

B. Directions: Put a C if the sentence is correct, an X if it is not correct.

1. ____ Cats and dogs love to run.
2. ____ He don't like chocolate.
3. ____ Her friends or Sarah excel at volleyball.
4. ____ Each of these have been ruined.
5. ____ Trousers are baggy now.
6. ____ The students, as well as the teacher, are nervous about the test.
7. ____ The news are on at 10.

8. ____ My family are a lot of fun.
9. ____ Mathematics is hard for many.
10. ____ The director, with all the cast members, works very hard.

D. REFERENCES

<https://7esl.com/subject-verb-agreement/>

<https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/parts-of-speech/verbs/quiz-in-subject-verb-agreement.html>