

GED 2002 Teachers' Handbook of Lesson Plans

Area/Skill - LA, Writing	Cognitive Skill Level - Application	Correlation to Framework - 01.02	Lesson Number - 06		
<p>Activity Title - Grammar– Subject-Verb Agreement</p> <p>Goal/Objective To enable students to write sentences in which the subject and the verbs are either both plural or both singular.</p> <p>Lesson Outline Introduction Subjects and verbs can be either singular or plural. When used in a sentence, the subject and verb must always agree. Review the basics of subject and verb agreement, including the verbs to be and to have.</p> <p>Activity Distribute and review the handout containing basic rules of subject-verb agreement. Write the following on the board. See how many combinations the students can make from these examples.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Subject fragments: The parrots and the squirrels The luggage The box of envelopes Not only the nurses but also the doctor</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Verb Fragments: are colorful. smells bad. listens to the radio. was full of hot air.</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>A random sentence might be “The luggage listens to the radio” or “The box of envelopes are colorful”. Ask the students to write subject and verb sentence fragments on little slips of paper (both singular and plural). Put them into two boxes and ask the students to draw a fragment from each and read the sentence that is formed.</p> <p>Debriefing/Evaluation Activity The sentences may be comical or may make no sense at all. Since the sentence makes no sense, the process is free of student habit or other influences. Use the 5-step process to review the sentences and determine if the subject and verb are in agreement. Have students make corrections as needed.</p>			<p>Subject fragments: The parrots and the squirrels The luggage The box of envelopes Not only the nurses but also the doctor</p>	<p>Verb Fragments: are colorful. smells bad. listens to the radio. was full of hot air.</p>	<p>Materials/Texts/Realia/Handouts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout—Subject-Verb Agreement • Handout—The 5-Step Subject-Verb Edit Process • Paper and pencils • Boxes for sentence fragments • Whiteboard or Chart Paper and Marker s <p>Extension Activity Have students review sample GED essays and identify any instances of problems with subject-verb agreement. Have the students sentences that contain errors in subject-verb agreement. This will give students opportunities to build their editing skills.</p> <p>ESE/ESOL Accommodations Pair students who need help with another student who will help them. Provide assistive technology such as a word processor with spelling and grammar checkers to help students who have difficulty with the writing process.</p>
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<p>Real-Life Connection Have students review articles from the local paper to see if they can identify any errors in subject-verb agreement. Ask students to identify common “slang” expressions that have errors in subject-verb agreement. For example: “he don’t”, “we is”, etc. Explain that the way we speak can have a tremendous effect on the way others will view us. Help students identify common errors with subject-verb agreement so they will not have problems on job interviews, meetings, etc.</p>					

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Activity Title— Grammar: Subject-Verb Agreement

Introduction

Say: Subject-verb agreement refers to the rule that a singular subject must be followed by a singular verb, and a plural subject must be followed by a plural verb. That sounds pretty straight forward, but to write sentences that are in agreement, you must be able to identify the subject and the verb, and whether they are singular or plural. Does a singular verb always end in “s”?

Main Activity

Distribute and review the handout containing basic rules of subject-verb agreement. Write the following on the board. See how many combinations the students can make from these examples.

Subject fragments:

The parrots and the squirrels

The luggage

The box of envelopes

Not only the nurses but also the doctor

Verb Fragments:

are colorful.

smells bad.

listens to the radio.

was full of hot air.

Say: I want each of you to write five subject and five verb sentence fragments on little slips of paper. We are going to put them in two boxes and then each of you will select a subject and verb fragment and make a sentence with them. I know some of them may not make any sense or will be funny. After we put the subjects and verbs together we will correct the sentences.

Debriefing/Evaluation Activity

Use the 5-step process to review the sentences and determine if the students have responded properly. *Say:* Using appropriate grammar goes further than when we are writing – often when we talk with other people we don't use proper subject-verb agreement in our conversation. *Ask:* Have you ever said “he don't know what he is doing” or “we is going down to the store”? If you use this type of language, people will judge you differently. If you use this type of language on an interview you probably won't get the job. Subject-verb agreement is just one way to improve your spoken and written communication skills.

Subject-Verb Agreement

RULE - The subject and verb of a sentence must agree. A singular subject must have a singular verb and a plural subject must have a plural verb.

1. The indefinite pronouns listed below are singular and require a singular verb.

one	no one	anyone	everyone	someone
each	no body	anybody	everybody	somebody
anything	everything	something		

No one is listening.
Everyone is listening.

2. The indefinite pronouns listed below are plural and require a plural verb.

both few many several

Many students understand the lesson. But a few are still confused.

3. Collective nouns, words that refer to a group of people or things, are treated as a singular unit and require singular verbs.

audience company class group committee crowd team choir

The group goes together everywhere. The team is inseparable.

4. Indefinite pronouns can be treated as either singular or plural, depending upon what they refer to within the context of the sentence.

most some none part any all

Most of the people are happy with the class.
Most of the corn is burned.

5. Watch out for words that appear to be plural because they end in “s”, but are really singular and require a singular verb.

politics news athletics civics

The news is bad.
Politics makes strange bedfellows.

6. Some words are plural and require a plural verb even when used to refer to only one object. Notice if used to refer to more than one, the plural form of the word stays the same.

Jeans scissors pliers shears pants trousers

The scissors are in the other room.
His jeans are ill-fitting; they hang low on the hips and appear as if they will fall off at any moment.

7. **Here and There**

The words here and there are expletives and cannot be the subjects of sentences. Notice that they often begin sentences and can look confusingly like subjects. The real subject lies elsewhere in the sentence:

Here **is** the **book** you ordered.

There **is no one** at the office.

8. **Compound Subjects joined by “And”**

When a sentence contains more than one subject and those subjects are joined by “and”, the subject is considered plural and the verb must also be plural:

Fruits and vegetables are both necessary to a well balanced diet.

The dog and the cat are unconcerned about the other’s presence.

9. **Compound Subjects joined by “either,...or”, “neither,...nor”, and “not only,...but also”**

When compound subjects are joined by any of the above combinations of words, the verb must agree with the subject that is closest to the verb:

Neither the candles nor **the lamp creates** the right amount of light.

Neither the lamp nor **the candles create** the right amount of light.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT FIVE-STEP EDIT PROCESS

1. Identify the subject.

The subject is the person or thing the sentence is about.

2. Determine whether the subject is singular or plural.

3. Identify the verb.

The verb expresses a physical action, a mental action or a feeling about the subject.

4. Determine whether the verb is singular or plural.

5. If the subject and the verb are both singular or are both plural, they agree. If they are not both the same, then you must change the verb so that it agrees with the subject, or vice versa.

Usually the verb is changed rather than the subject, because the writer knows whether he/she is referring to one or more than one thing. In other words, the subject is the choice of the speaker and so the verb should be the word that is changed.