Subject-Verb Agreement A

8b. A verb should agree in number with its subject.

(1) Singular subjects take singular verbs.
(2) Plural subjects take plural verbs.

**EXAMPLES**  
Mexican *art* is interesting. [The singular verb *is* agrees with the singular subject *art*.]  
Mexican *holidays are celebrated* in the Southwest. [The plural helping verb *are* agrees with the plural subject *holidays*.]

**EXERCISE** In each of the following sentences, underline the verb or helping verb in parentheses that agrees with its subject.

Example 1. Mr. Frank (*has, have*) been studying Mexican culture.

1. Cinco de Mayo (*is, are*) an important Mexican holiday.
2. We (*celebrates, celebrate*) the Mexican victory at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862.
3. Some people (*watches, watch*) these celebrations in Los Angeles, California.
4. Others (*sees, see*) them in San Antonio, Texas.
5. The celebrations (*includes, include*) parades and dancing.
6. The women dancers (*wears, wear*) swirling skirts or brilliant colors.
7. Strolling bands (*plays, play*) traditional mariachi music.
8. Spectators (*lines, line*) the streets of the parade route.
9. The floats (*seems, seem*) lively and colorful.
10. Mexican Americans (*views, view*) the festivities with pride.
11. We (*has, have*) learned about Mexican traditions.
12. Many immigrants (*has, have*) brought new traditions from their homelands.
13. Mexican ballads (*is, are*) heard in the Southwest.
14. In Spanish, ballads (*is, are*) called *corridos*.
15. What subjects (*does, do*) these ballads describe?
16. In them, heroes' lives (*has, have*) been recorded.
17. Everyday people (*does, do*) appear in ballads, too.
18. Historians (*has, have*) begun to record these ballads.
19. They (*is, are*) trying to save these ballads.
20. (*Does, Do*) Horacio know any *corridos*?
Subject-Verb Agreement B

8b. A verb should agree in number with its subject.

(1) Singular subjects take singular verbs.
(2) Plural subjects take plural verbs.

EXAMPLE: Is she taking biology class this year? [The singular helping verb Is agrees with the singular subject she.]

EXERCISE Underline the verb in each of the following sentences. If the subject and verb do not agree, write the correct verb form above the error. If the sentence is already correct, write C.

Example 1. My cousins are bringing that delicious cinnamon bread.

1. Two of the sparrows is eating at the bird feeder.
2. Each morning I look out my window at the sunrise.
3. No, he do not sing and dance.
4. After three months, the experiment have been judged a success.
5. The children smile for the camera.
6. The singers is applauding for the winners.
7. They wave to the audience.
8. That tree have still not lost all its leaves.
9. After every performance, she bow.
10. Outside on the playground, children laugh.
11. This evening, Frank are not needed at rehearsal.
12. The geese leaves our town during the winter.
13. Mario wants the last orange.
14. We has been waiting for more than two hours.
15. Her sister have that CD.
16. They run together every morning.
17. Sophia need a new winter coat.
18. He always eat breakfast.
19. Jeremy does not expect any problems with the new equipment.
20. That bread smell delicious.
Subject-Verb Agreement C

8c. The number of a subject is not changed by a phrase following the subject.

**EXAMPLE** The phases of the moon are caused by changes in the amount of sunlight reflected by the moon. [The plural helping verb are agrees with the plural subject phases.]

**EXERCISE A** In each of the following sentences, circle the phrase following the subject. Then, underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

**Example 1.** The moon in the night sky (are, is) a beautiful sight.

1. People throughout history (has, have) been fascinated by the moon.
2. The distance to the moon (is, are) 384,403 kilometers (238,857 miles).
3. The features of the moon (is, are) seen through powerful telescopes.
4. The sun, like the earth, (influences, influence) the moon’s motion.
5. The moon’s orbit around the earth (takes, take) about 27 days, 8 hours.
6. The earth, at the same time, (moves, move) around the sun.
7. A full moon, on the average, (occurs, occur) every 29 1/2 days.
8. Tides on the earth (rises, rise) according to the moon’s gravitational pull.
9. Photography from lunar-orbiting vehicles (shows, show) features on the moon’s surface.
10. Exploration of the moon (continues, continue).

**EXERCISE B** In each of the following sentences, circle the prepositional phrase following the subject. Then, underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

**Example 1.** The contributions of immigrants (has, have) enriched many countries.

11. The names of some American Jewish authors (is, are) well known.
12. A famous author of short stories and novels (is, are) Bernard Malamud.
13. Jewish writers of fiction (includes, include) Saul Bellow.
14. A Nobel Prize in literature (was, were) awarded to Saul Bellow.
15. Another writer of Jewish descent (is, are) Philip Roth.
Subject-Verb Agreement D

8d. The following indefinite pronouns are singular: anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone, and something.

8e. The following indefinite pronouns are plural: both, few, many, several.

8f. The indefinite pronouns all, any, more, most, none, and some may be either singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

EXAMPLES
- Nobody on our street throws a better fastball than Otts.
- Many of his pitches blaze past the batter.
- None of Jana's effort is wasted.
- Some of Mr. Green's tomatoes are prize winners!

EXERCISE A Circle the indefinite pronoun in each of the following sentences. Then, underline the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. (Either) of the vegetables (are, is) a good choice for the salad.

1. One of my brothers (plants, plant) tomatoes every year.
2. No one on my block (believes, believe) his plants will grow.
3. Everyone in the neighborhood (says, say) the soil is not good enough.
4. Most of the plants (does, do) not do very well.
5. A few of them (reaches, reach) full size.
6. Usually everyone in the family (eats, eat) these tomatoes in a salad.
7. Most of the salad (is, are) greens.
8. Several of us (prefers, prefer) blue cheese dressing on the salad.
9. None of us (likes, like) that kind of salad dressing.
10. All of the tomatoes (is, are) eaten before they spoil.

EXERCISE B Circle the indefinite pronoun in each of the following sentences. Above the pronoun write S if it is singular or P if it is plural. Then, underline the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. (Everyone) in a successful band (practices, practice) frequently.

11. Some of my cousins (is, are) in musical bands.
12. All of my classmates (listens, listen) to them.
13. Any of the bands (plays, play) for private parties.
14. None of our neighbors ever (complains, complain) when the bands practice.
15. Most of their music (is, are) enjoyable.
Subject-Verb Agreement E

A pronoun that does not refer to a definite person, place, thing, or idea is called an indefinite pronoun.

8d. The following indefinite pronouns are singular: anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone, and something.

8e. The following indefinite pronouns are plural: both, few, many, several.

8f. The indefinite pronouns all, any, more, most, none, and some may be either singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

**EXERCISE A** In each of the following sentences, underline the correct indefinite pronoun in parentheses.

**Example 1.** (All, Many) of the fruit has been put in the refrigerator.

1. (One, Several) of my sisters runs in the marathon every year.
2. (Many, Nobody) is predicting rain for tomorrow.
3. (Everyone, Several) wears a coat in this weather.
4. (One, Many) of us sometimes forget to bring lunch.
5. (Both, Each) of my brothers like algebra.
6. (None, No one) of the performances take place outside.
7. (Someone, Few) are strong enough to swim across the English Channel.
8. (All, Neither) have seen that movie.
9. (Each, Most) has an opinion about the review in the newspaper.
10. (Somebody, Both) have been given that responsibility.

**EXERCISE B** Circle the indefinite pronoun in each of the following sentences. Then, underline the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

**Example 1.** (Most) of the potatoes (has, have) been harvested.

11. Everybody (is, are) welcome at the skating party.
12. I hope nobody (forgets, forget) to bring skates.
13. Many of my friends (is, are) good skaters.
14. All of us (enjoys, enjoy) the music at the skating rink.
15. Most of the music (is, are) popular dance music.
**Exercise A** In each of the sentences below, underline the form of the verb in parentheses that agrees with its subject.

**Examples**
1. Carmina and Gerald *(read, reads)* a book called *Some of the Kinder Planets*.
2. The stories in this book *(was, were)* written by Tim Wynne-Jones.

1. A boy in one of the stories *(fear, fears)* he has been abducted by aliens.
2. The “aliens” *(is, are)* actually a family living in a high-tech geodesic dome.
3. What *(does, do)* the planet Mars and the pomegranate fruit have in common?
4. If you *(read, reads)* “The Night of the Pomegranate,” you will find out.
5. Everyone *(has, have)* been ill at one time or another.
7. Then, in a very unusual way, he *(begin, begins)* to plan a trip to an exotic city.
8. Either you or your friends *(has, have)* probably written an essay about a vacation.
9. An imaginative boy and his friend *(creates, create)* an alternative to this assignment.
10. The story that tells about their activities *(is, are)* “Tweedledum and Tweedledee.”

**Exercise B** In each of the following sentences, write C above the underlined verb if it agrees with its subject. If the underlined verb does not agree with its subject, write the correct form of the verb above it.

**Example**
1. Does you or a friend want to live forever at the same age you are now?

11. Winnie Foster, in *Tuck Everlasting*, face this exact choice.
12. Winnie, while playing in the woods, find a beautiful, clear stream of water.
13. Before she take a drink, however, she is kidnapped by a very nice family.
14. When the Tuck family *kidnap* Winnie, she doesn’t expect magic.
15. The spring of water, these people tell her, are magical.
16. A tiny sip from this spring hidden among the trees give everlasting life.
17. Every one of the Tucks are immortal because they drank from the spring.
18. Over the years they have formed a definite opinion about their situation.
19. Winnie, faced with the opportunity of drinking from the spring, make a surprising decision.
20. Meanwhile, a mysterious stranger *suspect* Winnie’s secret.