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Number

5a. A word that refers to one person, place, thing, or idea is **singular** in number. A word that refers to more than one is **plural** in number.

SINGULAR	building	he	woman	knife	country
PLURAL	buildings	they	women	knives	countries

USAGE

EXERCISE A On the line, write *S* for each singular word and *P* for each plural word.

Example *P* 1. several

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ 1. vegetables | _____ 11. contest | _____ 21. somebody |
| _____ 2. valley | _____ 12. strawberries | _____ 22. pennies |
| _____ 3. it | _____ 13. dandelion | _____ 23. her |
| _____ 4. mice | _____ 14. monkey | _____ 24. catalog |
| _____ 5. we | _____ 15. office | _____ 25. wharves |
| _____ 6. wrenches | _____ 16. men | _____ 26. anything |
| _____ 7. chicken | _____ 17. wolves | _____ 27. truth |
| _____ 8. honesty | _____ 18. them | _____ 28. few |
| _____ 9. children | _____ 19. peach | _____ 29. piano |
| _____ 10. ourselves | _____ 20. loss | _____ 30. oats |

EXERCISE B On each line, complete each word group with a correct singular or plural word. Write *S* after a singular word and *P* after a plural word.

Example 1. those breathtaking *photographs P*

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 31. twelve strange _____ | 41. a delicious _____ |
| 32. an excellent _____ | 42. a few more _____ |
| 33. several satisfied _____ | 43. a thousand _____ |
| 34. neither of the _____ | 44. every _____ |
| 35. these interesting _____ | 45. a herd of _____ |
| 36. many talented _____ | 46. numerous _____ |
| 37. another large _____ | 47. that small _____ |
| 38. thirty-five _____ | 48. each of the _____ |
| 39. some mysterious _____ | 49. many important _____ |
| 40. a pair of _____ | 50. not even a single _____ |

Agreement of Subject and Verb A

5b. A verb should agree in number with its subject.

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

SINGULAR He **takes** music lessons.

She **has been sleeping**.

PLURAL They **take** music lessons.

They **have been sleeping**.

5c. The number of the subject usually is not determined by a word in a phrase or clause following the subject.

EXAMPLES That **dog** with big teeth **scares** me.

Earl, as well as his older sister, **is** a fantastic athlete.

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, two verbs appear in parentheses. Underline the verb that agrees with its subject.

Example 1. Some members of the Spanish club (*has, have*) been studying Mexico.

- The capital of Mexico (*is, are*) Mexico City.
- The plaza at the center of the city (*covers, cover*) the site of an ancient Aztec temple.
- Today, people (*calls, call*) the plaza the Zócalo.
- Many buildings of historical and architectural interest (*surrounds, surround*) the Zócalo.
- The City Hall, as well as the National Palace, (*is, are*) on the Zócalo.
- The offices of the government (*is, are*) in the National Palace.
- The National Palace (*was, were*) built over three hundred years ago.
- Inside the Palace (*is, are*) several murals by Diego Rivera.
- One of them, titled *El Mundo Azteca*, (*depicts, depict*) people from the ancient culture.
- The citizens, together with tourists, (*enjoy, enjoys*) visiting the National Palace.

EXERCISE B Each of the sentences in the following paragraph contains an error in subject-verb agreement. Cross out each incorrect verb and write the correct verb above it.

Example [1] The arts of illusion ^{are} ~~is~~ essential in the world of moviemaking.

[11] Few viewers of the film *Superman: The Movie* knows how Christopher Reeve soars through the air. [12] Credit for the flying scenes go to special-effects crews. [13] These masters of illusion creates the tricks to make the impossible appear to happen. [14] Superman, together with Lois Lane, were suspended on wires from huge cranes. [15] The actors in the scene were moving only their heads and arms while films of rushing scenery was projected onto large screens behind them.

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Agreement of Subject and Verb B

5b. A verb should agree in number with its subject.

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

SINGULAR He **sings** in the choir. She **has been drawing**.
PLURAL They **sing** in the choir. They **have been drawing**.

5c. The number of the subject usually is not determined by a word in a phrase or clause following the subject.

EXAMPLE The **documentary** on runners in Kenya **was** fascinating.

USAGE

EXERCISE In each sentence below, underline the verb that agrees with its subject.

Example 1. The name of the student with the highest grades (has, have) been announced.

- The vase of flowers (*is, are*) on the table.
- The photographs on the table (*reminds, remind*) me of our recent trip.
- The pole vault, as well as the high jump, (*is, are*) Abdul's specialty.
- Bears (*lives, live*) in those mountains.
- Rome, together with Venice, (*has, have*) many interesting sights.
- Lemon (*enhances, enhance*) the flavor in fish.
- The tigers at our hometown preserve (*roams, roam*) freely on an island.
- Spinach, in addition to squash, (*is, are*) very nourishing.
- The highest mountains in the world (*rises, rise*) in the Himalayas.
- The plays we read in speech class (*is, are*) based on historical events.
- The grass on the lawns (*gets, get*) parched when we have a hot, dry summer.
- Anaba, along with her brothers, (*wants, want*) to learn some traditional songs.
- That pair of scissors with the orange handles (*is, are*) missing.
- My aunt from the Netherlands (*loves, love*) to travel.
- Three students in my math class (*is, are*) going to the state finals.
- Coyotes, rattlesnakes, and lizards (*thrives, thrive*) in the Mexican desert.
- Many beautiful fish near the reef in Cozumel (*swims, swim*) lazily below us.
- The grandparents of my best friend (*has, have*) always lived in Guadalajara.
- Dust mites in the air (*is, are*) a problem for people with allergies.
- The top of those bushes (*reaches, reach*) almost to the second story.

Agreement of Subject and Verb C

5d. The following indefinite pronouns are singular: *anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone, and something.*

EXAMPLE **Everyone** in the cast **is** at rehearsal today.

5e. The following indefinite pronouns are plural: *both, few, many, and several.*

EXAMPLE **Several** of the athletes **were** at the banquet.

5f. The indefinite pronouns *all, any, more, most, none, and some* may be singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

EXAMPLES **Most** of our vacation **is** over. [*Most* refers to the singular noun *vacation*.]

Most of the days **have passed**. [*Most* refers to the plural noun *days*.]

EXERCISE A Each of these sentences has an indefinite pronoun as a subject. Write *S* above the pronoun if it is singular and *P* if it is plural. Then, underline the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. ^{*P*} Some of my neighbors (*has, have*) installed extra lights.

- Neither of the contestants (*knows, know*) the answer to the question.
- (*Has, Have*) all of the ice melted?
- Everybody in the theater (*is, are*) standing and cheering.
- Many of the tickets to the play (*has, have*) been sold.
- Both of the candidates for the job (*seems, seem*) capable.
- No one at the party (*recognizes, recognize*) Stefan.
- Each of the Maramoto brothers (*has, have*) applied for a scholarship.
- Most of the musicians (*respects, respect*) the conductor.
- Some of the story (*was, were*) difficult to understand.
- (*Is, Are*) either of the doctors available for an appointment tomorrow?

EXERCISE B In each of the following sentences, two verbs appear in parentheses. Underline the correct verb form. Then, circle the subject of the sentence.

Example 1. All of Suzi's kittens (*was, were*) adopted.

- Everything about the concert (*was, were*) thrilling.
- (*Is, Are*) any of the peaches ripe yet?
- Few of the boys (*responds, respond*) well to criticism.
- None of the dessert baked by my sisters (*is, are*) left.
- Several of the new students (*speak, speaks*) Spanish.

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Agreement of Subject and Verb D

5d. The following indefinite pronouns are singular: *anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone, and something.*

EXAMPLE **Neither** of the girls **is** here now.

5e. The following indefinite pronouns are plural: *both, few, many, and several.*

EXAMPLE **Both** of us **were** excited to attend the concert.

5f. The indefinite pronouns *all, any, more, most, none, and some* may be singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

EXAMPLES **All** of the salad **has been eaten.** [*All* refers to the singular noun *salad.*]

All of the oranges **are** gone. [*All* refers to the plural noun *oranges.*]

USAGE

EXERCISE A If the verb in a sentence does not agree with its subject, cross out the incorrect verb and write the correct verb above it. If a sentence is already correct, write C above it.

Example 1. Many of the drivers in the race ^{were} ~~was~~ European.

- Most of the children does their homework in study hall.
- Some of the television program were interesting.
- Neither of the team captains have told us what to do.
- Does both of the writers want to attend the workshop?
- Everyone who likes to sing usually joins in on the choruses.
- Nothing in these books contradict your theory.
- Everybody already know how to solve the problem.
- Several of the band members is planning to audition for the orchestra.
- None of us wants to go there in the winter.
- Each of the girls swim every day during the summer.

EXERCISE B In each of the following sentences, two verbs appear in parentheses. Underline the correct verb form. Then, circle the subject of the sentence.

Example 1. (*Is, Are*) any of the boys playing soccer this afternoon?

- Some of the guests (*was, were*) friends of his brother.
- Everything in your notebooks (*is, are*) graded weekly.
- (*Does, Do*) all of the tires on the car need air?
- Neither of the girls (*is, are*) planning to stay late.
- (*Is, Are*) both of them studying right now?

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Agreement of Subject and Verb E

5g. Subjects joined by *and* generally take a plural verb.

EXAMPLE Justin Leonard and Annika Sörenstam are famous professional golfers.

Compound subjects that name only one person, place, thing, or idea take a singular verb.

5h. Singular subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a singular verb. Plural subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a plural verb.

EXAMPLE Either a doctor or a nurse checks on the hospital patients each morning.

5i. When a singular subject and a plural subject are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb agrees with the subject nearer the verb.

EXAMPLES Neither the band members nor the singer feels ready for the performance.
Neither the singer nor the band members feel ready for the performance.

EXERCISE A Underline the verb that agrees with the compound subject of the sentence.

Example 1. Macaroni and cheese (is, are) on the menu for lunch today.

- Three women and a man (*makes*, make) up the conference committee.
- The leading actor and dancer (*is*, are) Gregory Hines.
- Neither her play nor her novels (*is*, are) widely read.
- Maya Angelou and Joan Didion (*writes*, write) about personal experiences.
- Neither the actors nor their director (*has*, have) staged a play by Wilson before.
- Neither the pitcher nor the outfielders (*is*, are) playing well today.
- Recycling and paper drives (*is*, are) helpful for the environment.
- The conductor and the musicians of the symphony (*is*, are) very talented.
- Either the eggs or the milk (*seems*, seem) spoiled.
- Neither the trees nor the flowers (*fares*, fare) well in this heat.

EXERCISE B Circle the subject and underline the verb that agrees with the subject.

Example 1. The producer and director of the film (is, are) Steven Spielberg.

- Neither the managers nor the workers (*agrees*, agree) with the negotiator.
- Jason Granholm and Ty Nguyen (*is*, are) the winners of the poetry contest.
- Either the puppies or their mother (*has*, have) torn a hole in that chair.
- Neither Beatriz nor her sisters (*attends*, attend) Southdale High School.
- Those plants and the ones next to the window (*blooms*, bloom) each spring.

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Agreement of Subject and Verb F

5g. Subjects joined by *and* generally take a plural verb.

Compound subjects that name only one person, place, thing, or idea take a singular verb.

EXAMPLE My **mother** and **father** **cook** excellent meals.

5h. Singular subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a singular verb. Plural subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a plural verb.

EXAMPLE Neither the **guests** nor the **hosts** **are dancing**.

5i. When a singular subject and a plural subject are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb agrees with the subject nearer the verb.

EXAMPLES Neither the players nor the **coach** **is** happy with the game.

Neither the coach nor the **players** **are** happy with the game.

EXERCISE A Circle the subject and underline the verb that agrees with the subject.

Example 1. Either Tom or Susan (*live, lives*) on the next street.

- The singer and songwriter of the CD (*is, are*) a talented artist.
- Neither Beth nor her parents (*is, are*) able to come to the concert.
- Cynthia or Tania (*want, wants*) to go hiking this weekend.
- Either the club members or the president (*has, have*) the right to make the decision.
- Beverly and Rafael (*agrees, agree*) that the house needs to be painted.

EXERCISE B If a verb does not agree with its subject, cross out the incorrect verb and write the correct verb above it. If a verb is already correct, write C above it.

Example 1. Neither my mother nor my aunts ~~has~~^{have} perfect vision.

- Both Cocheta and Amalia buys their clothes with money from their jobs.
- Either Will Rogers or James Thurber are the author of that quotation.
- Neither the residents nor the governor want the bridge to be built.
- Does the Arnolds or the MacLeods always bring the salsa?
- Neither my sister nor my mom are willing to go with me.
- Neither Delores nor any of the other girls wants to go surfing with me.
- Neither the ghosts nor the pirates in the haunted house scares me.
- Either the mail carrier or the meter readers have been leaving my gate open.
- The hamster and the mouse seems healthier since we got the new feeders.
- The room and board at the dormitory seem reasonable.

Agreement of Subject and Verb G

5j. The contractions *don't* and *doesn't* should agree with their subjects.

The word *don't* is the contraction of *do not*. Use *don't* with all plural subjects and with the pronouns *I* and *you*.

EXAMPLES **I don't** speak French well. **Doesn't she** like spinach?

EXERCISE In each of these sentences, the contractions *don't* and *doesn't* appear in parentheses. Underline the contraction that agrees in number with its subject.

Example 1. She (*don't*, *doesn't*) ski very often.

1. A desert (*don't*, *doesn't*) get much rain.
2. (*Don't*, *Doesn't*) these kinds of fruit contain a lot of vitamin C?
3. Some of the spectators watching the magician (*don't*, *doesn't*) realize he is creating illusions.
4. The dancer performing the slow moves (*don't*, *doesn't*) impress me as much as the other one.
5. Macaroni and cheese (*don't*, *doesn't*) taste bad at all.
6. (*Don't*, *Doesn't*) he know that I want a new bicycle for my birthday?
7. Many of the players (*don't*, *doesn't*) mind practicing more often.
8. (*Don't*, *Doesn't*) the time go by fast when you're having fun?
9. If Juan Pablo and his brother (*don't*, *doesn't*) get here on time, we're leaving.
10. It really (*don't*, *doesn't*) matter to me whether we leave now or in fifteen minutes.
11. That CD player you bought yesterday (*don't*, *doesn't*) sound too good.
12. The leaves on the pecan tree typically (*don't*, *doesn't*) start falling off until mid-October.
13. (*Don't*, *Doesn't*) one of you belong to that national organization?
14. The jazz band at María's school (*don't*, *doesn't*) perform every month.
15. My friend, who is from the Philippines, (*don't*, *doesn't*) mind eating my mother's Southern cooking.
16. One of the girls (*don't*, *doesn't*) intend to go to the football game.
17. You and she (*don't*, *doesn't*) have to coordinate your plans.
18. (*Don't*, *Doesn't*) every person in the group have to participate to the fullest extent?
19. Those (*don't*, *doesn't*) offer the same benefits.
20. The last song on that set of CDs (*don't*, *doesn't*) sound like the rest.

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Agreement of Subject and Verb H

5k. A collective noun may be either singular or plural, depending on its meaning in a sentence.

EXAMPLES The **committee is meeting** today. [*Committee* is thought of as a unit.]
 The **committee are discussing** several issues. [*Committee* is thought of as individuals.]

USAGE

EXERCISE A For each of the following sentences, choose the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. The audience (*express, expresses*) its enthusiasm by applauding loudly.

- Each Christmas, Marco’s family (*exchange, exchanges*) gifts with one another.
- The committee in charge of the project (*make, makes*) its decision at 3:00 P.M. tomorrow.
- Graziella’s class (*has, have*) chosen its theme for the annual dance.
- Far off the shore, a fleet of ships (*move, moves*) away from the island one by one.
- The team (*is, are*) happy because each member has been given a victory award.

EXERCISE B Select five collective nouns, and write five pairs of sentences that show clearly how the nouns you chose may be singular or plural. Select from the following: *army, audience, class, club, committee, fleet, flock, group, public, and team*.

Examples 1. *The herd of cattle cautiously moves away from the barn.*

2. *Hearing the loud noise, the herd of cattle quickly move in separate directions.*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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Agreement of Subject and Verb I

5l. A verb agrees with its subject, but not necessarily with a predicate nominative.

EXAMPLES My favorite **vegetable is** peas. **Peas are** my favorite vegetable.

5m. When the subject follows the verb, find the subject and make sure that the verb agrees with it.

EXAMPLES Where **is** your **plate**? Here **are** some **sandwiches** for you.
Where **are** your **friends**? Where's your **friend**?

USAGE

EXERCISE For each of the following sentences, underline the correct form of the verb in parentheses. Then, underline the subject of the sentence twice.

Example 1. The order we made (was, were) three pizzas.

- Where (*is, are*) the line to purchase tickets for the movie?
- The team's mission (*is, are*) victories.
- When (*was, were*) the new CD releases announced?
- There (*is, are*) the list of items you wanted.
- The items (*was, were*) a list of ingredients for cooking paella.
- Achievements (*is, are*) the main objective of that company.
- Here (*is, are*) the samples you requested.
- The New Orleans jazz bands performing at the festival (*was, were*) a popular appeal.
- There (*is, are*) never enough time to do all that you want to do.
- Why (*is, are*) the squirrels in our backyard so friendly?
- The main attraction at the circus (*is, are*) usually the acrobats.
- Where (*is, are*) the soccer team traveling for the next game?
- A popular food in south Louisiana (*is, are*) red beans and rice.
- There (*was, were*) more visitors expected at the exhibit this year.
- In biology, why (*is, are*) those birds a distinct category?
- For my mother, peas and carrots (*is, are*) traditional side dishes.
- A collection of old stamps (*was, were*) an interest of many visitors at the exhibit.
- There (*is, are*) the list of topics for the project.
- Here (*is, are*) the roster of names of those who plan to attend the ceremony.
- That group of insects (*is, are*) a special class.

Agreement of Subject and Verb J

- 5n.** An expression of an amount (a measurement, a percentage, or a fraction, for example) may be singular or plural, depending on how it is used.

EXAMPLES **Six weeks is** a long vacation. [Amount is thought of as a unit.]
Six dollars were lying on the street. [Amount is thought of as individual pieces.]
Eighty-five percent of the seniors **are going** on the class trip. [Percentage is plural because it refers to the plural word *seniors*.]
One quarter of the term **is** over. [Fraction is singular because it refers to the singular word *term*.]

EXERCISE For each of the following sentences, choose the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. Three fourths of my classmates (*is, are*) studying Spanish.

- Three months (*is, are*) the training period for Susan's new job.
- Half of the men (*was, were*) barefoot.
- Two eighths (*is, are*) the same as one fourth.
- The teacher said that 50 percent of the grade (*is, are*) this essay.
- Half of an orange (*was, were*) enough for me.
- Aren't you surprised that almost 100 percent of the children (*know, knows*) the answer?
- Two thirds of a cup of flour (*was, were*) more than enough to thicken the sauce.
- Nine cents (*was, were*) found under the couch cushion.
- Only 10 percent of the members (*wants, want*) to spend money on that project.
- Only thirty weeks (*remain, remains*) until summer vacation.
- Half of the apples (*was, were*) rotten.
- Five dollars an hour (*is, are*) not even minimum wage.
- Of the tomatoes, two thirds (*has, have*) already been eaten.
- Ten days (*is, are*) the limit for returning the merchandise after purchase.
- I think 60 percent of the paper (*has, have*) been written.
- One third of the employees (*plans, plan*) to attend the training session.
- Seventy dollars (*is, are*) a lot to pay for a shirt.
- The director said that about one fifth of the time (*was, were*) spent scouting for locations.
- One tenth of the compound (*consist, consists*) of hydrogen.
- Fifty percent of the scientist's time (*is, are*) spent doing research.

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Agreement of Subject and Verb K

5o. Some nouns that are plural in form take singular verbs.

EXAMPLES The **news is** on at six o'clock.
The **scissors were left** on the counter.

5p. Even when plural in form, the title of a creative work (such as a book, song, film, or painting), the name of an organization, or the name of a country or city generally takes a singular verb.

EXAMPLE *The Grapes of Wrath* **is** a novel by John Steinbeck.

EXERCISE For each of the following sentences, choose the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. The news about the earthquake (was, *were*) a shock to everyone.

- The coach explained that gymnastics (*is, are*) a good sport for improving flexibility.
- Linguistics, the study of language, (*include, includes*) social and nonsocial aspects of language.
- How much (*do, does*) those binoculars cost?
- My new pajamas (*fits, fit*) me very loosely.
- "Night and Day" (*is, are*) a song by one of the great American songwriters, Cole Porter.
- Checkers (*is, are*) my cousin Ignacio's favorite game.
- The scissors in the top drawer (*has, have*) to be repaired.
- The blues, thought to have been developed after the Civil War, (*is, are*) traditionally an African American form of music.
- Statistics, a branch of mathematics, (*is, are*) used to organize and interpret numerical data.
- The acoustics in the auditorium (*was, were*) excellent; we had no trouble hearing the choir.
- Ernest Hemingway's *The Torrents of Spring* (*was, were*) published in 1926.
- My braces (*has, have*) to be adjusted by the dentist in four weeks.
- The shears in the garage (*is, are*) rusting because of the damp weather we have been having.
- Dominoes (*is, are*) my grandfather's favorite pastime during the hot summer.
- Ethics (*use, uses*) reason to address questions of what is right and what is wrong.
- Jane says that economics (*is, are*) what her son has decided to study.
- Politics, the science of government, (*is, are*) Rafael's primary interest.
- The Outsiders* (*is, are*) my brother Tom's favorite movie.
- The shorts I wore yesterday (*was, were*) inexpensive.
- Girls' athletics (*has, have*) become popular at my high school.

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Agreement of Subject and Verb I

5q. Subjects preceded by *every* or *many a* take singular verbs.

EXAMPLE **Many a** concert **was performed** at that arena.

5r. When the relative pronoun *that*, *which*, or *who* is the subject of an adjective clause, the verb in the adjective clause agrees with the word to which the relative pronoun refers.

EXAMPLES The home **that is** on the tour is next door. [*That* refers to the singular noun *home*.]
The homes **that are** on the tour are in my neighborhood. [*That* refers to the plural noun *homes*.]

USAGE

EXERCISE A For each of the following sentences, choose the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Example 1. Every teacher and student (*is, are*) invited to the auditorium for the concert.

1. Many a family (*has, have*) either a dog or cat as a pet.
2. Every girl and boy in the class (*receive, receives*) merit points for good conduct.
3. Many a play (*is, are*) produced at the Little Theater in my hometown.
4. Every film at the festival (*was, were*) reviewed by a dozen critics.
5. Many a farmer (*grow, grows*) corn or soybeans in this part of the country.

EXERCISE B For each of the following sentences, underline the correct form of the verb in parentheses. Then, underline twice the word or word group with which the verb agrees.

Example 1. Here is the picture that (*show, shows*) all my friends at my birthday party.

6. The stadium that (*is, are*) located downtown seats up to forty thousand spectators.
7. Everyone who (*visits, visit*) that monument is amazed by its grandeur.
8. Improvisation, which (*is, are*) the ability to create spontaneous music, is characteristic of jazz.
9. Mark, who (*know, knows*) he has a lot to do, has decided to prioritize.
10. That is the building that (*house, houses*) all the offices of the computer company.

Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent A

5s. A pronoun should agree in number and gender with its antecedent.

EXAMPLES **Gloria Estefan** records **her** songs in Spanish and in English. [*Her* is a singular, feminine pronoun referring to the antecedent *Gloria Estefan*.]

My **cousins** brought **their** backgammon game. [*Their* is a plural pronoun referring to the antecedent *cousins*.]

EXERCISE Complete each of the following sentences by inserting at least one pronoun that agrees with its antecedent. Then, underline the antecedent.

Example 1. Each girl waited for _____ *her* mother outside the building after school.

- The boy in the blue sweater just dropped _____ notebook and calculator.
- Resting on the branch of the tree, the robin fluttered _____ wings.
- I try to wash _____ car every weekend when the weather is pleasant.
- The women entered _____ offices at about the same time.
- Neither man was wearing _____ name tag at the meeting.
- The treasurer needs to keep good records so that _____ knows how much money has been spent.
- Did the forwards on the girls' soccer team do _____ best?
- We never ride _____ bicycles on the main road.
- Mr. Robinson gave _____ dog a treat for being so obedient.
- Daniel and Roseanne said _____ would be late.
- Sophia said that *To Kill a Mockingbird* is _____ favorite novel.
- Ryan said _____ would report on the films of the director Billy Wilder.
- My aunt Catherine's cat always licks _____ paws after eating.
- The students said that _____ were happy with the results of the vote.
- Each member presented _____ position on the issue in an unbiased fashion.
- María walks _____ dog every morning and every evening.
- How many friends is Claire going to invite to _____ party?
- Eric's car had _____ back window broken during the hail storm.
- We would like to add _____ names to the petition.
- Three of the girls will take _____ college entrance exam tomorrow.

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Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent B

5t. Some indefinite pronouns are singular, and some are plural. Other indefinite pronouns can be either singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

SINGULAR Each of the girls thinks **she** can help.

Someone forgot **his or her** jacket.

PLURAL Both of my brothers left on **their** bikes.

Few of the class said **they** had finished.

USAGE

EXERCISE Complete each of the following sentences by inserting at least one pronoun that agrees with its antecedent.

Example 1. Several of the boys were awarded medals for _____ *their* _____ charity work.

- One of the lizards on the patio had a twig in _____ mouth.
- Did all of the people invited to the party bring _____ CDs?
- Someone will have to give up _____ seat.
- Both of the trained gymnasts moved _____ bodies with ease and grace.
- Everyone in the group is entitled to _____ opinion.
- Most of the houses appear to have icicles on _____ eaves.
- None of the cereal is left because _____ has all been eaten.
- Only one of the women has finished packing _____ suitcase for the trip.
- Many live _____ lives without ever taking serious risks.
- Someone has left _____ car headlights on.
- In spite of the bad weather, neither of the girls altered _____ plans.
- Each of the boys was happy with _____ grades.
- All of the water in the pond is gone; _____ evaporated in the heat.
- Would one of the sopranos like to perform _____ favorite song?
- Rosa just bought a new tennis racket, and _____ intends to use it in the next game.
- One of the fish in the tank swims around _____ food before eating it.
- Several of the writers were praised for _____ eloquence and style.
- Neither of the girls blamed _____ for the accident.
- No one forgot to bring _____ pencil to the exam.
- We really enjoyed those pears and mangos; _____ were perfectly ripe.

Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent C

5u. Use a singular pronoun to refer to two or more singular antecedents joined by *or* or *nor*.

EXAMPLE Max or Kai will bring **his** hibachi for the cookout.

5v. Use a plural pronoun to refer to two or more antecedents joined by *and*.

EXAMPLE Marlys and Simone are practicing **their** duet because **they** perform tonight.

EXERCISE A For each of the following sentences, underline the pronoun in parentheses that agrees with its antecedent.

Example 1. Mary and Pam will have the opportunity to prove (*herself, themselves*) at the concert.

- Neither Marco nor Juan agreed to give (*his, their*) opinion on the subject.
- Sandra or Lucia will have to meet Jim at the station so that (*she, they*) can drive him home.
- The waiters and the manager at the restaurant will do (*his, their*) best to assist you.
- The singer and the orchestra performed (*its, their*) selection of songs with great care.
- Paul or Dennis arranged to have (*his, their*) car repaired by the mechanic.
- The coach and the goalie wanted to have (*its, their*) picture taken.
- Neither Mr. Lund nor Mr. Hebert believed that (*his, their*) job was at stake.
- Neither Scott nor his brother would have blamed (*themselves, himself*) for the mistake.
- My sister and her husband arrived late because (*their, his and her*) train was delayed.
- Eduardo or William will lend me one of (*his, their*) jackets if the weather turns cool.

EXERCISE B The following sentences contain blanks where pronouns should be. Complete the sentences by inserting pronouns that agree with their antecedents.

Example 1. Either Patrick or Ted will bring _____ *his* _____ CD player to the party.

- Neither my aunt Barbara nor my aunt Margaret liked _____ new haircut.
- Where will Sam and Nicholas take _____ parents tonight?
- Jessica or Sarah will deliver the food to the homeless shelter; then _____ will return to the school.
- Katie and Claire pride _____ on _____ knowledge of history.
- Charlie and Albert said that _____ thought _____ game strategy was best.

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Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent D

5w. The number of a relative pronoun (such as *who*, *which*, or *that*) is determined by its antecedent.

EXAMPLES Aluhani is a **girl who** is loyal to **her** friends. [*Who* refers to the singular noun *girl*. Therefore, the singular form *her* is used to agree with *who*.]
 The **students who** finished **their** projects early were allowed to go to the library. [*Who* refers to the plural noun *students*. Therefore, the plural form *their* is used to agree with *who*.]

USAGE

EXERCISE A For each of the following sentences, underline the pronoun in parentheses that agrees with its antecedent.

Example 1. The bees that were in (*its*, *their*) hive came out and stung Fernando.

1. My uncle Joe is a person who treats (*their*, *his*) friends with the utmost kindness.
2. Those who achieve recognition in (*his*, *their*) field typically have to work hard.
3. Dogs that obey (*its*, *their*) owners are often given tasty treats.
4. My neighbor who has (*their*, *her*) own unicycle rides it around the park every day.
5. Theresa, who decorates (*their*, *her*) house every Fourth of July, enjoys the holidays a lot.

EXERCISE B Complete each of the following sentences by inserting a pronoun that agrees with its antecedent. Then, circle the word to which the relative pronoun *who* refers.

Example 1. The students who received _____ *their* _____ diplomas this year entered college in the fall.

6. Cameron is a boy who always promises to do _____ best.
7. People who use _____ time wisely usually find that they have more free time.
8. Anyone who would like to turn in _____ report early is encouraged to do so.
9. Many who offered _____ assistance after the hurricane were given awards.
10. The girl who forgot _____ notebook has not returned yet.

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Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent D

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USAGE

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Example 1. The students who received _____ *their* _____ diplomas this year entered college in the fall.

6. Cameron is a boy who always promises to do _____ best.
7. People who use _____ time wisely usually find that they have more free time.
8. Anyone who would like to turn in _____ report early is encouraged to do so.
9. Many who offered _____ assistance after the hurricane were given awards.
10. The girl who forgot _____ notebook has not returned yet.

Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent E

5x. A collective noun is singular when it refers to the group as a unit and plural when it refers to the individual members of the group.

EXAMPLES The **flock** of birds wended **its** way south. [*Flock* is thought of as a unit.]
The **flock** of birds were grooming **themselves**. [*Flock* is thought of as individuals.]

5y. An expression of an amount (a measurement, a percentage, or a fraction, for example) may be singular or plural, depending on how it is used.

EXAMPLES **Two minutes** is a long time; **it** seems long when you're on hold. [The amount is thought of as a unit.]
Two of the ten minutes were already used up; we had spent **them** reading the agenda. [The amount is thought of as individual pieces or parts.]

5z. Singular pronouns are used to refer to some nouns that are plural in form.

EXAMPLES We like books about **politics** and **its** effects on communities.
These **pants** fit; **they** fit better than the ones you tried on yesterday. [Plural pronouns are used to refer to some nouns that end in *s* but refer to a single item.]

EXERCISE For each of the following sentences, underline the pronoun that agrees with its antecedent.

Example 1. I am very interested in civics. I have been studying (it, *them*) for several years.

- The pride of lions take turns resting in the sun after (*their*, *its*) successful hunt.
- One half of the employees decided (*it*, *they*) needed to speak to the boss about the situation.
- The scissors are in the top drawer. But watch out! (*It*, *They*) may be sharp!
- About one fourth of the squirrels in the park grabbed the peanuts I offered (*it*, *them*).
- Guys and Dolls* opened on Broadway in 1950. (*They*, *It*) proved to be a big success.
- The soccer team at our high school won seventeen of (*their*, *its*) games last season.
- The soccer team proved (*their*, *its*) remarkable abilities when each member scored a point.
- Listening to the news on the radio, we found (*them*, *it*) very troubling.
- One third of the committee members left the room. (*It*, *They*) returned two minutes later.
- My aunt and uncle live in Arlington Heights; they find (*it*, *them*) to be very pleasant.

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Review A: Subject-Verb Agreement

USAGE

EXERCISE A Change the following sentences according to the directions given in parentheses. If necessary, change the forms of verbs, pronouns, or other words in the sentences. Cross out words you are changing, and write the new words above the old words.

Example 1. Of all the students in my class, ~~perhaps one or two enjoy~~ ^{only one enjoys} being the star of the class play. (Change *perhaps one or two* to *only one*.)

- Most of the students in the class want to work on the play, however. (Change *Most of the students* to *Almost every student*.)
- There is at least one major speaking role in this year's play. (Change *at least one major speaking role* to *several major speaking roles*.)
- The hero and the heroine, naturally, have more lines than the supporting members of the cast. (Change *The hero and the heroine* to *The hero or the heroine*.)
- Two of my friends were thrilled that they were assigned to the stage crew. (Change *Two* to *One*.)
- At every performance of our play, two of my three lines earn laughs from the audience. (Change *two* to *one*.)

EXERCISE B In most of the following sentences, a verb does not agree with its subject. Strike through each wrong verb. Then, write the correct form above it. If a verb form is already correct, write C above it.

Example 1. Nancy and her sister ~~has~~ ^{have} tickets to the play.

- My aunt and I like to play tennis, although neither of us are really very good at it.
- Everybody likes to spend some free time relaxing.
- Some of the prize-winning costumes was very original.
- Mathematics are an easy subject for some students, but to most students either history or English seems easier.
- Everybody in the movie theater were laughing hysterically.
- The chef and his assistant cooks excellent dishes.
- Neither the waiters nor the cook expect customers to return food.
- Paul's closest friend doesn't find him to be ill-tempered.
- My family agrees that our last two trips was a big success.
- Here's the pictures we took at the beach.

Review B: Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

EXERCISE Complete each sentence by underlining the pronoun that agrees with its antecedent. Then, underline the antecedent twice. If the antecedent is a relative pronoun, circle the word to which the relative pronoun refers.

Example 1. How many people who have (*his or her, their*) driver's licenses live in a big city?

- I like studying economics. I find (*them, it*) very interesting.
- Each of my three stepsisters will update (*their, her*) diary tonight.
- Neither Jane nor Clarissa will say what (*their, her*) middle name is.
- The jazz musicians won great praise for (*its, their*) remarkable performance.
- Startled by the thunder, the flock of sheep huddled against each other and made (*its, their*) way to shelter.
- Sarah Vaughan, a popular jazz singer, was known for (*her, their*) rich voice and inventive ability to improvise.
- One half of the musicians arrived late. I think (*they, it*) must have gotten caught in the traffic.
- One of my brothers said that (*they, he*) just had a haircut.
- Lola or Carmen will bring salad to the potluck dinner on Friday night. (*She, They*) will also pick up Rafael on the way.
- Alex is a man who treats all of (*their, his*) friends with a great deal of respect.
- The flock of sea gulls descended one by one to (*their, its*) nests on the cliff.
- Our teacher said that physics will fascinate us. (*They, It*) is a very important area of study.
- Nearly one fifth of the players received (*its, their*) awards for outstanding performance.
- Most of this shoreline and (*their, its*) natural beauty is under threat.
- Li-yun and Chao, two Taiwanese friends of mine, invited us to dinner at (*her, their*) grandparents' home.
- The car that had (*its, her*) headlights on would no longer start.
- Few of the boys had time to eat (*his, their*) lunch before the bell rang.
- Many consider "St. Louis Blues" a classic song. I believe (*it, they*) must be admired by many.
- My grandfather said that fifteen dollars was a lot of money to pay for a CD. He would never pay (*it, them*).
- The class gathered all (*its, their*) backpacks and headed toward the auditorium for the assembly.

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Review C: Subject-Verb and Pronoun-Antecedent

EXERCISE For each of the following sentences, underline the correct form of the verb or pronoun in parentheses.

Example 1. Two thirds of our assignment (has, have) been completed.

1. Almost every game we play in gym (*is, are*) strenuous.
2. The jury believes that (*it, they*) may have reached a decision.
3. Few people claim that iguanas or lizards (*is, are*) among their favorite pets.
4. In this band everyone can play (*their, his or her*) favorite instrument.
5. In this novel, there (*is, are*) at least one main theme.
6. If I get home before 3:00 P.M., my sister or my brother (*don't, doesn't*) have to walk the dog.
7. Visitors who eat in (*its, their*) hotel rooms will miss a great deal of sightseeing.
8. Neither Jim nor Matt knew that (*his, their*) wallet had been lost.
9. Based on his first trip to the United States, Dickens' *American Notes* (*is, are*) widely read.
10. The researcher announced that genetics (*is, are*) going to be the topic of the next seminar.
11. Despite many hours of grueling practice, neither of the teams (*is, are*) ready for the playoffs.
12. All of the birds who visited our birdbath chirped happily while (*it, they*) bathed.
13. Don't you think that 70 percent of the votes (*is, are*) going to be in our favor?
14. Either Lucia or Susan will need to call (*their, her*) parents for a ride.
15. (*Has, Have*) Tanya and Jeffrey been told about the change in plans?
16. Many a neighbor (*decorate, decorates*) his or her yard for the holiday.
17. Most of the money (*are, is*) in the bank account.
18. Both of the books were recommended by the librarian. I had already read (*it, them*) last year.
19. Very few of the boys played as well as (*he, they*) could.
20. Lists of terms relating to economics (*appears, appear*) in that book of technical jargon.