

Simple Subjects

Teaching

The simple subject is the main word or words in the complete subject. Words that describe the subject are not part of the simple subject. In the following sentence, the simple subject is underlined.

People in a large city lead busy lives.

If a proper name is used as the subject, all parts of the name make up the simple subject.

Councilman Johnson in our ward cares about neighborhood concerns.

Identifying Simple Subjects

Underline the simple subject in each sentence.

1. Life in the city is often hectic.
2. Ms. Hale took a cab to the convention center.
3. The airport closed because of the storm.
4. Many unhappy passengers were left stranded.
5. Shuttle buses took passengers to the hotel.
6. A large truck blocked the street in front of the apartment building.
7. Main Street in the downtown area was under construction.
8. Football fans gathered for the first game in the new stadium.
9. Mayor Thomas attended the game as a special guest.
10. The express train to New York left at six o'clock.
11. Students from the university volunteered as reading tutors at the nearby school.
12. Our civic orchestra gave a free concert at Public Square.
13. The art museum has a new exhibit on Egyptian art.
14. Two new office buildings just opened yesterday.
15. The library in my neighborhood hosted a speech by a famous author.
16. Rush-hour traffic was slowed by the heavy rains.
17. An emergency medical helicopter landed at the hospital.
18. Samantha stopped at the mall to look for some shoes.
19. A slow-moving street cleaner backed up traffic on the freeway for miles.
20. Wu moved into an apartment near school.
21. The freighter from Greece slowly approached the pier.
22. People on the docks prepared for its arrival.
23. Cities, with all their activities, are never boring.

Lesson
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Agreement Problems in Sentences

Teaching

Subjects in Unusual Positions In questions, sentences beginning with *here* or *there*, or sentences in which an adjective, an adverb, or a phrase is placed first, the subject can be hard to find. Reorder the words in standard order to determine whether the verb should be singular or plural.

Question Does your **house** have a big yard?
Your **house** does have a big yard.

Here and There Here are the new **bushes**.
The new **bushes** are here.

Beginning Phrase Beyond the hedge lies a **fishpond**.
A **fishpond** lies beyond the hedge.

Predicate Nouns A **predicate noun** follows a linking verb and describes the subject. The verb must agree with the subject, not the predicate noun.

The **delight** of the gardener **is** the old rosebushes.
The old **rosebushes** **are** the gardener's delight.

Prepositional Phrases The subject of a verb is never part of a prepositional phrase. Mentally block out any words between the subject and verb. Make the verb agree with the subject.

This ~~pot of flowers~~ **blooms** in spring. (singular subject and verb)
The ~~flowers in this pot~~ **bloom** in spring. (plural subject and verb)

Making Subjects and Verbs Agree

Underline the subject of each sentence. Draw a line through any phrase that separates the subject from the verb. Finally, underline the verb that agrees with the subject.

- Houses by Frank Lloyd Wright (is, are) usually on the National Register.
- (Does, Do) the inexperienced actors in the play know their lines?
- The students in the honors class (is, are) doing a new project.
- Movies full of intrigue and adventure (appeals, appeal) to Henry.
- Off through the woods (runs, run) Little Red Riding Hood.
- Meals on the road (is, are) a problem.
- (Does, Do) this restaurant's fish sandwiches taste fishy?
- Only one can of chicken-with-rice soup (is, are) left on the shelf.
- "Off with their heads," (shouts, shout) the mad queen.
- There (is, are) ten eggs still in the refrigerator.
- (Is, Are) the students' parents invited to the reception?
- The list of names of donors (is, are) being read now.
- Down the river (rushes, rush) the racing canoes.
- (Has, Have) the famous architect visited her completed homes?

Lesson
3**Agreement Problems in Sentences***More Practice***A. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree**

Underline the subject. Then underline the verb that agrees with the subject.

1. (Is, Are) John and Marie going on the architectural tour?
2. Here (is, are) a building and a gardener's cottage by Frank Lloyd Wright.
3. Maintenance of these older buildings (is, are) difficult.
4. The number of buildings from the 1920s (falls, fall) yearly.
5. (Do, Does) Wright's office building still exist?
6. There (stands, stand) the Adler and Sullivan skyscraper.
7. (Was, Were) Wright working for Louis Sullivan at that time?
8. The list of remarkable structures (is, are) a long one.
9. Here (is, are) one of the first major buildings by Henry Hobson Richardson.
10. Where (was, were) Richardson living then?

B. Correcting Agreement in Number

In each of these sentences, decide whether the verb agrees with the subject. If it does, write **Correct** on the line. If it does not, write the correct form of the verb on the line.

1. Were the exchange student taking English as a second language? _____
2. There was seven ducks in the pond this afternoon. _____
3. Here are the list of books for my biology class. _____
4. Up into the clouds soar the skyscrapers. _____
5. Aren't Aunt Emily a music teacher? _____
6. Have you seen the newly opened apartment building? _____
7. Who construct such large buildings as this one? _____
8. Arsonists is the cause of this terrible fire. _____
9. From the ashes of the burned block rises a new neighborhood. _____
10. There is no Stanford White buildings here. _____
11. A problem for the plumbing and electrical departments are vandals. _____
12. Yes, vandals are always a problem. _____