




SENTENCE CORRECTION

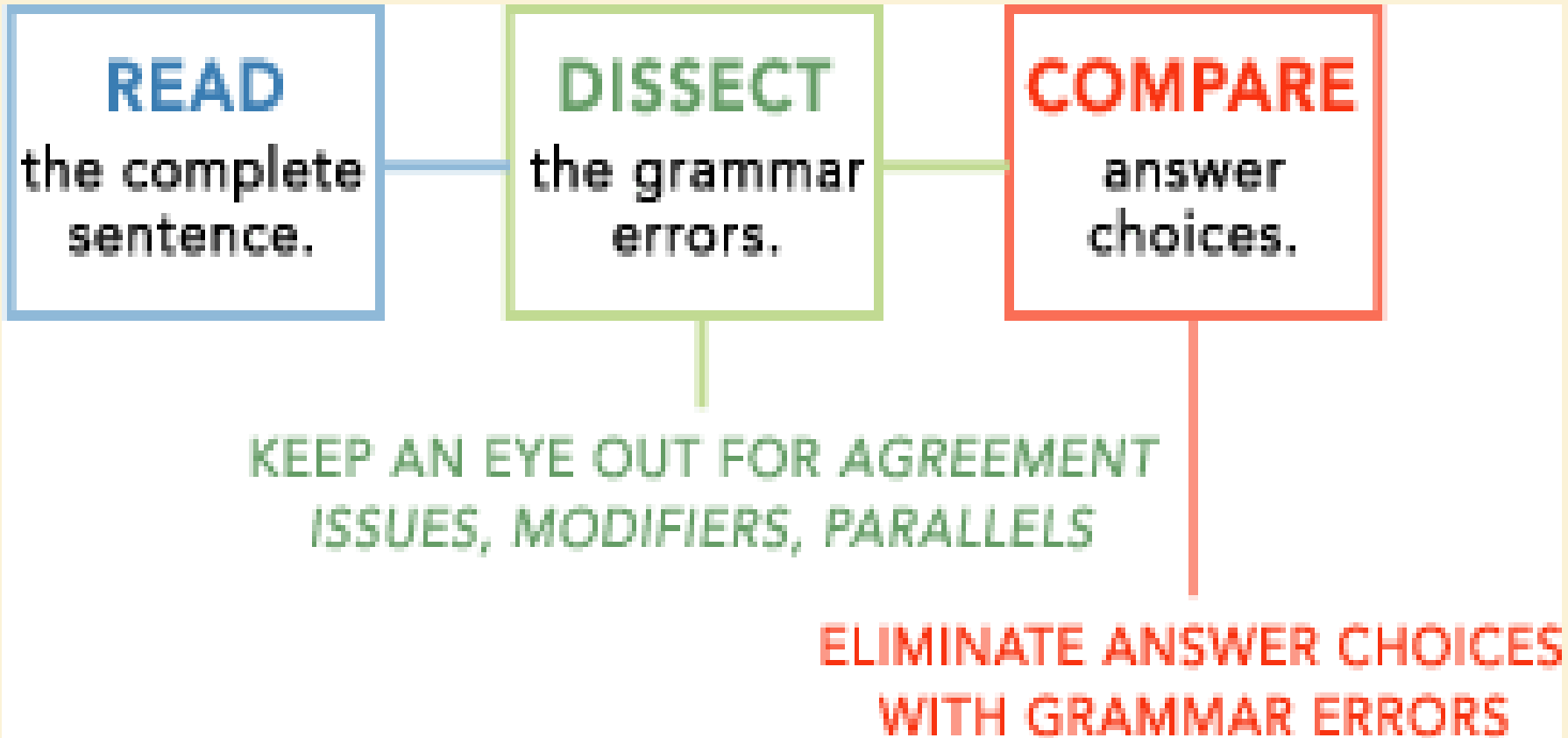
Tips and Tricks



Proper written English often differs from spoken English, the correct answer will not always be the one that sounds the best to you. You cannot rely on your ear alone; you must become familiar with the grammar rules of written English.

- Sentence Correction questions contain discrete, identifiable errors. Be on the lookout for sentences containing two or three errors. Just because an answer choice corrects one error in the sentence doesn't necessarily mean it's the right choice. The best answer will correct *all* errors in the original sentence.
- Sentence Correction answer choices are variations of the correct answer. Incorrect answers will almost always be identifiable as such. Even if an answer choice sounds strange, don't rush to eliminate it unless you can find a definite error.

THREE-STEP METHOD TO SENTENCE CORRECTION QUESTIONS:



READ

- **Read the entire sentence.** Do not simply read the underlined part of the sentence, because context may be important in determining the correct answer. **Choice (A) will always be a copy of the original underlined part of the sentence.** If you cannot find any errors, grammatical or otherwise, in the original sentence, choose (A) and move on.

Don't worry about spelling, capitalization, or punctuation; they are not covered in Sentence Correction questions. If you do find an error in the underlined portion, or if you're not 100% sure, proceed to step two.

DISSECT

- **Look for clues indicating which grammar rule the question is testing.** These grammar rules and clues will be covered in more detail in the next section.

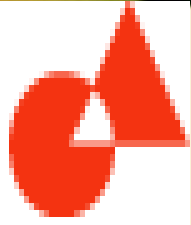
Keep an eye out for the following issues:

Agreement: Look for pronouns, verbs, and nouns — do they agree?

Modifiers: Look for introductory phrases set off by a comma — is the modifier used correctly?

Parallels: Look for commas separating words in a list as well as expressions such as "*not only...but also*"; "*both...and*"; "*either...or*"; "*neither...nor*" — is everything parallel?

COMPARE



- **Look for the answer choice that preserves the meaning of the original sentence and fixes its errors without creating any new ones.** Eliminate answer choices with grammatical errors.

EIGHT ERROR TYPES

1. Subject-Verb Agreement
2. Pronoun Agreement
3. Modifiers
4. Parallelism
5. Comparisons
6. Redundancy
7. Error of Participles
8. Verb Time Sequences

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

- Singular subjects must be paired with singular verbs, and plural subjects with plural verbs. Agreement allows us to show who's doing what in a sentence by indicating which parts of the sentence go together.

The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.

NOUN (SUBJECT)

VERB

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

- Singular verbs generally have an "s" at the end. Plural **verbs** do not. **Nouns** are the opposite:

John (singular noun) walks (singular verb)

Cars (plural noun) drive (plural verb)

Pronouns must match as well.

He walks

They drive



POLL QUESTION

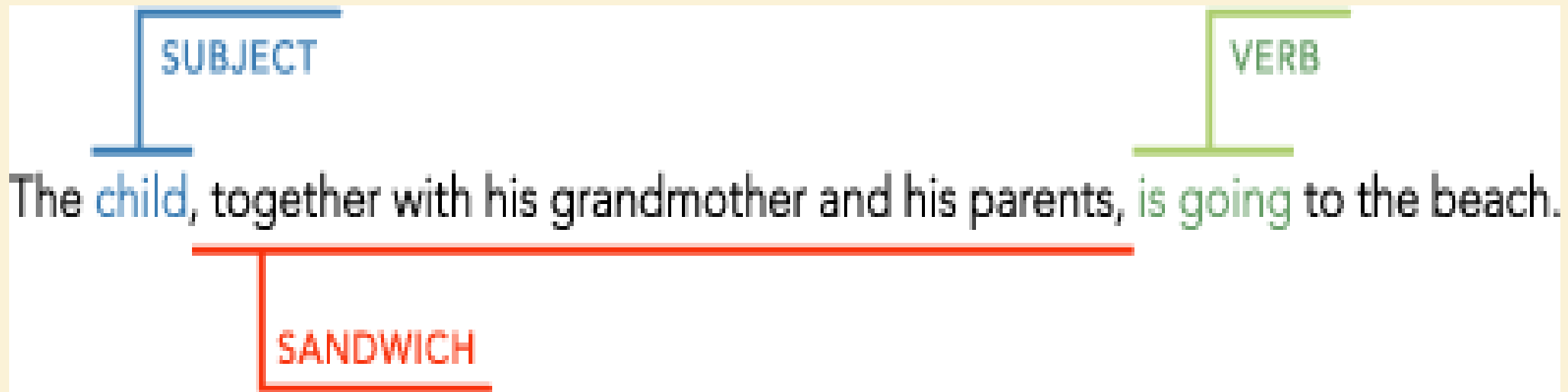
- The boy, among many friends, celebrate his birthday in lavish style.
 - a. having been celebrated
 - b. is celebrated
 - c. celebrates
 - d. celebrate
 - e. is celebrate

POLL QUESTION

- The boy, among many friends, celebrate his birthday in lavish style.
 - a. having been celebrated
 - b. is celebrated
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SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

In the sentence below, the accompanying phrase **his grandmother and his parents** only provides extra information and does not alter the grammatical relationship between the subject **child** and the verb **is**.



SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Take a look at the following sentence and decide which one is correct.

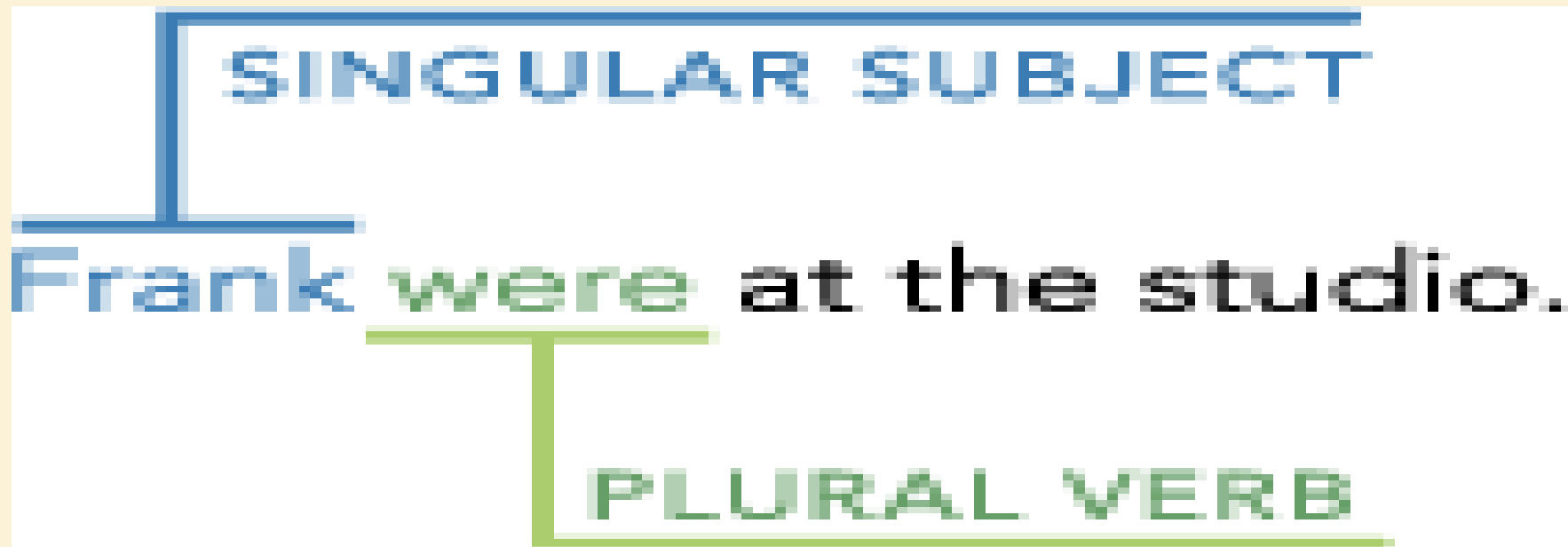
*Frank, accompanied by his students, (**were** / **was**) at the studio.*

Frank, ~~accompanied by his students,~~ were at the studio.

SUBJECT **VERB**

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

To simplify the task of comparing the newly-identified subject and its governing verb, we'll next erase the crossed-out clause. We're left with the following:



POLL QUESTION

- The teenager, along with her classmates, object to the school's use of uniforms beginning next year.
A.The teenager, along with her classmates, objects
B.The teenager along with her classmates objects
C.The teenager along with her classmates, objects
D.The teenager along with her classmates object

POLL QUESTION

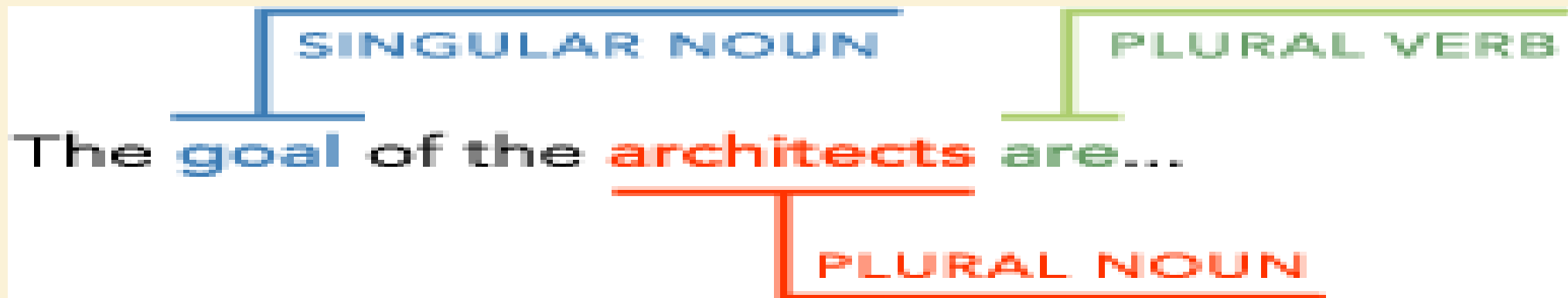
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- B. The teenager along with her classmates objects
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SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Prepositional Phrases

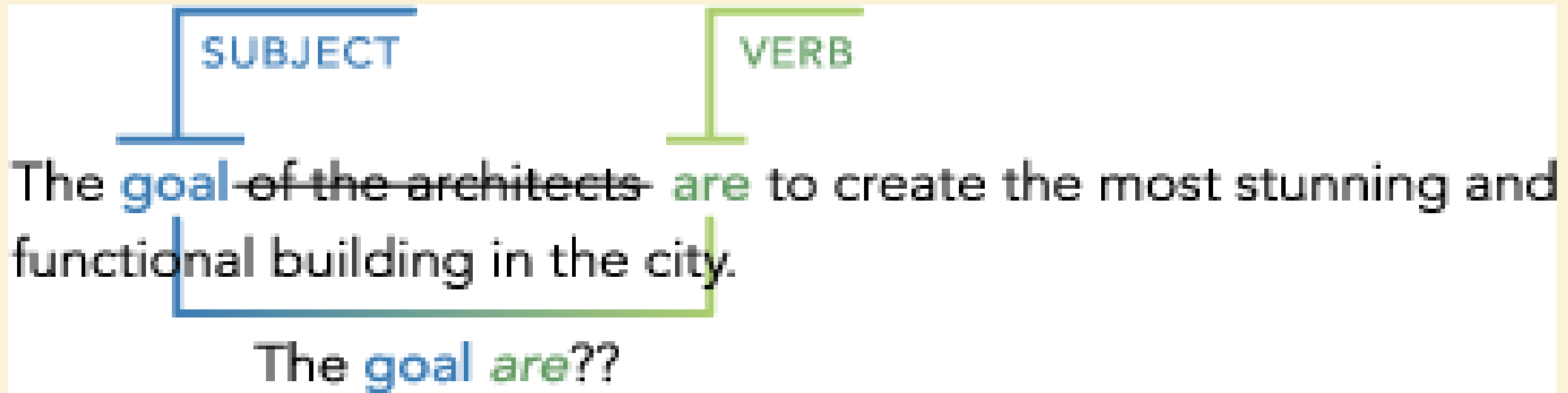
Many modifying phrases will begin with a preposition: *like, as, in, of, to, between, etc.*

The goal of the architects are to create the most stunning and functional building in the city.



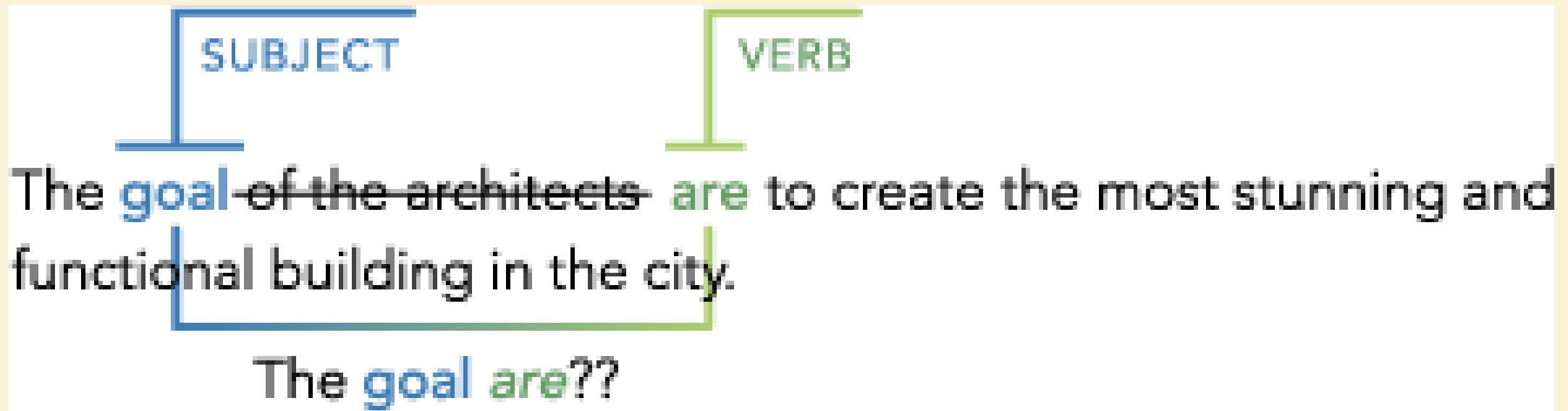
SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

If the plural noun **architects** is the subject, then the plural verb **are** is correct. But if the singular noun **goal** is the subject, then the plural noun **are** is incorrect: we would need the singular verb **is** instead.



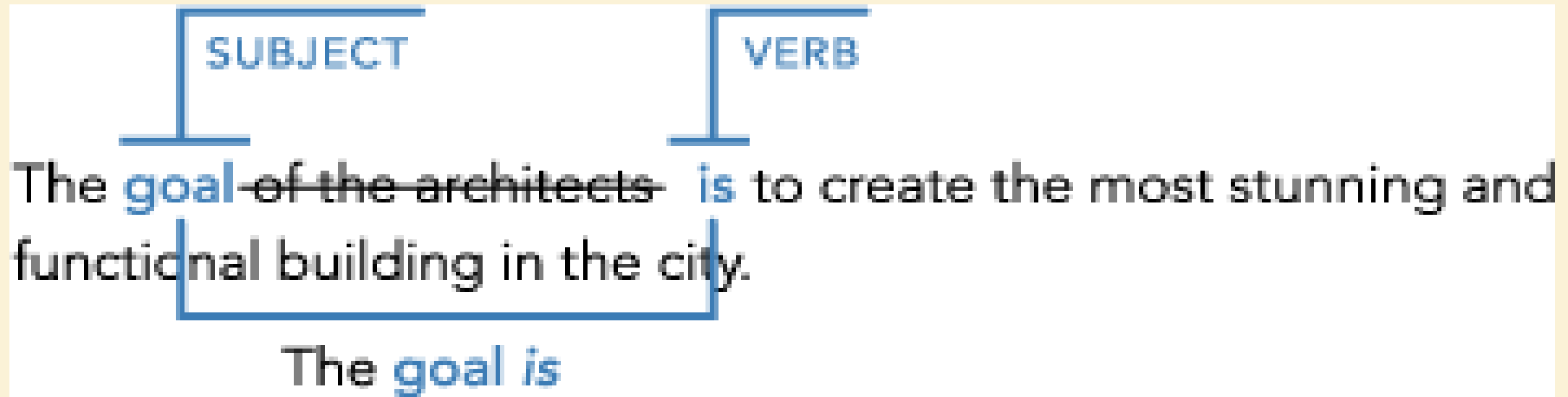
SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

If the plural noun **architects** is the subject, then the plural verb **are** is correct. But if the singular noun **goal** is the subject, then the plural noun **are** is incorrect: we would need the singular verb **is** instead.



SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Once the filler phrase is crossed out, we can see that the plural verb **are** is not correct, because **goal**, a singular noun, is the subject of the sentence. The correct verb is the singular verb **is**:



POLL QUESTION

- According to industry analysts, the recent growth in the number of hybrid motor vehicles in major metropolitan areas are likely to accelerate in the future.
 - A. the number of hybrid motor vehicles in major metropolitan areas are
 - B. the numbers of hybrid motor vehicles in major metropolitan areas are
 - C. the number of hybrid motor vehicles in major metropolitan areas is
 - D. the numbers of hybrid motor vehicles in major metropolitan areas is
 - E. hybrid motor vehicles' numbers in major metropolitan areas are

POLL QUESTION

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SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Adjectival Clauses

Just like prepositional phrases, adjectival clauses add extra information to a sentence, which means that their contents cannot affect noun-verb agreement in the main part of the sentence.

*The book that I bought for my students (**tell** / **tells**) the story of a Russian immigrant's experience in the United States.*

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The portion of the sentence we're concerned with contains two verbs in addition to there being three possible subjects: two nouns and one pronoun.

*The book that I bought for my students (**tell** / **tells**) the story of a Russian immigrant's experience in the United States.*



SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

How do you know which noun is the subject and which verb is the main verb? First, cross out **for my students** since it is a prepositional phrase:

*The **book** that I **bought** ~~for my students~~ (**tells** / **tell**) the story of a Russian immigrant's experience in the United States.*

Next, cross out any groups of words beginning with the pronoun *that*:

*The **book** ~~that I bought~~ (**tells** / **tell**) the story of a Russian immigrant's experience in the United States.*

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Here, we are left with just one noun and one verb after crossing out the prepositional phrase and the adjectival clause:



Now that we've isolated the main clause subject and verb, we can solve the agreement problem. Since the subject, **book**, is singular, we need the singular verb **tells**.

POLL QUESTION

- Autocratic styles of leadership frequently annoys the people who must work under such leaders.
 - a. frequented annoying
 - b. frequent annoy
 - c. frequently annoy
 - d. frequent annoys
 - e. frequently annoys

POLL QUESTION

- Autocratic styles of leadership frequently annoys the people who must work under such leaders.
 - a. frequented annoying
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 - d. frequent annoys
- frequently annoys

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Collective nouns, such as *family, majority, audience,* and *committee*, are singular when they act in a collective fashion or represent one group.

List of Common Collective Nouns

army

audience

band (musical)

board (political)

cabinet (political)

choir

class

committee

company

corporation

clergy

council

crowd

department

enemy

group

herd

faculty

family

team

government

jury

majority

minority

public

school

senate

society

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

In the sentence below we are presented with the noun **majority**.

A **majority** of the shareholders **wants** the merger.

SINGULAR NOUN **SINGULAR VERB**

The **majority of shareholders** likely contains several shareholders; however, they are only spoken of as a group, not as individuals. There is no indication that the sentence is referring to the individuals within the majority – even though it comprises several people, the **majority** acts as one – as a singular entity. Therefore **majority** requires a singular verb, **wants**.

POLL QUESTION

Anyone who chooses to be part of our coalition to defend homeless people are required to sign several documents.

- A) people are required to sign
- B) people is required to sign**
- C) person is required to sign
- D) people are required, signing
- E) people is required, signing

POLL QUESTION

Anyone who chooses to be part of our coalition to defend homeless people are required to sign several documents.

- A)** people are required to sign
- B)** people is required to sign
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- D)** people are required, signing
- E)** people is required, signing

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

For the sake of contrast, let's take a look at a collective noun that requires a *plural verb*:

Collective nouns are plural when the members of the collective body act as individuals.



The sentence above describes the fighting that occurs between the individual members of the team. Because **team** refers to several individual members in this case, it is a plural noun, and therefore requires the plural verb **are** as a result.

POLL QUESTION

- Although the basketball team used their star players, the match was lost.
- a. Although the basketball team used their star players
- b. Although the star players were used by the basketball team
- c. The basketball team used its star players, although
- d. Although the basketball team used its star players
- e. The basketball team used their star players

POLL QUESTION

- Although the basketball team used their star players, the match was lost.
- a. Although the basketball team used their star players
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SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Basic rules for compound subjects:

- Phrases or words separated by "and" are plural;
- Phrases separated by "or" or "nor" are singular.

SEPARATED BY "AND"...

Ted, John and I are going.

MEANS PLURAL VERB...

In this example, we see a list of three names. **Because these names – Ted, John, I – are separated by the word and, the plural form of the verb is used.** The subject is plural because it refers to more than one person (place, thing, or event), and plural subjects require plural verbs.



POLL QUESTION

- John and Susan runs to the finish line as fast as possible.
 - a. are run
 - b. runs to the finish line
 - c. run to the finish line
 - d. having run to the finish line
 - e. running to the finish line

POLL QUESTION

- John and Susan runs to the finish line as fast as possible.
 - a. are run
 - b. runs to the finish line
 - c. run to the finish line
 - d. having run to the finish line
 - e. running to the finish line

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Pronouns

A. The following pronouns are always singular:

anyone	everything	something
anybody	whatever	no one
anything	whoever/whomever	nobody
everyone	someone	nothing
everybody	somebody	

Many of the words in this category can be broken down in a way that illustrates their singular nature:



SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

B. The following pronouns are always plural:

both

many

several

few

others

C. The following indefinite pronouns could be either singular or plural

some

none

most

any

all

For the pronouns in list **C**, you can't depend on memorization to tell you whether you need a singular or plural verb. Instead, you need to figure it out from the context. Eg.:

- **Some** of the bananas **are** brown.
- **Some** of the banana **is** brown.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Both sentences are correct. In the first sentence, **some** refers to several distinct objects:



Some of the bananas are brown.

If we have ten bananas, then **some of the bananas** means **many individual bananas**. In the second sentence, **some** refers to **part of one object**:

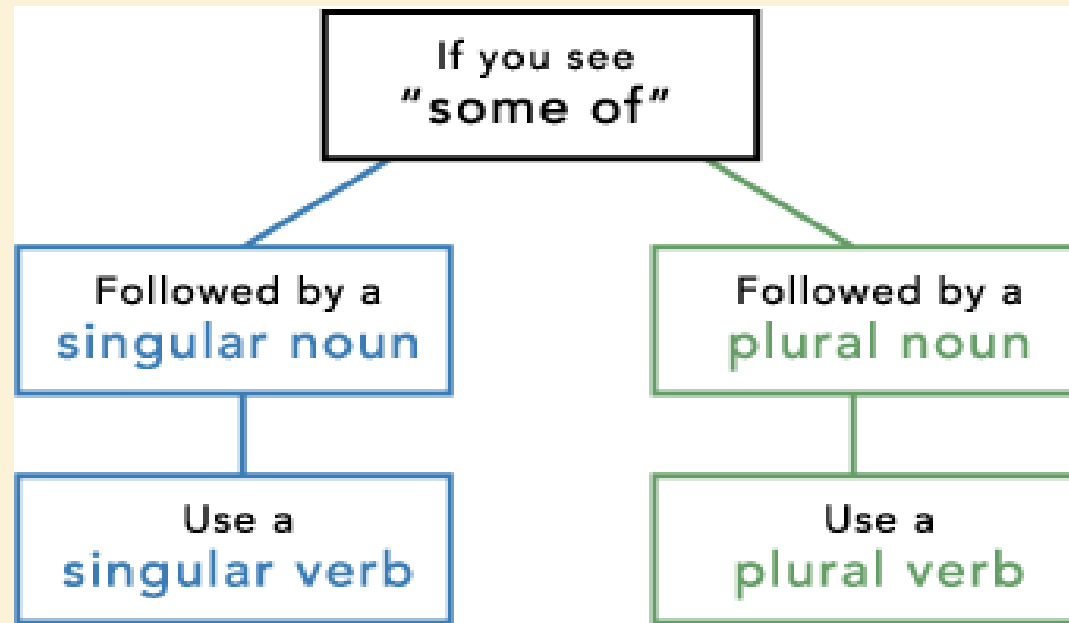


Some of the banana is brown.

One part of one banana is brown. In this sentence, **some** means **one part (of a banana)**, which is singular.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The general rule applies:



This trick works for the following pronouns: **some**, **all**, **any**, and **most**. These pronouns will almost always be followed by a noun or by the prepositional phrase "of + noun": some **of the dogs**, most **of the cake**, any **of the individuals**, etc. In either case, you can use the flowchart above to determine which verb to use.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The same principle applies even if the verb comes before the pronoun in the sentence. This often happens with the pronoun *any*.



The number of the noun determines the number of the verb. If a *singular* noun follows the pronoun, use a *singular* verb. If a *plural* noun follows the pronoun, use a *plural* verb.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The pronoun **none** follows slightly different rules. Consider these sentences, all of which are grammatically correct:

- **None** of the ice cream **was** left over.
- **None** of my friends **are** going to a play tonight.
- **None** of the inmates **was** given a fair trial.

Unlike agreement for the pronouns *some*, *all*, *any*, and *most*, agreement for *none* is not determined by the noun following it, but rather by context – whether the thing being spoken of is singular or plural. You should learn to use context to determine whether the quantity in question is singular or plural.

POLL QUESTION

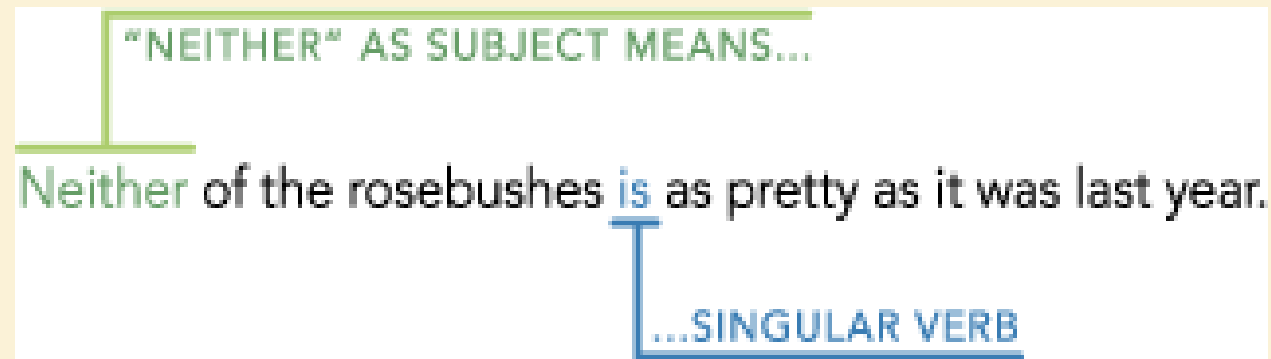
- Each of the students were sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- A. Each of the students have been sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- B. Each of the students were sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- C. Each of the students were sick last week, and so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- D. Each of the students was sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.

POLL QUESTION

- Each of the students were sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- A. Each of the students have been sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- B. Each of the students were sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- C. Each of the students were sick last week, and so the professor cancelled the lecture.
- D. Each of the students was sick last week, so the professor cancelled the lecture.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Neither and *either* always take singular verbs when acting as the subject of a sentence.



Here, **neither** is the subject and behaves like a singular noun. It requires the singular verb **is**.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

"EITHER ONE" MEANS...

Either of us is capable of doing the work.

...SINGULAR VERB

In this example, **Either** (or **Either one**) is the subject and behaves like a singular noun. It requires the singular verb **is**.



POLL QUESTION

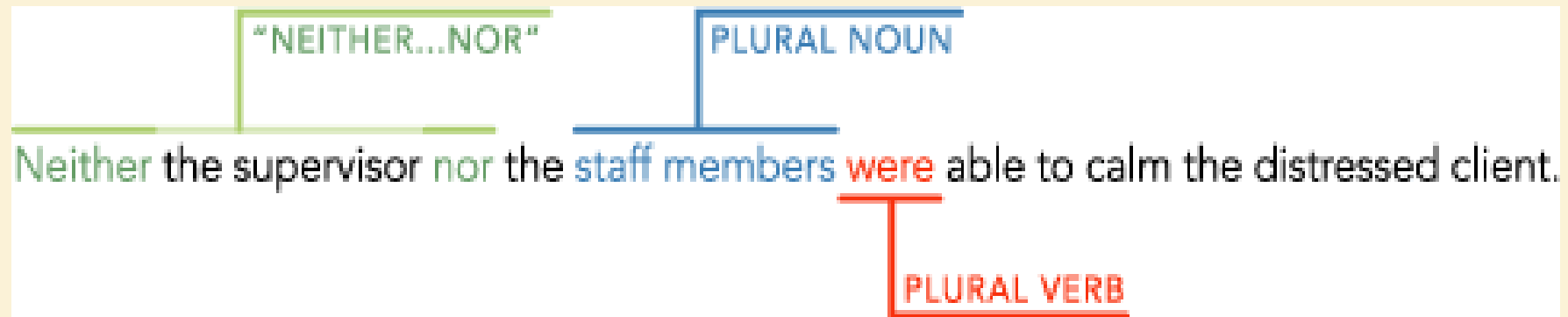
- Neither of our school's students nominated for the national spelling bee were able to win the competition.
- A) Neither of our school's students nominated for the national spelling bee were
- B) Neither of our school's students nominated for the national spelling bee was
- C) Neither of the students from our school nominated for the national spelling bee were
- D) Neither of the students nominated for the national spelling bee from our school were
- E) Neither one of our school's students who was nominated for the national spelling bee was

POLL QUESTION

- Neither of our school's students nominated for the national spelling bee were able to win the competition.
- A) Neither of our school's students nominated for the national spelling bee were
- **B)** Neither of our school's students nominated for the national spelling bee was
- C) Neither of the students from our school nominated for the national spelling bee were
- D) Neither of the students nominated for the national spelling bee from our school were
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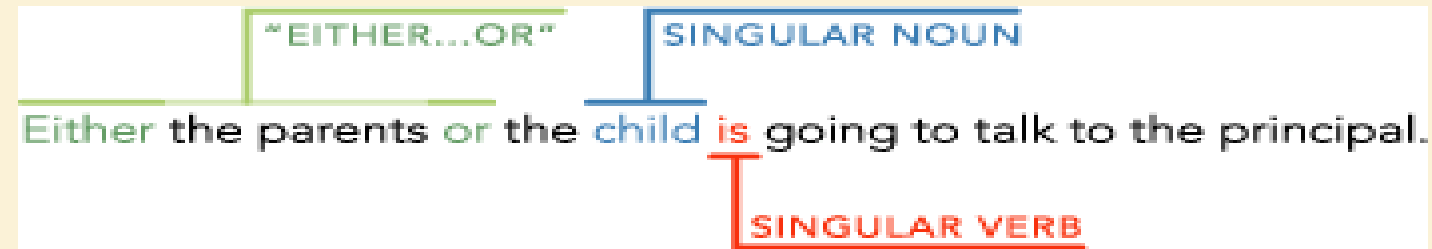
SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

If two subjects are joined by the correlative pairs "*Either...or*" or "*Neither...nor*," the verb should agree with the subject that is closer to it.



This "neither...nor" sentence contains two subjects: **supervisor** and **staff members**. The third noun, **client**, is the object. Since the latter subject, **staff members**, is plural, we need the plural verb **were**.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT



The verb must therefore agree with the subject closest which is the singular noun **child**. The proper verb form is the singular **is**.



POLL QUESTION

- We don't yet know whom it will be, but eventually either my brother or I are going to take over the family business.
- A) either my brother or I are going to take over the family business
- B) either my brother nor I are going to take over the family business
- C) either my brother or I will be going to take over the family business
- D) either my brother or I taking over the family business
- E) either my brother or I am going to take over the family business

POLL QUESTION

- We don't yet know whom it will be, but eventually either my brother or I are going to take over the family business.
- A) either my brother or I are going to take over the family business
- B) either my brother nor I are going to take over the family business
- C) either my brother or I will be going to take over the family business
- D) either my brother or I taking over the family business
- **E**) either my brother or I am going to take over the family business

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The sentence contains two verb constructions **is** and **can't help** plus three nouns/pronouns **reasons**, **I**, and **you**. The subject is the noun that comes directly after the first verb: **There + is/are + subject**. The rest of the sentence is a subordinate clause. Since the subject, **many reasons**, is plural, it takes the plural verb **are**.

Correct: There **are** many reasons why I can't help you.

The subordinate clause **why I can't help you** has no effect on subject-verb agreement in the main clause. This part of the sentence functions as a direct object.

POLL QUESTION

- Though most people are unaware of it, there is over a hundred varieties of coffee which grow throughout the world.
 - A. there are over a hundred varieties of coffee that grow throughout the world.
 - B. there is over a hundred varieties of coffees that grow throughout the world.
 - C. there is over a hundred varieties of coffee that grow throughout the world.
 - D. there are over a hundred varieties of coffee which grow throughout the world.

POLL QUESTION

- Though most people are unaware of it, there is over a hundred varieties of coffee which grow throughout the world.
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- C. there is over a hundred varieties of coffee that grow throughout the world.
- D. there are over a hundred varieties of coffee which grow throughout the world.

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

- When replacing any noun with a pronoun, the pronoun must match the noun it is replacing, or the *antecedent*.
- Also check if the pronoun is acting as the SUBJECT or the OBJECT of the sentence or clause.
- This aspect of pronoun formation is called **case** (*objective/subjective/possessive*).

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

X

How could SUBJECT *she* blame OBJECT *you* and OBJECT?? *he* for the accident?

The first two pronouns in this sentence are correct: *she* is the subjective form of the *her/she* pronoun, and *you* takes the same form for the objective and subjective cases, so it is also correct. However, *he* is not in the correct form: it is acting as the **object** of the sentence, but it is in the **subjective** form. We need the **objective** form of the pronoun, *him*.

✓

How could SUBJECT *she* blame OBJECT *you* and OBJECT *him* for the accident?

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

More examples

Incorrect: *Her* was better suited for the job.

Correct: *She* was better suited for the job.

Incorrect: John and *me* drank a bottle of wine.

Correct: John and *I* drank a bottle of wine.

Incorrect: The dinner was eaten by John and *I* .

Correct: The dinner was eaten by John and *me*.

POLL QUESTION

It is likely that you and I will not irritate she and John as they are very tolerant people.

- A)** you and I will not irritate she and John
- B)** you and me will not irritate she and John
- C)** you and I will not irritate John and her
- D)** you and me will not irritate John and her
- E)** you and myself will not irritate John and sh

POLL QUESTION

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- B)** you and me will not irritate she and John
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PRONOUN AGREEMENT

If the pronoun is acting as a subject, use *who*. If it is acting as an object, use *whom*.

To determine whether the pronoun is acting as the subject or object of the verb, try rearranging the sentence into a question, and then answer it. The form of the answer will tell you which version of the pronoun to use, subjective or objective.

Question: *Who/m did Kate marry?*

Answer: *Kate married **him**.*

You wouldn't say "Kate married *he*." Since the pronoun used in the answer is the objective "him," the pronoun in the original sentence should also be in the objective case: *whom*.

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

So,

Correct: *I don't know **whom** Kate married.*

Incorrect: *I don't know **who** Kate married.*

Another example

Question: *Who/m took out the trash?*

Answer: ***He** took out the trash.*

The person taking out the trash is the subject of the sentence. You wouldn't say "*Him* took out the trash," because "*him*" is objective. The indefinite pronoun must be in the subjective case: *Who*.

So,

Correct: ***Who** took out the trash?*

Incorrect: ***Whom** took out the trash?*

POLL QUESTION

I don't remember whom has the most stock in the company.

- A)** whom has the most stock
- B)** who have the most stock
- C)** whom have the more stock
- D)** who has the most stock
- E)** whose the most stock

POLL QUESTION

I don't remember whom has the most stock in the company.

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- B)** who have the most stock
- C)** whom have the more stock
- D)** who has the most stock
- E)** whose the most stock

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

- When a *pronoun* is the subject of the sentence, it must agree with the main verb in number.
- Like nouns, singular pronouns take singular verbs and plural pronouns take plural verbs.

When a pronoun is the subject of the sentence, you must check to see that it agrees with the main verb in number.

➤ *Everyone on the project (**has** / ~~have~~) to come to the meeting.*

The pronoun "everyone" is singular.

➤ *Many have tried, but few people (~~has~~ / **have**) been able to solve the puzzle.*

Many and few, both are plural pronouns, so each must have a plural verb have.

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

Sometimes, we have a compound subject where one subject is a noun and the other is a pronoun. In these cases, the verb must agree in number with whichever subject is closer to it. Consider the following sentences:

*Neither he nor his bodyguards (~~was~~ / **were**) there.*

The verb must agree with the plural noun *bodyguards*, so the plural verb *were* is correct.

*Neither his bodyguards nor he (~~were~~ / **was**) there.*

The singular pronoun "he" is closer to the verb, so the verb needs to be singular, too: "was."

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

Possessive pronouns such as *yours, theirs, his, hers* and *its*, must agree with their antecedents in *number* and *gender*. The antecedent for possessive pronouns is the noun or pronoun that is doing the possessing.

Incorrect: *I brought my book, and I'm glad to see that some of you brought **theirs**.*

Correct: *I brought my book, and I'm glad to see that some of you brought **yours**.*

Incorrect: *If anyone comes over to take your name, make sure that you take **theirs**.*

Correct: *If anyone comes over to take your name, make sure that you take **his or hers**.*



POLL QUESTION

- The loss of a parent at a young age can traumatize a person for the rest of your life.
 - a. for the rest of yourself's life.
 - b. for the rest of his or her life.
 - c. for the rest of your life.
 - d. for the rest of your living.
 - e. on the rest of your life.



POLL QUESTION

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 - d. for the rest of your living.
 - e. on the rest of your life.

ORDER OF PRONOUN

For all good things: (231)

- *You, he and I have achieved remarkable success.*
- *You, he and I; You and I or He and I*

For all bad things : (123)

- *I, you and he are responsible for the failure of the project.*
- *I, you and he; I and you or I and he*

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

A relative pronoun must refer to the noun or pronoun immediately preceding it (the antecedent).

- *Which* introduces non-essential clauses; *that* introduces essential clauses.
- *Who* refers to individuals; *that* and *which* refer to a group of persons, class, type, species, or one or more things.
- *Whose* is used to refer to both people and things.

Incorrect: *John was met at the door by a strange man, which he, being afraid, opened slowly.*

Correct: *John was met by a strange man at the door, which he opened slowly out of fear.*

POLL QUESTION

Marston was an early seventeenth-century dramatist, and *it* is likely that him and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other.

- A)** it is likely that him and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other
- B)** they likely borrowed ideas from each other
- C)** him and Shakespeare likely borrowed ideas from each other
- D)** it is likely that himself and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other
- E)** it is likely that he and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other

POLL QUESTION

Marston was an early seventeenth-century dramatist, and *it* is likely that him and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other.

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- C)** him and Shakespeare likely borrowed ideas from each other
- D)** it is likely that himself and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other
- E)** it is likely that he and Shakespeare borrowed ideas from each other

PRACTICE QUESTION

. The choir sang passionately, as they moved through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies.

A) as they moved through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

B) as they were moving through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

C) moving themselves through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

D) as it moved through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

E) as it moved through challenging four-part harmonies elaborately

PRACTICE QUESTION

. The choir sang passionately, as they moved through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies.

A) as they moved through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

B) as they were moving through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

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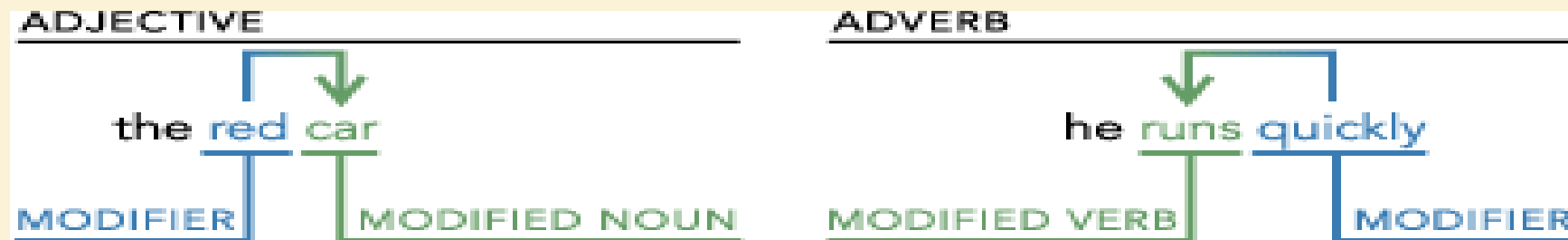
D) as it moved through elaborate and challenging four-part harmonies

E) as it moved through challenging four-part harmonies elaborately

MODIFIERS

Modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that restrict or provide extra information about other words, phrases, or clauses. Adjectives (the red car, the happy child) and adverbs (he runs quickly) are modifiers.

- **Adjectives modify nouns or pronouns.**
- **Adverbs modify verbs or adjectives.**



- Entire phrases can also be used as modifiers.
- Modifying phrases function in the same way as single-word modifiers, but because they're often buried in an already complicated sentence, they can be harder to spot than adjectives and adverbs.

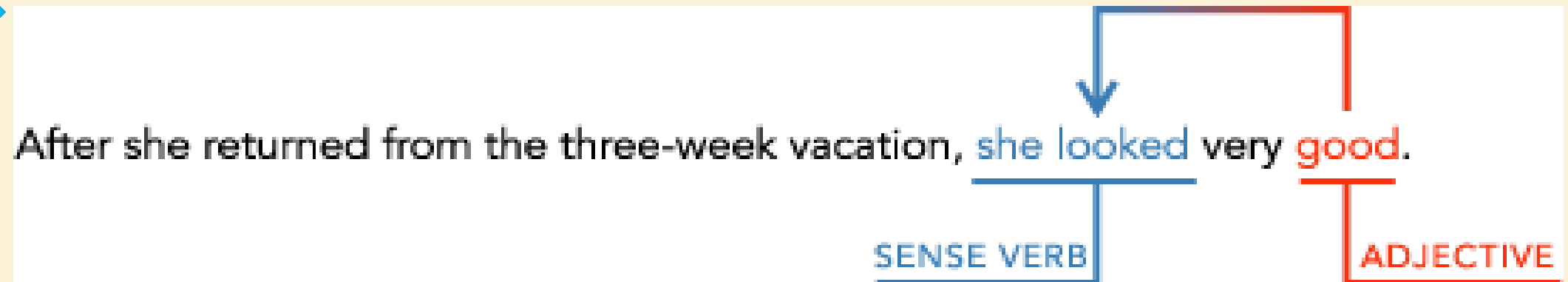
MODIFIERS

X



if you place an adverb (**well**) directly after the verb **looked**, then the adverb modifies the verb. But we don't want to describe a verb — we want to describe a noun (or pronoun), in this case a woman who just came back from vacation.

✓





POLL QUESTION


Coming upon the hills, the sun began setting behind the travelers.

- a) Coming upon the hills as the sun began setting behind the travelers.
- b) Coming upon the hills, the sun began setting behind the travelers.
- c) As the travelers came upon the hill, the sun began setting behind them.
- d) As the sun began setting, travelers coming upon the hills.
- e) Coming upon the hills, the sun set behind the travelers.

POLL QUESTION

Coming upon the hills, the sun began setting behind the travelers.

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- b) Coming upon the hills, the sun began setting behind the travelers.
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- e) Coming upon the hills, the sun set behind the travelers.

- 
- The two common types of modifier grammar errors are:-
 - 1. Misplaced Modifiers
 - 2. Dangling Modifiers

MODIFIERS

Modifiers must be placed as *close as possible* to the word or group of words they're modifying.

Incorrect: *Finally thinking clearly, **the book** was able to be understood by Rebecca.*

Correct: *Finally thinking clearly, **Rebecca** was able to understand the book.*

Misplaced modifiers won't always occur at the beginning of sentences; *any* descriptive phrase or clause is a potential misplaced modifier.

Pronouns like *which, that, who, whose, whom* often indicate modifying phrases.

Location of Modification – Misplaced Modifiers

Finally thinking clearly, the book was able to be understood by Rebecca.

The meaning of the sentence seems clear enough: Rebecca finally understood the book after she started thinking clearly. But if you look closely, you'll see that the introductory phrase actually refers to "the book," not "Rebecca":

*Finally thinking clearly, **the book** was able ...*

This construction makes it seem as if the book were thinking clearly. This is because of misplaced modifier.

MISPLACED MODIFIERS

- Misplaced modifiers lead to illogical sentences that are difficult to follow.

Misplaced	A small book sat on the desk that Sarah had read.
-----------	---

The modifier:	“that Sarah had read”
---------------	-----------------------

The Problem:	This modifier is misplaced because it modifies the desk. It sounds as if Sarah had read the desk.
--------------	---

Corrected:	A small book that Sarah had read sat on the desk
------------	--



Misplaced	The professor posted the notes for the students covered in class.
-----------	---

The Problem:	The modifier, “covered in class,” appears to modify “the students.” Because the students are not covered in class, this is a misplaced modifier.
--------------	--

Rehabilitated:	The professor posted the notes covered in class for the students.
----------------	---

POLL QUESTION

Coming around the corner, the skyscrapers came clearly into view across the river.

- a) Coming around the corner, the skyscrapers come clearly into view across the river.
- b) Comes around the corner, the skyscrapers came clearly into view across the river.
- c) Coming around the corner, the skyscrapers came clearly into view across the river.
- d) Coming around the corner, the skyscrapers are viewed clearly across the river.
- e) Coming around the corner, the people got a view of the skyscrapers across the river


POLL QUESTION

Coming around the corner, the skyscrapers came clearly into view across the river.

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- e) Coming around the corner, the people got a view of the skyscrapers across the river

DANGLING MODIFIERS

- Dangling Modifiers
- occur with -ing modifiers
- Modifiers dangle when they are not logically connected to the main part of the sentence.
 - State the subject right after the dangling modifier, or
 - Add the subject to the dangling phrase.
- A **dangling modifier** occurs when the intended **subject** of the modifier is missing from the sentence, and instead another subject appears in its place.

- 
- Incorrect-Fumbling in her purse, the keys could not be found .
 - CORRECT-
 - **Fumbling in her purse, she** could not find the keys.
 - **(OR) As she fumbled in her purse, the keys could not be found.**
 - **Recognizing dangling modifiers**
 - In a correct sentence, the subject (or doer) that is modified should immediately follow the comma after the modifier. In the example below, the introductory phrase modifies *Jane*, the subject of the main clause
 - **While driving to work, Jane** witnessed a car accident on the highway.

POLL QUESTION

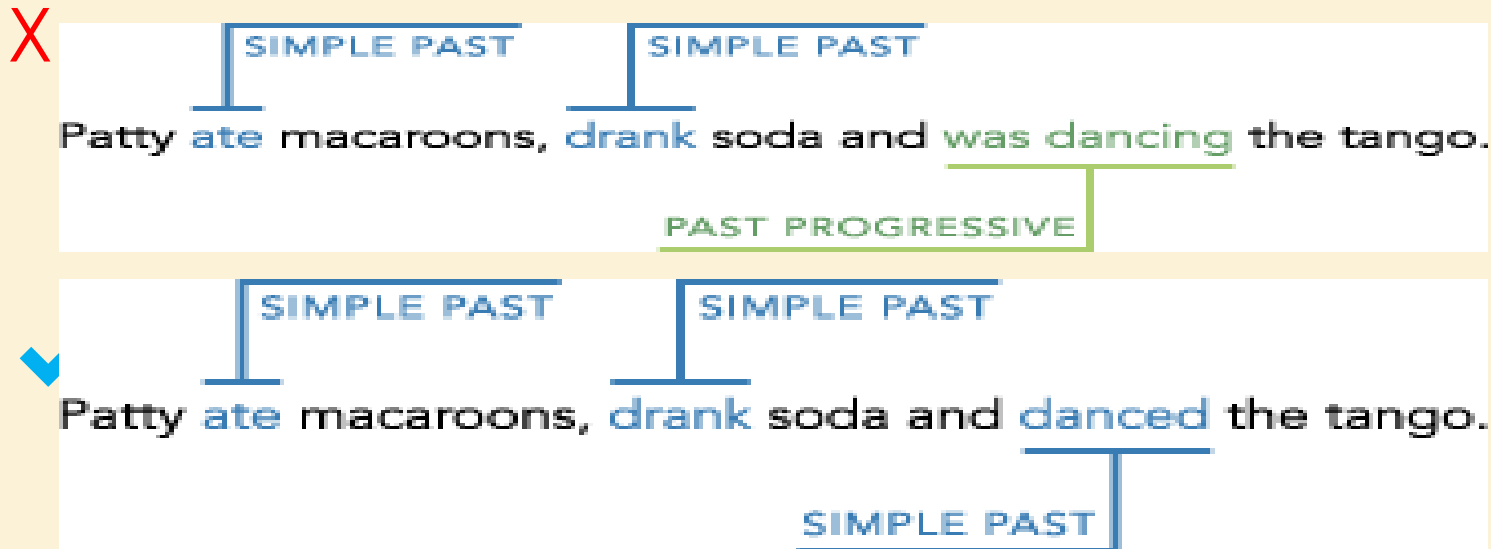
- Coming back to the farm, the gruesome scene was seen by everyone in the car.
 - a. everyone in the car saw the gruesome scene.
 - b. the gruesome scene being seen by everyone in the car.
 - c. the gruesome scene was seen by everyone at the car.
 - d. the gruesome scene was seen by everyone in the car.
 - e. the gruesome scene saw by everyone in the car.

POLL QUESTION

- Coming back to the farm, the gruesome scene was seen by everyone in the car.
 - a. everyone in the car saw the gruesome scene.
 - b. the gruesome scene being seen by everyone in the car.
 - c. the gruesome scene was seen by everyone at the car.
 - d. the gruesome scene was seen by everyone in the car.
 - e. the gruesome scene saw by everyone in the car.

PARALLELISM

In a sentence having more than one verb, all of them must agree with each other for the sentence to be correct.



Incorrect: He likes **to** swim, sail, and **to** dance.

Correct: He likes **to** swim, sail, and dance.

Correct: He likes **to** swim, **to** sail, and **to** dance.



POLL QUESTION

. The teacher sought new ways of teaching, believing her students would get more from lessons featuring playing, acting, and creativity.

- a. featuring playing, acting, and creativity.
- b. featuring playing, acting, and creating.
- c. featuring playing, acting, and creative things.
- d. featuring play, act, and creativity.
- e. featuring the playing, acting, and creativity



POLL QUESTION

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- a. featuring playing, acting, and creativity.
- b. featuring playing, acting, and creating.
- c. featuring playing, acting, and creative things.
- d. featuring play, act, and creativity.
- e. featuring the playing, acting, and creativity

PARALLELISM

Just like verbs, adverbs and adjectives in a list must agree.

X

On the morning of his fourth birthday, Johnny was giggly, energetic and couldn't wait
for the party to begin.

ADJECTIVE ADJECTIVE VERB

✓

On the morning of his fourth birthday, Johnny was giggly, energetic and very eager
for the party to begin.

ADJECTIVE ADJECTIVE ADJECTIVE

PARALLELISM

When you see comparison words or phrases such as "*more than*," "*less than*," "*although*," "*rather than*," etc, check that the things being compared are grammatically parallel.

Incorrect: *The professor published more papers last year than **were published by all his colleagues combined**.*

Correct: *The professor published more papers last year than **all his colleagues combined**.*

PARALLELISM

Sometimes, you'll come across comparisons between multiple pronouns or a noun and a pronoun. In many cases, in order for the pronouns to be parallel, the pronouns must be identical.

Incorrect: *Those who exercise in addition to maintaining a healthy diet are likely to be in better health than **the people who** maintain a healthy diet but don't exercise.*

Correct: *Those who exercise in addition to maintaining a healthy diet are likely to be in better health than **those who** maintain a healthy diet but don't exercise.*

POLL QUESTION

Stretching before physical workouts is important to improve flexibility and avoiding injury.

- a. is important to improve flexibility and being injured less.
- b. is important to both improve flexibility and also avoid injury.
- c. is important to improve flexibility and avoid injury.
- d. is important to improve flexibility and in the avoidance of injury.
- are important to improve flexibility and avoiding injury

POLL QUESTION

- Stretching before physical workouts is important to improve flexibility and avoiding injury.
 - a. is important to improve flexibility and being injured less.
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 - c. is important to improve flexibility and avoid injury.
 - d. is important to improve flexibility and in the avoidance of injury.
- are important to improve flexibility and avoiding injury

PARALLELISM

Use the same pronoun for both elements of the comparison.

Incorrect: *Those* who have strong work credentials and a college degree are more likely to be hired than **one** who has only the degree.

Correct: *Those* who have strong work credentials and a college degree are more likely to be hired than **those** who have only the degree.

Correct: *One* who has strong work credentials and a college degree is more likely to be hired than **one** who has only the degree.

Be consistent: whichever pronoun you choose, use it all the way through.

PARALLELISM

When you use correlative pairs of conjunctions in a sentence, make sure that the words or groups of words immediately following each conjunction are in the same form.

Incorrect: *Either I will attend the show, or they will be attending.*

Correct: *Either I will attend the show, or they will.*

Or

Either I will be attending the show, or they will be attending.

Incorrect: *The captain has assigned to the case not only all his men, but also a private detective.*

Correct: *The captain has not only assigned all his men to the case, but also hired a private detective.*

POLL QUESTION

Richard is not only a terrific pianist, but also great at playing hockey.

A) Richard is not only a terrific pianist, but also great at playing hockey.

B) Richard not only is a terrific pianist, but is also great at playing hockey.

C) Not only great at playing hockey, Richard also is a terrific pianist.

D) Richard is not only a terrific pianist, but also a great hockey player.

E) Also great at playing hockey, Richard is a terrific pianist.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. *His co-workers praised both his determination and the way he paid attention to detail.*

- A) and the way he paid attention to detail
- B) and also praised his attention to detail
- C) and his attention to detail
- D) they praised the way he paid attention to detail
- E) also they praised his attention to detail

2. *The art studio is spacious, pleasantly cluttered, and has good lighting.*

- A) and has good lighting
- B) and being well-lit
- C) and is lit well
- D) and well-lit
- E) and the lighting is good

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. *His co-workers praised both his determination and the way he paid attention to detail.*

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- B) and being well-lit
- C) and is lit well
- D) and well-lit
- E) and the lighting is good

Ans. 1-C, 2-D

PARALLELISM

3. *The school board requested that a waiver be obtained and that the residency requirements are reviewed.*

- A)** that the residency requirements are reviewed
- B)** the residency requirements will be reviewed
- C)** the residency requirements reviewed
- D)** to review the residency requirements
- E)** a review of the residency requirements

4. *Some of the many renovations set for Memorial Field in the coming years include building additional seating, improving safety, and the construction of a new varsity athletics center.*

- (A)** and the construction of a new varsity athletics center
- (B)** and constructing a new varsity athletics center
- (C)** and also the construction of a new varsity athletics center
- (D)** and a new varsity athletics center
- (E)** and a new varsity athletics center under construction

PARALLELISM

3. *The school board requested that a waiver be obtained and that the residency requirements are reviewed.*

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Ans. 3-C, 4-B

PARALLELISM

5. The philosophical doctrine of Incompatibility posits an inherent irreconcilability among the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs that preceded it, and the existence of free will.

A) among the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs that preceded it, and the existence of free will

B) between the doctrine of Determinism, holding each state of affairs as necessitated by the states of affairs that preceded it, and free will existing

C) in the doctrine of Determinism, which holds the idea that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs preceding, and the existence of free will

D) between the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs preceding it, and the existence of free will

E) among the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs may be necessitated by the states of affairs preceding it, and free will existing

PARALLELISM

5. The philosophical doctrine of Incompatibility posits an inherent irreconcilability among the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs that preceded it, and the existence of free will.

A) among the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs that preceded it, and the existence of free will

B) between the doctrine of Determinism, holding each state of affairs as necessitated by the states of affairs that preceded it, and free will existing

C) in the doctrine of Determinism, which holds the idea that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs preceding, and the existence of free will

D) between the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs is necessitated by the states of affairs preceding it, and the existence of free will

E) among the doctrine of Determinism, which holds that each state of affairs may be necessitated by the states of affairs preceding it, and free will existing

Ans. 5-D

COMPARISONS

A comparison can be faulty in two ways:

- (1) it is not logical, or
- (2) it is not grammatical.

Correcting either type of error *always* requires fixing the grammar. In other words, you may see a grammar error without a logical error; but you will never see a logical error without an accompanying grammar error.


COMPARISONS

Incorrect: *The view from this apartment is not nearly as spectacular as **that** mountain lodge.*

The sentence actually compares the view from the apartment to the lodge itself not the view from the lodge.

Correct: *The view from this apartment is not nearly as spectacular as **the one from** that mountain lodge.*

Correct: *The view from this apartment is not nearly as spectacular as **the view from** that mountain lodge.*



Even though he does not like crowds, John still likes New York City more than Sybil.

- A)** John still likes New York City more than Sybil
- B)** New York City is still liked more than Sybil by John
- C)** John is still liking New York City more than is Sybil
- D)** John still likes New York City more than Sybil does
- E)** New York City is still more liked by John than Sybil

COMPARISONS

Incorrect: *Shakespeare's plays vs. any other playwright.*

You have a person and his creations on one side, and just people on the other side. You need to add the creations to the right-hand side. There are two ways to do this:

Correct: *Shakespeare's plays vs. any other playwright's plays.*

Correct: *Shakespeare's plays vs. **those of** any other playwright.*

COMPARISONS

Incorrect: *Shakespeare's plays are different **from any other playwrights** of his era because they exhibit an exceptional mastery of verse.*

The phrase "those of" in this example makes it very clear that Shakespeare's plays are being compared to other playwrights' plays – not other playwrights.

Correct: *Shakespeare's plays are different **from those of any other playwrights of** his era because they exhibit an exceptional mastery of verse.*



POLL QUESTION

Choose the correct sentence from the following options.

- a. That company is considerably richest than that one.
- b. That company is considerable rich than that one.
- c. That company is considerable richest than that one.
- d. That company is considerably richer than that one

POLL QUESTION

Choose the correct sentence from the following options.

- a. That company is considerably richest than that one.
- b. That company is considerable rich than that one.
- c. That company is considerable richest than that one.
- d. That company is considerably richer than that one

COMPARISONS

A number of comparison-specific constructions call for you to always express ideas in parallel form.

Incorrect: Either drinking or to eat will do.

Correct: Either drinking or eating will do.

Incorrect: Neither *an interest in* history nor *to be adept* in a foreign language is going to help you learn to sing.

Correct: Neither *an interest in* history nor *adeptness* in a foreign language is going to help you learn to sing.

POLL QUESTION

In his work, George Santayana is more reminiscent of Plato's poetic narratives and Henry David Thoreau's obsessive detailing than Bertrand Russell's scientific precisions.

- A)** In his work, George Santayana is more reminiscent of
- B)** George Santayana writes more like
- C)** George Santayana reminds one more of
- D)** George Santayana's work is more reminiscent of
- E)** George Santayana's work more resembles that of

POLL QUESTION

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- D)** George Santayana's work is more reminiscent of
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REDUNDANCY

Redundancy is when you use more words than necessary to express something, especially words and/or phrases in the same sentence that mean the same thing.

Adverbs are often the source of egregious redundancies,: “shouted loudly”, “whispered softly”

- **Examples of Sentence correction:**

- **1.** Please combine the three departments into one.
The correct sentence would be- please combine the three departments.
“**Into one**” is redundant because on combining departments we will automatically get one
- **2.** Would you please repeat again what you said.
The correct sentence would be- would you please repeat what you said.
- **3.** The new innovations were startling.
The correct sentence would be- the innovations are startling.

POLL QUESTION

Darren spent most of the day sulking alone in his room, but however he came out once to eat dinner with his parents. No error

- a. No error
- b. to eat
- c. most of the day
- d. but however
- e. spent

POLL QUESTION

Darren spent most of the day sulking alone in his room, but however he came out once to eat dinner with his parents. No error

- a. No error
- b. to eat
- c. most of the day
- d. but however
- e. spent

MARK ERRORS

1. The end result of her stubbornness was that she didn't get dessert.
2. . We assembled together in the kitchen.
3. Jasper's twin sisters are exactly identical.
4. My mom cut the pizza into four quarters
5. . After much thought and consideration, Frances decided to major in astronomy.
6. I hope the DJ will replay my favorite song again.



POLL QUESTION

In addition to providing lunch for the children, the camp counselors also gave them dessert and played educational games with them. No error:

- a. them
- b. No error
- c. also
- d. the children, the
- e. played

POLL QUESTION

In addition to providing lunch for the children, the camp counselors also gave them dessert and played educational games with them. No error:

- a. them
- b. No error
- c. also
- d. the children, the
- e. played

ERROR OF PARTICIPLES

What are participles?

A **participle** is a word which is partly a verb and partly an adjective.

Hearing a loud noise, the boy woke up.

A common error in the use of participles

A participle is a verb-adjective. It should be related to a proper subject of reference. If the subject is lacking or if a wrong subject is used, the whole sentence would be wrong.

- Study the following sentence:
- **Having bitten the boy, the farmer killed the snake.**
- This sentence means that it was the farmer who bit the boy and not the snake. It should, therefore, be re-written as '*The snake having bitten the boy, the farmer killed it*'.

- Another example is given below:
- ***Driving down the road, a leopard leapt out in front of me.***
- This sentence means that it was the leopard which was driving down the road. It should, therefore, be rewritten as
- ***'As I was driving down the road, a leopard leapt out in front of me.'***

Note

The doer of the participle verb should not be distanced from it or interrupted by any other subject, noun or verb.

VERB TIME SEQUENCE

Tenses are useful for ordering sequences of events.

Incorrect: *After he finished his performance, he **had gone** to the party.*

This sentence has two verbs: *finished* (past tense) and *had gone* (past perfect).

The key word “after” tells us that this is a “first, second” ordering of two events that both happened in the **past**. Because both events are **completed**, you need the **simple past tense** for each verb: “*finished* his performance and *went* to the party”.

Correct: *After he finished his performance, he **went** to the party.*

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Larry was entertained and enlightened by the scintillating presentation.

- A) was entertained and enlightened
- B) entertained and was enlightened
- C) entertained and enlightened
- D) was entertaining and enlightened
- E) will entertain and enlighten

2. Valerie recalls her college years with such nostalgia that she often lost herself in reminiscence.

- A) she often lost herself in reminiscence
- B) she often had lost herself in reminiscence
- C) she often loses herself in reminiscence
- D) she often will be losing herself in reminiscence
- E) she often will have lost herself in reminiscence

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

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- C) she often loses herself in reminiscence
- D) she often will be losing herself in reminiscence
- E) she often will have lost herself in reminiscence

Ans. 1- A, 2- C

VERB TIME SEQUENCE

3. Before it will be made available to the public, the painting was sold to a private collector and is currently on hold at the auction house awaiting pick-up.

- A) Before it will be made available to the public
- B) Before it can be made available to the public
- C) Before it could be made available to the public
- D) Before it has been made available to the public
- E) Before it was made available to the public

4. In 79 BC, when Vesuvius erupted, the Villa of the Papyri was being covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and was preserved as the sole library of Antiquity.

- A) was being covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and was preserved
- B) was covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and was preserved
- C) was covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and had been preserved
- D) had been covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and is preserved
- E) is covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and was preserved

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- C) was covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and had been preserved
- D) had been covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and is preserved
- E) is covered in 90 feet of volcanic ash and was preserved

Ans. 3-C, 4-B

VERB TIME SEQUENCE

5. *In the history of life on Earth, there have been five mass extinctions; the most recent was the K-T extinction, which occurred at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out the non-avian dinosaurs, among many other species.*

A) the K-T extinction, which occurred at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out

B) the K-T extinction, which had occurred at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out

C) the K-T extinction, which, occurring at the end of the Cretaceous period, had wiped out

D) the K-T extinction, which began occurring at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out

E) the K-T extinction, which occurs at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out

VERB TIME SEQUENCE

5. *In the history of life on Earth, there have been five mass extinctions; the most recent was the K-T extinction, which occurred at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out the non-avian dinosaurs, among many other species.*

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- B)** the K-T extinction, which had occurred at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out
- C)** the K-T extinction, which, occurring at the end of the Cretaceous period, had wiped out
- D)** the K-T extinction, which began occurring at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out
- E)** the K-T extinction, which occurs at the end of the Cretaceous period and wiped out

Ans. 5-A