

⚡ PREPARE

CONCEPT In a sentence, the subject and verb must agree, or match, in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb. Collective nouns, which are people or things that act together, take a singular verb. Also, a compound subject (two subjects joined by a coordinating conjunction) that is joined by *and* takes a plural verb, whereas a compound subject that is joined by *or* or *nor* takes a verb that agrees with the subject closest to it. Indefinite pronouns (which refer to a non-specific person or group) that end in *one*,

thing, and *body* take a singular verb, while indefinite pronouns such as *many*, *all*, and *most* take a plural verb. When the subject and verb do not agree, the sentence is ungrammatical. Knowledge of subject-verb agreement helps students write clearly and interpret text accurately.

VOCABULARY collective noun, compound subject, indefinite pronoun, plural subject/verb, singular subject/verb, subject, verb

MATERIALS Lesson reproducibles, index cards

⚡ INSTRUCT

Display sentence 1 from the Sample Sentences included with this lesson. Read the sentence aloud to students, and ask them to think about whether the sentence sounds correct. (Prompt them as necessary: Underline the subject (*elephants*) and circle the verb (*uses*). Do they seem to match in number? What would be a better match for the subject?)

Then, explain to students that the sentence is not grammatical because it is lacking subject-verb agreement. A singular subject must take a singular verb, and a plural subject (such as *elephants*) must take a plural verb (such as *use*).

Next, display sentences 2 to 4. For each sentence, work with students to identify the subject and verb and determine if the sentence is grammatical. Teach or remind students how to identify the subject and predicate of a sentence. First, they should look for the simple predicate, the one word that tells what the subject does or is. Next, they should look for the simple subject, the one word (noun or pronoun) that tells who or what the sentence is about. The subject and verb should match in number.

If the sentence is not grammatical, invite a student to change the subject or verb to achieve subject-verb agreement.

Finally, have students synthesize their understanding of subject-verb agreement.

State the information: **In a sentence, the subject and verb must agree, or match, in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb.**

Note to Teachers: If students are working in Concept 5 or beyond, activities that address subject-verb agreement specific to collective nouns, compound subjects, and indefinite pronouns are available in the *Adapt: Extend* section of this lesson.

Refer students to the Anchor Chart. Distribute copies for students to keep, or have students record the information in a notebook.

⚡ PRACTICE

- Display sample sentences in which the subjects and verbs agree, along with several in which they do not. Have students determine the simple subject and simple predicate of each sentence, as well as whether each sentence is grammatically correct. (More information about simple subjects and predicates may be found in the Simple Sentences lesson.) If the sentence is correct, students should explain why. If the sentence is incorrect, students should correct the subject-verb agreement and explain their reasoning.

- Write different verbs on index cards (e.g., *plant*), and distribute a card to each student. Next, display a plural subject and a singular subject (e.g., *children*; *child*). Have students write separate sentences using each subject and the correct form of the verb on their card (e.g., *The children plant strawberries*; *The child plants strawberries*). Students can share their sentences with a partner to check for subject-verb agreement.
- While reading a text aloud in class, ask students to determine the subject and predicate of particular sentences. Have students identify the subject-verb agreement (e.g., a plural subject and a plural verb) and paraphrase each sentence using their own words.
- Select images or photographs that depict events, and ask students to write a sentence to describe the scene. Have students swap sentences, identify the simple subject and simple predicate, and check for subject-verb agreement.

ADAPT

SUPPORT

- Say a list of subjects, one at a time. For each subject, students should identify if it is singular or plural. Then, have them work together to generate a verb that matches the subject in number and write a sentence using that subject and verb.
- Say a list of verbs, one at a time. For each verb, students should identify if it is singular or plural. Then, have them work together to generate a subject that matches the verb in number, and write a sentence using that subject and verb.
- Provide students with a list of subjects in one column and a list of verbs in another. The subjects and verbs should vary by number. Students can connect subjects and verbs that go together and work with a partner to use the pairs in sentences.

EXTEND

- Explain to students that collective nouns (people or things that act together) take singular verbs. Then, provide students with sentences that contain collective nouns and are missing the verb, such as those in the Collective Nouns Sentences. Have students complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb.
- Explain to students that compound subjects (two subjects joined by a coordinating conjunction) that are joined by *and* take a plural verb, while compound subjects that are joined by *or* or *nor* take a verb that agrees with the subject closest to it. Then, provide students with sentences that contain compound subjects and are missing the verb, such as those in the Compound Subjects Sentences. Have students complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb.
- Explain to students that some indefinite pronouns (which refer to a non-specific person or group) take a singular verb (e.g., those ending in *one*, *thing*, and *body*). Others (e.g., *many*, *all*, *most*) take a plural verb. Provide students with sentences that contain indefinite pronouns and are missing the verb, such as those in the Indefinite Pronouns Sentences. Have students complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb.

CONNECT

- Give students a content-based subject (e.g., *red blood cells*) and a related verb (e.g., *transports*). Students should create a grammatically correct, factual sentence that uses the subject and the correct form of the verb provided (e.g., *Red blood cells transport oxygen around the body*).

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Sentence 1 (lacks subject-verb agreement)</p>	<p><u>Elephants</u> uses calls to stay in contact with family members.</p>
<p>Sentence 2 plural subject + plural verb</p>	<p><u>Oysters</u> improve ocean ecosystems.</p>
<p>Sentence 3 (lacks subject-verb agreement)</p>	<p><u>The Mayan calendar</u> are extraordinarily complex and accurate.</p>
<p>Sentence 4 (lacks subject-verb agreement)</p>	<p><u>My mechanic</u> fix vintage automobiles.</p>

ANCHOR CHART

Subject-Verb Agreement

In a sentence, the subject and verb must agree, or match, in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb. Examples of subject-verb agreement specific to collective nouns, compound subjects, and indefinite pronouns are also given.

Subject	Verb	Example (subjects underlined; verbs circled)
Singular subject	Singular	<u>The pilot</u> checks the controls. <u>He</u> loves to eat rutabagas. <u>Her dog</u> barks at the mailman.
Plural subject	Plural	<u>The flight attendants</u> are in the cabin. <u>We</u> enjoy swimming in the lake. <u>Scholars</u> meet at the conference.
Collective noun* (people or things that act together and take a singular verb)	Singular	<u>The crowd</u> cheers for the runners. <u>The committee</u> looks for volunteers. <u>Our group</u> works on the project.
Compound subjects joined by <i>and</i> *	Plural	<u>Carlos and his brothers</u> rehearse for the concert. <u>The writer and the illustrator</u> collaborate. <u>She and I</u> are excited about the dance.
Compound subjects joined by <i>or/nor</i> *	Take verb that agrees with subject closest to it	<u>The captains or the coach</u> accepts the medal. <u>Neither the flight attendants nor the pilot</u> is ready for take-off. <u>The pilot or the flight attendants</u> are going to meet the new pilot.
Indefinite pronouns that end in <i>one, thing, and body</i> *	Singular	<u>Everyone</u> enjoys my special dessert. <u>Something</u> tastes spicy in this dish. <u>Is anybody</u> here?
Indefinite pronouns such as <i>many, all, most</i> *	Plural	<u>Many</u> support the new legislation. <u>All</u> are in the restaurant. <u>Most</u> like the show.

*More advanced examples of subject-verb agreement

COLLECTIVE NOUNS SENTENCES

1. The flock _____ nests around the lake in the summer. (build, builds)
2. A shoal _____ a large group of fish. (is, are)
3. The orchestra _____ the conductor. (follow, follows)
4. The series _____ sold-out at my favorite bookstore. (is, are)
5. A crowd _____ outside the theater. (gather, gathers)
6. The crew _____ the aircraft carrier for its next voyage. (prepare, prepares)

COMPOUND SUBJECTS SENTENCES

1. My grandmother and my aunt _____ Japan every other year. (visit, visits)
2. Do you think the movie or the book _____ more exciting? (is, are)
3. Either the zookeeper or her assistants _____ the morning meals.
(distribute, distributes)
4. Neither the buses nor the train _____ after midnight. (run, runs)
5. Peaches and blueberries _____ my favorite fruits. (is, are)
6. Either the bookshelves or the table _____ to be painted. (need, needs)

INDEFINITE PRONOUNS SENTENCES

1. Everyone _____ the skunk in the backyard. (smell, smells)
2. Several _____ to South America each year. (travel, travels)
3. Nobody _____ to eat the meatloaf tonight. (want, wants)
4. _____ most already at the surprise party? (is, are)
5. Nothing _____ better than an ice cream on a hot day. (is, are)
6. All _____ at the same time. (spin, spins)