

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades of green, creating a modern and dynamic look. The shapes are primarily triangular and polygonal, with some areas appearing more translucent than others.

COMMON ERRORS IN ENGLISH

Identifying Common Errors in English

**A verb must agree with its subject in number and person.
In other words, the verb should be of the same number
and person as the subject in a sentence.**



1. Two or more singular subjects joined by 'and' take a plural verb.

Mohan and Sohan have passed.

He and his brother were absent.

He and I are great friends.


Time and tide wait for no man.

Wheat, rice and barley are cereals.

When the subject of a sentence is singular, the verb must also be singular. When the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural.

My brother likes to play chess. **(singular)**

My brothers like to play chess. **(plural)**



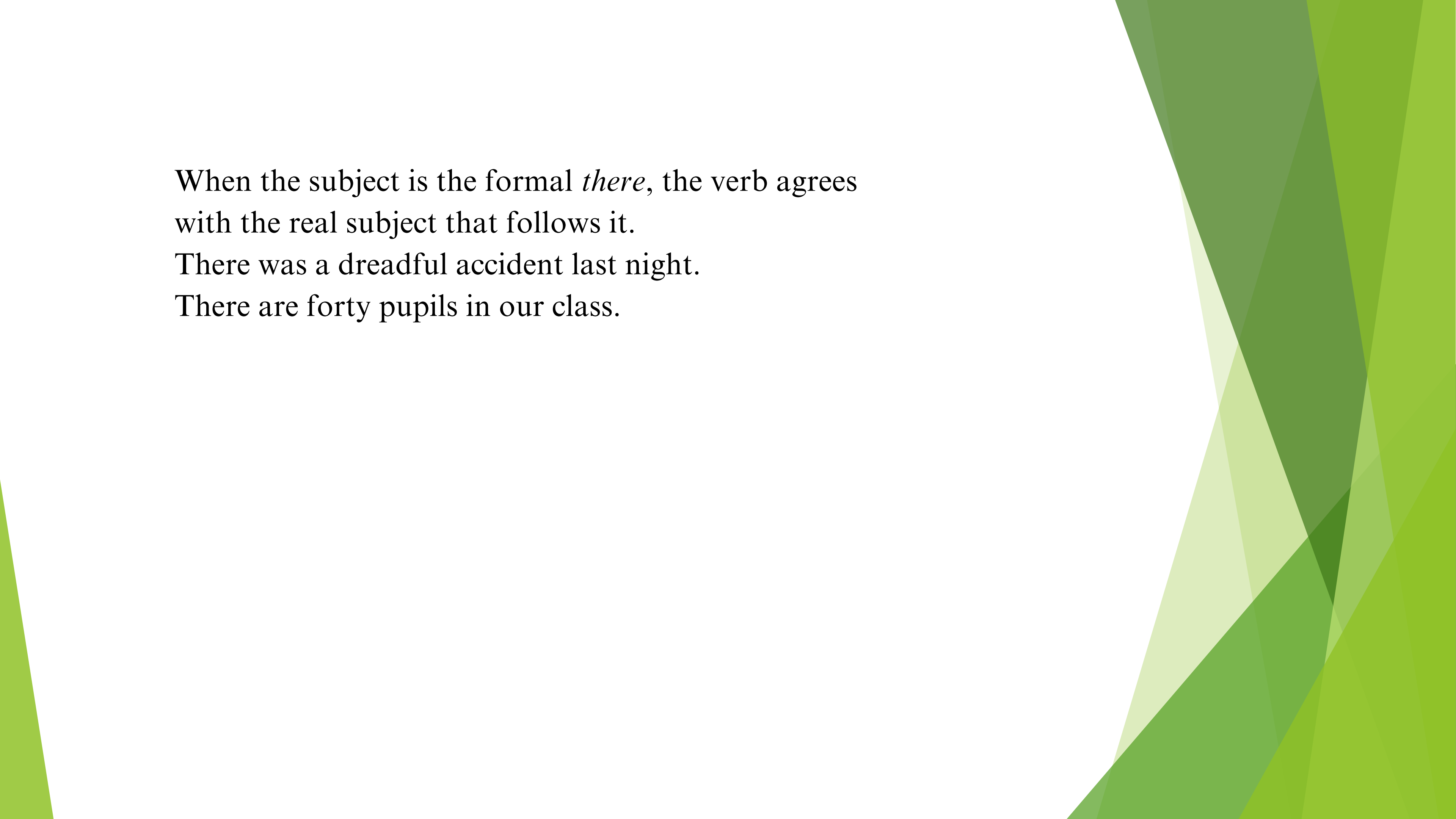
When the subject is *one of*, followed by a plural noun
(One of the pupils, One of the players), the verb is
singular, to agree with one.

One of the students in our class was punished by the
teacher.

One of my friends likes swimming.

But, when two or more nouns represent a compound name of one person or thing, then the compound is thought of as singular, and takes a singular verb.

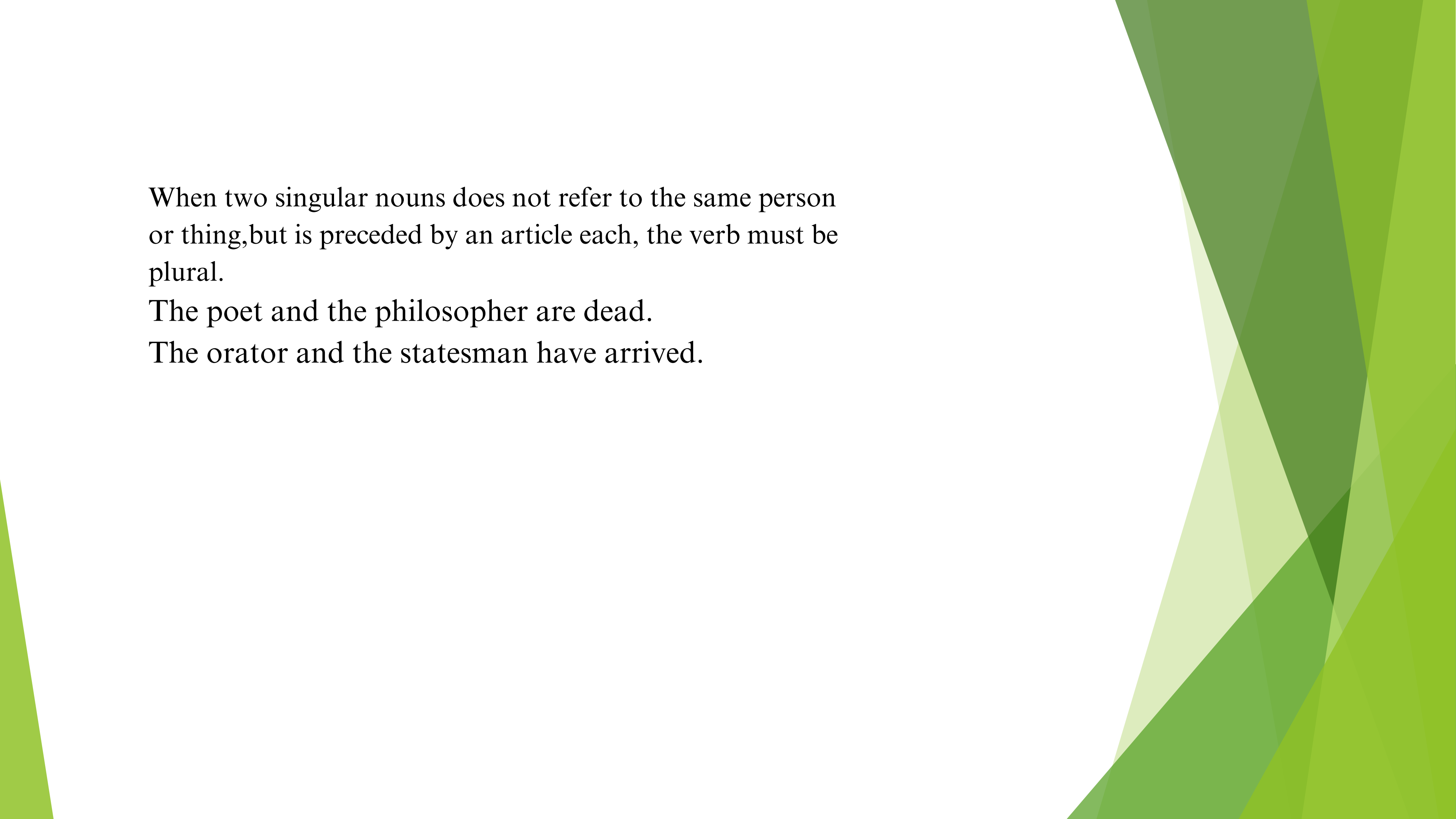
The Wheat, rice and barley are cereals
His friend and benefactor has come to see him.
Bread and butter is a wholesome food.
Slow and steady wins the race.
Bread and butter is his favourite food.
'Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.'

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When the subject is the formal *there*, the verb agrees with the real subject that follows it.

There was a dreadful accident last night.

There are forty pupils in our class.

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When two singular nouns does not refer to the same person or thing, but is preceded by an article each, the verb must be plural.

The poet and the philosopher are dead.

The orator and the statesman have arrived.

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A number of is always followed by a plural verb, since it means several or many.

There have been a number of accidents this year.

A large number of books are missing from the library.

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When two singular nouns joined by and are preceded by each or every, the verb is singular.

Each day and each hour brings us fresh anxiety.

Every man and every woman in the village is terrified.

A singular collective noun like *a crowd of people*, *a gang of thieves*, *a board of directors*, *a company of soldiers*, takes a singular verb.

There was a crowd of people in the street.

A gang of thieves was seen entering the village at night.

A new board of directors has been elected.

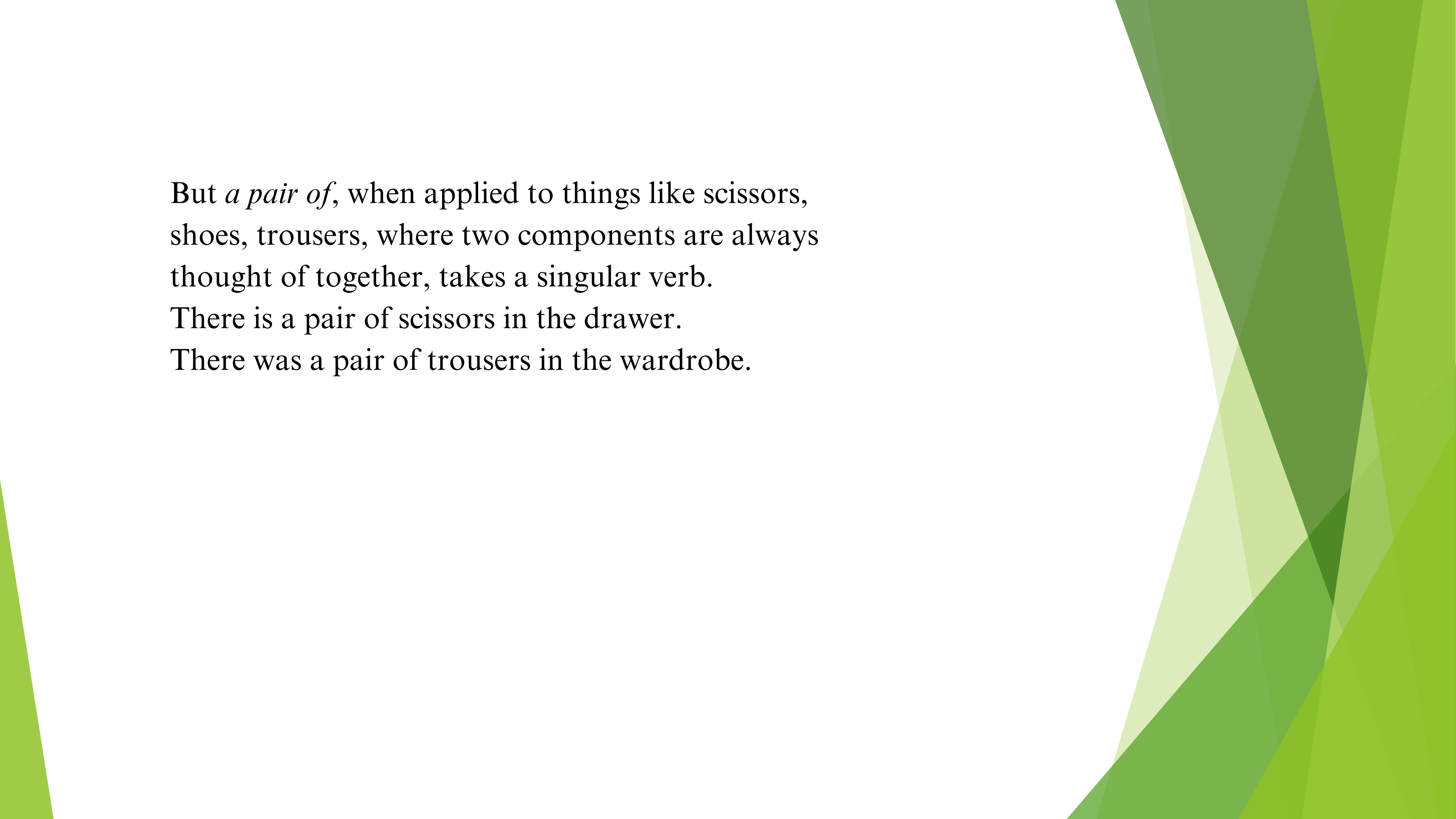
A flock of sheep was grazing in the field.

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A dozen, since it denotes a plural number, takes a plural verb.

There are a dozen eggs on the plate.

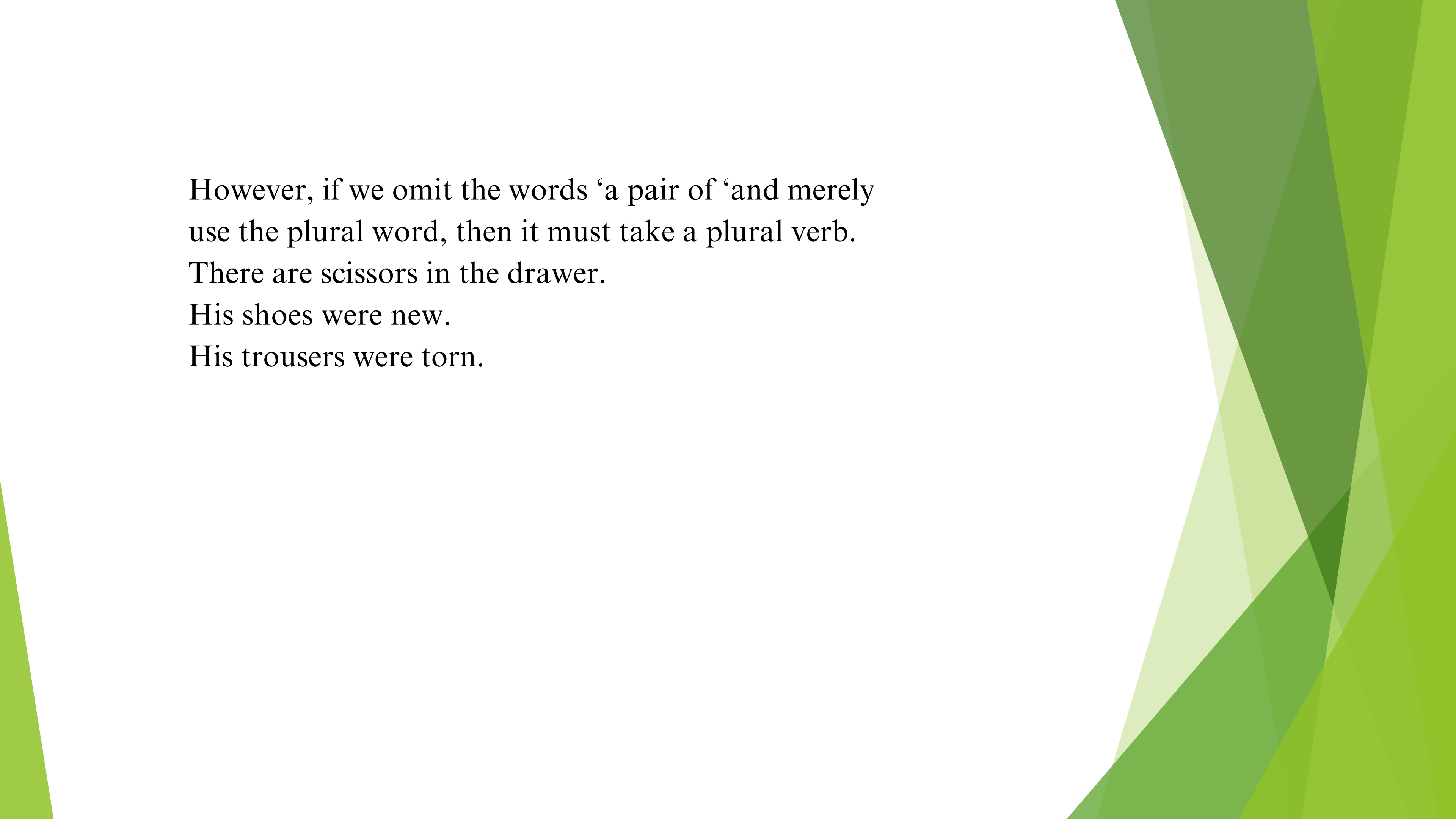
There were a dozen pencils in the drawer.

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But *a pair of*, when applied to things like scissors, shoes, trousers, where two components are always thought of together, takes a singular verb.

There is a pair of scissors in the drawer.

There was a pair of trousers in the wardrobe.

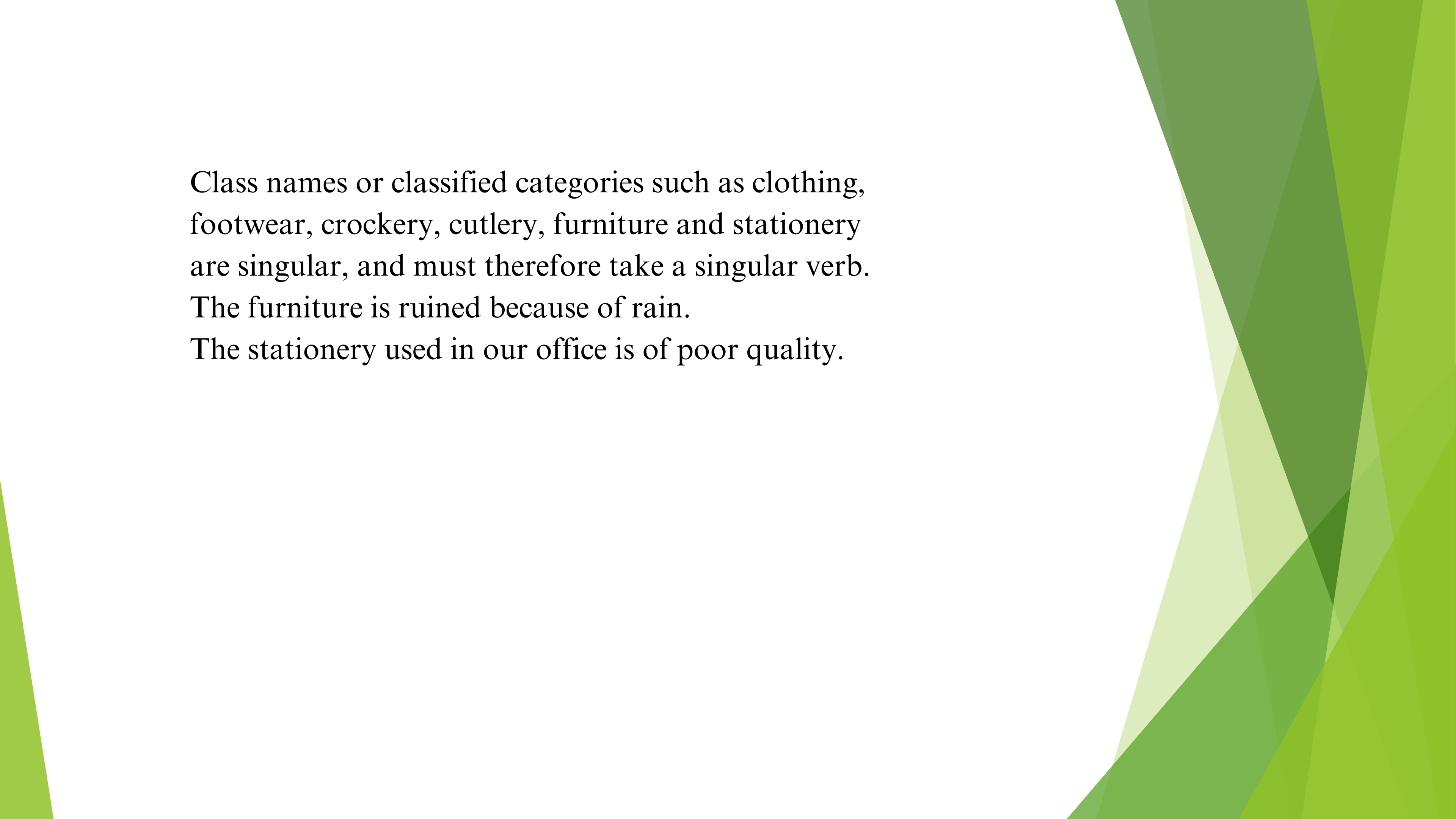
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However, if we omit the words ‘a pair of ‘and merely use the plural word, then it must take a plural verb.

There are scissors in the drawer.

His shoes were new.

His trousers were torn.

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Class names or classified categories such as clothing, footwear, crockery, cutlery, furniture and stationery are singular, and must therefore take a singular verb. The furniture is ruined because of rain. The stationery used in our office is of poor quality.

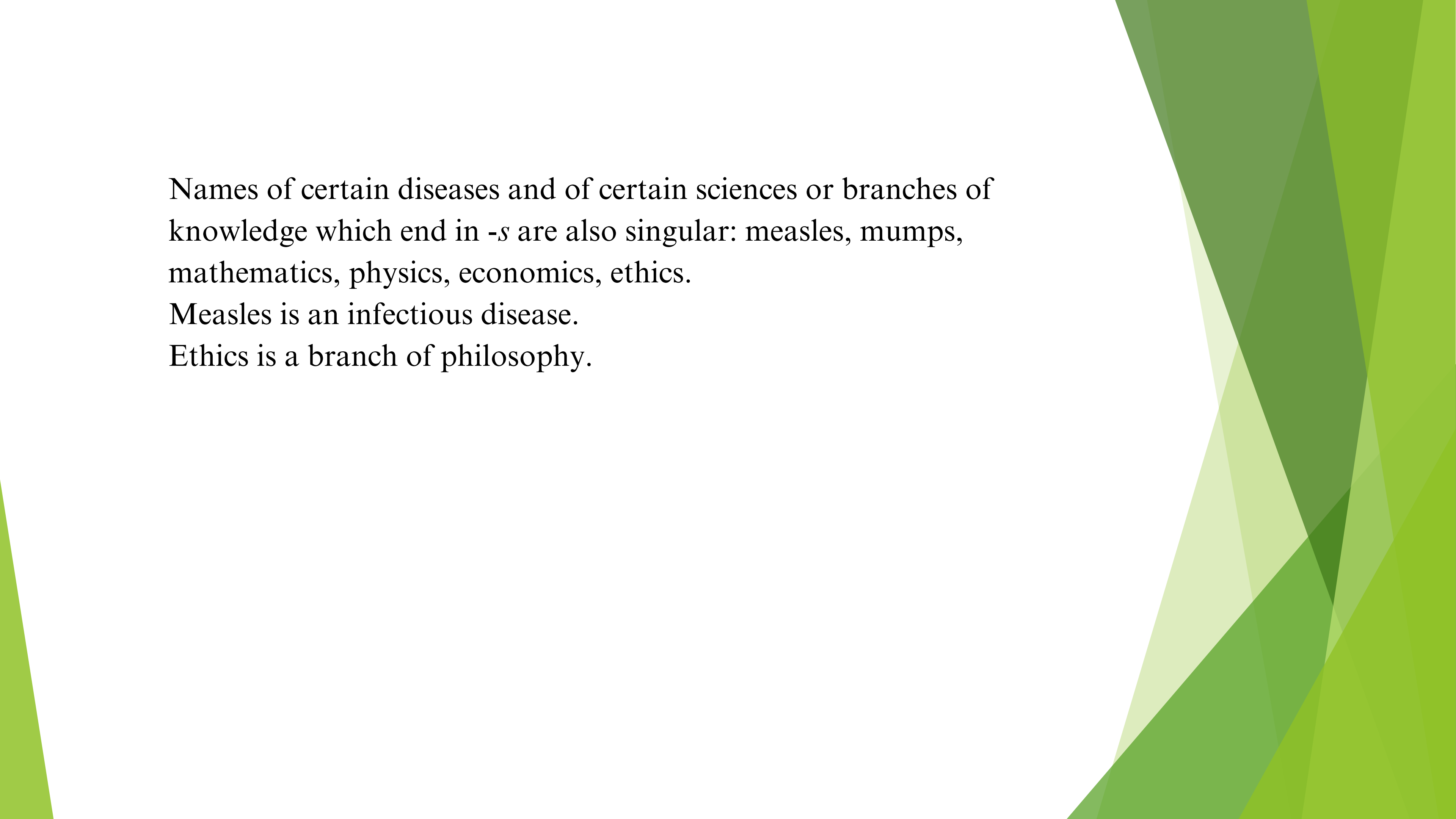
News, though it has a plural form, is always treated as singular, and advice and information are never used in the plural.

What is the latest news?

No news is good news.

He gave me much good advice. (Not many good advices)


Can you give us any information about this matter?

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Names of certain diseases and of certain sciences or branches of knowledge which end in -s are also singular: measles, mumps, mathematics, physics, economics, ethics.

Measles is an infectious disease.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy.



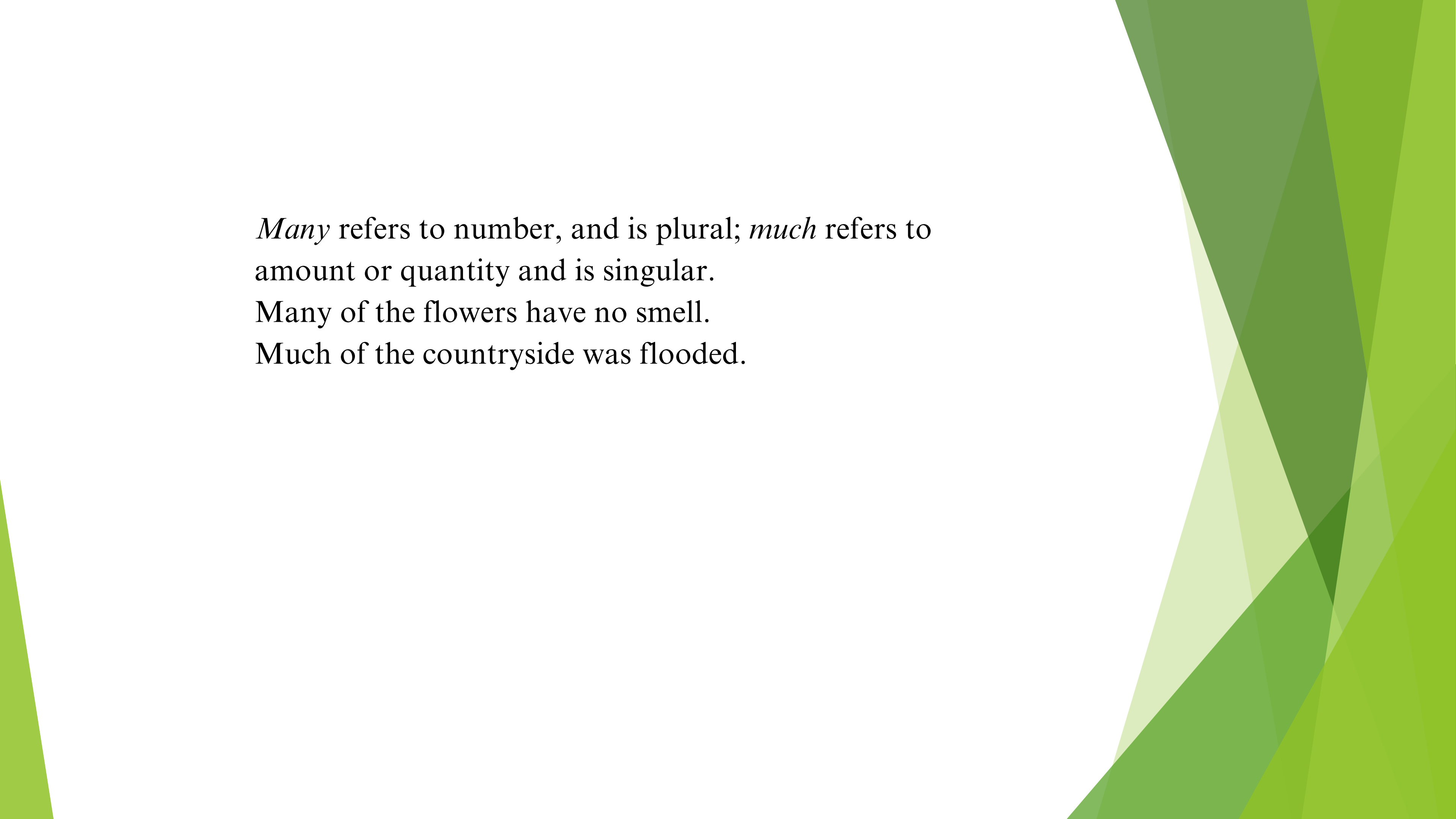
Some of, half of (and any other fraction of) take a plural verb if the reference is to number (i.e., to things that are countable), but a singular verb if the reference is to amount or quantity (i.e., non – countable things).

Some of the houses were dark and dingy.

Some of the milk was spilt on the floor.

Half of the eggs were rotten.


Half of the land was barren.

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Many refers to number, and is plural; *much* refers to amount or quantity and is singular.

Many of the flowers have no smell.

Much of the countryside was flooded.

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People and cattle are plural.
People in our village are hard-working.
The cattle were grazing in the field.

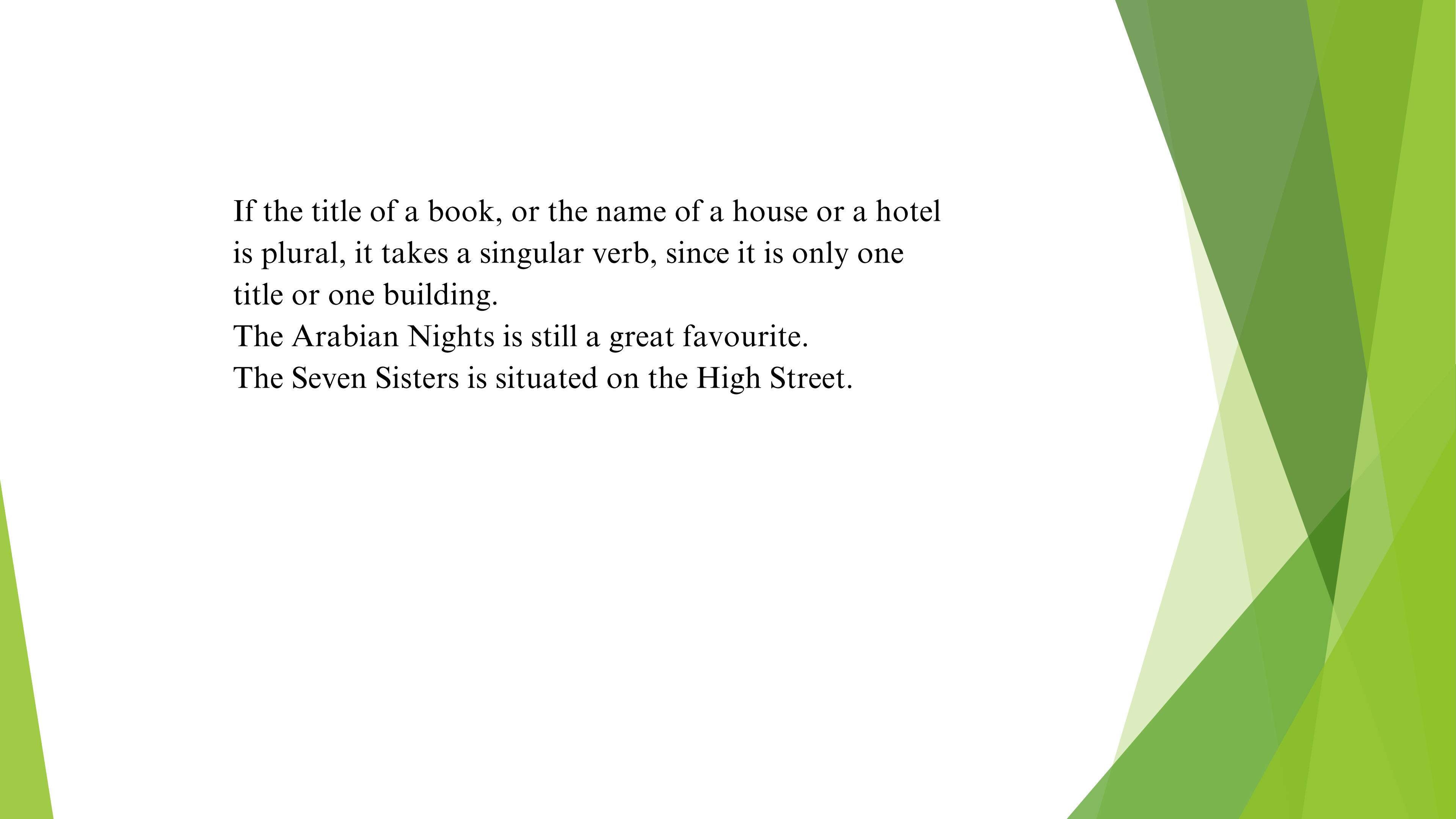


When a plural number applies to distances, weights, heights or amounts of money, taken as a whole, it is treated as a singular and takes a singular verb.

Ten miles is not a great distance these days. (not are)

Fifty grams of tea costs forty rupees. (not cost)

Ten thousand rupees is a lot of money. (not are)

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If the title of a book, or the name of a house or a hotel is plural, it takes a singular verb, since it is only one title or one building.

The Arabian Nights is still a great favourite.

The Seven Sisters is situated on the High Street.

Either, neither, each, everyone, many a must be followed by a verb in the singular.

Either of the two roads leads to the railway station.

Neither of the two applicants is suitable.

Each of these boys has done his best.

None of the applicants was found fit for the job.

Each of the players was garlanded at the end of the match

Each of these substances is found in India.

Each one of these man is reliable.

Every one of the boat's crew was drowned.

Many a man is tempted by gold.

In case of neither...nor, either...or, the verb is decided by the number of the noun closest to the verb

Either Mohan or Sohan is in the wrong

Ashok or his brother is to blame.

John or his brothers are to blame.

Neither the teacher nor his students were present.

Either the masters or the slaves are responsible.

Neither the teachers nor the Principal agrees to the raise in fee structure.

If two nouns are joined by with or as well as, the verb agrees with the first noun. In other words, if the first noun is singular, the verb must be singular, even if the second noun is plural.

Neel, as well as his brother, has won the prize.

Iron as well as gold is found in India.

Kindness as well as mercy allows it.

Metals as well as non-metals are expensive.

Brothers as well as sisters are in for a dispute.

The king, with all his ministers, was killed.

The ship with its crew was lost.

A collective noun generally takes singular verbs.

- The choir of singers was appreciated by the Principal.
- There is a fleet of cars parked in the No parking area.
- He sees the posse of Policemen every day.

A collective noun can also take a plural verb according to the contextual sense.

If the concept of oneness is mentioned, the verb should be singular; if the individuals of the collective noun are referred, then verb must be plural.

- The jury (= man of the jury) were divided in their opinions.
- The jury (= one body) has elected its president.
- The Council meets today in Town Hall.
- The Council that met in the Library were divided in their opinion.

Errors due of proximity: Often the verb is made to agree in number with a noun near it instead of its proper subject. This should be avoided.

- The behaviour of the children were excellent.(The verb here should be *was* (singular) in order for it to agree with *behaviour*)
- The cost of all these rare commodities have risen. (The verb here should be *has* (singular) in order for it to agree with *cost*)
- Not one of his films have ever been telecasted.(The verb here should be *has* (singular) in order for it to agree with *Not one*)

When a specific quantity, amount or fraction is considered as a whole and is preceded by a singular noun, the verb is generally singular.

The present scenario of two – thirds of the city *is* in ruins (It should not be *are*).

A thousand rupees *is* a good sum (It should not be *are*).

Four weeks *is* a good holiday (It should not be *are*).

Ten kilometers *is* not a long distance these days (It should not be *are*).

If a relative pronoun refers to a singular noun or pronoun, the verb used must be singular and vice versa. The verb that follows a relative pronoun always agrees in number and person with its antecedent.

He, who is rich must be helpful.(after the relative noun *who*, a singular verb should be used *ie is* and not *are*)

I, who am your Judge, will announce a verdict.(after the relative noun *who*, a singular verb should be used *ie am* and not *are*)

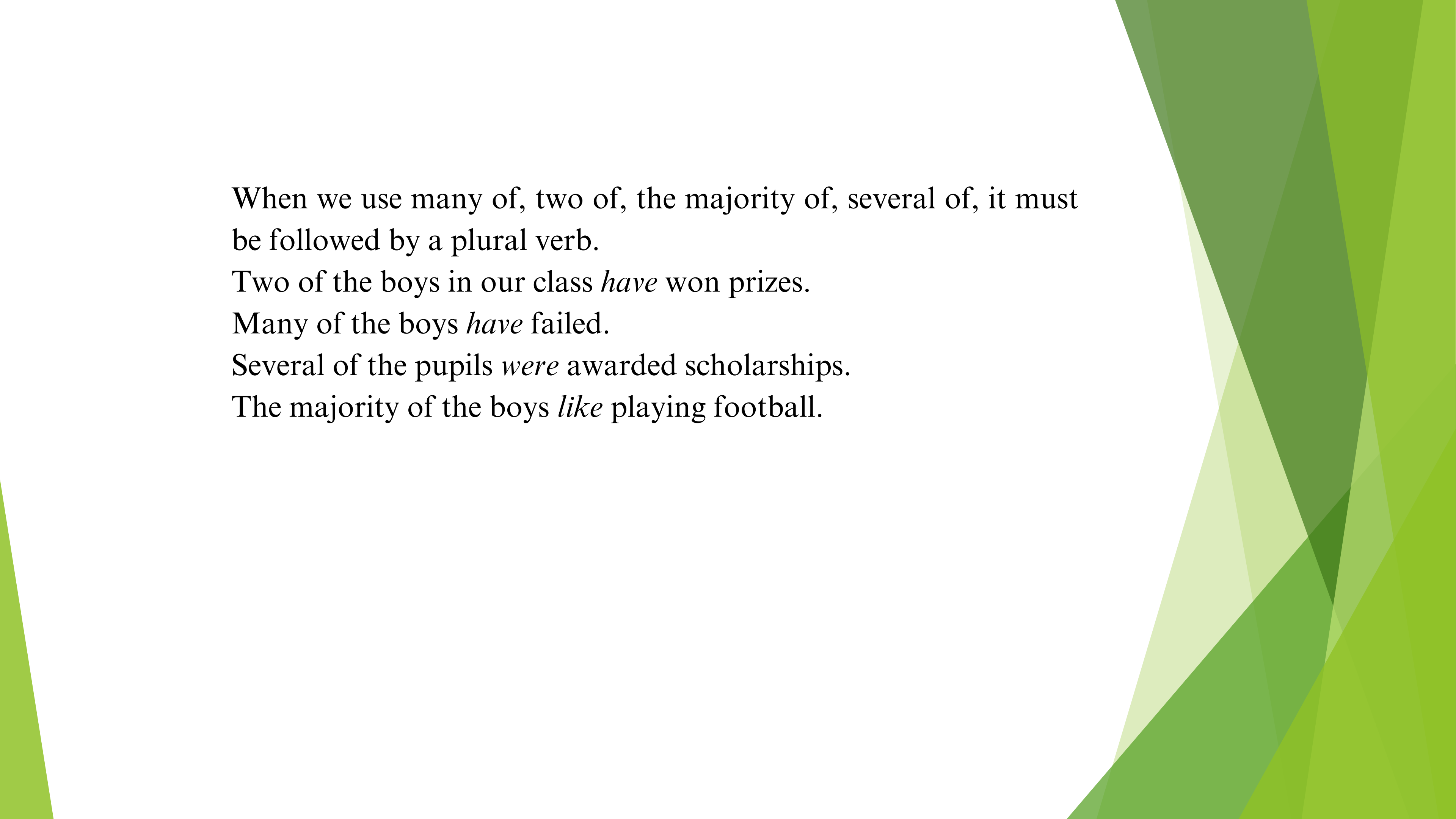
He is one of those doctors who *know* the details(not *knows*)

This is the only one of his articles that is (not are) worth reading.

When the subject is one of, followed by a plural noun (one of the pupils, one of the players), the verb is singular, to agree with one.

One of the constables *has been* shot dead.

One of the actors in the troupe *has* no mannerisms.

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When we use many of, two of, the majority of, several of, it must be followed by a plural verb.

Two of the boys in our class *have* won prizes.

Many of the boys *have* failed.

Several of the pupils *were* awarded scholarships.

The majority of the boys *like* playing football.

In the use of expressions like, most of, a lot of, plenty of, some of, half of, a plural verb is used when countable nouns are used. On the contrary they will take a singular verb if non- countable nouns are used.

It means these expressions take a plural verb when they denote number; they take a singular verb when they denote quantity or amount.

There were a lot of people at the concert.

There is plenty of time

Some of the furniture *was* eaten by the white ants.

Half of the rice *is* not cooked well.

Most of the time *was* spent in buying presents for the guests.

A lot of work still *remains* to be completed.

A great deal (of), a good deal (of), a large quantity (of) are always followed by a singular verb, since these expressions denote amount or quality.

A great deal of money was spent on the repairs of the old house.