

Subject Verb Agreement

When we construct a sentence its Verb and Subject must agree in Number and Person. Thus, if the subject is of the singular number, first-person, the verb must be of the singular number. If subject has plural number, third person, the verb must be of the plural number.

The subject and verb must agree in number and person.

- A singular subject takes a singular verb, (verb + s/es)
- A plural subject takes a plural verb, (bare infinitive)
- Collective nouns such as crowd, congregation, family, group, etc. may take a singular or plural verb depending upon the sense.
- If the collective noun refers to a single unit, the verb used is singular but if the noun refers to a collection of individuals, the verb used is plural.
- Nouns plural in form and plural in meaning, for example, physics, athletics, mumps, and so on, take a singular verb.
- Nouns plural in form but singular in meaning, for example, trousers, scissors, and so on, take a plural verb.
- Nouns joined by and take a plural verb.
- Nouns joined by 'and' but referring to the same person take a singular verb.
- In subjects joined by or, nor, either, neither, the verb agrees with the subject nearest to the verb.
- The title of a book/play takes a singular verb irrespective of form.
- Words/phrases expressing periods of time, fractions, weights, measurements and amounts of money are regarded as singular and take a singular verbs.

- **Subject Verb Agreement Exercises Solved Examples**

Question 1.

I sit by Kemmerich's side. He (sink) rapidly. Around us (be) great commotion. A hospital train (arrive) and the wounded who (be) fit to be moved are being selected. The doctor, (pass) by Kemmerich's bed without once looking at him. Kemmerich (raise) himself on the pillows with his elbows.

Answer:

- is sinking
- is
- has arrived
- are

- passes
- raises

Question 2.

In each of the following sentences, there is an error. Find out the error and provide the correction. First one has been done as an example.

(i)		Error	Correction
		are	is
The quality of the apples are not good Many of (a) them is rotten.		_____	_____
Cause of worries are that (b) the children		_____	_____
does not know the fact.	(c)	_____	_____
Answer: (a) is – are (b) are – is (c) does – do			
(ii)		Error	Correction
		are	is
Each century warm the earth.	(a)	_____	_____
But in the last century, there have been a	(b)	_____	_____

phenomenon increases in

earth's temperature. (c) _____ the

Answer:

- (a) warm warms
(b) have has
(c) increases – increase

Question 3.

Supply a verb in the blanks in agreement with its subject.

- (a) No news good news.
(b) The girl and the boy disappeared.
(c) One-third of the town flooded.
(d) "The Three Idiots" directed by Raju Hirani.
(e) Bhagwan Das, the writer, and the poet, passed away.
(f) Saffron, white and green the colours of the Indian flag.
(g) Chicken and cheese my favourite breakfast.

- (h) The crew forced to get off the plane.
 (i) The ship, with its crew, not traceable.
 (j) Nobody agreed. There many objections to the proposal.

Answer:

- (a) is
 (b) have/had
 (c) was
 (d) is
 (e) has
 (f) are
 (g) is
 (h) was/were
 (i) was
 (j) were

Question 4.

In each of the following sentences, there is an error. Find out the error and provide the correction. First one has been done as an example.

(i)	Error	Correction
	are	is
It was dark and cold in the garden. (a)	_____	_____
Rain is falling. A damp (b) cutting wind	_____	_____

were racing through the

(c) _____ garden.

Answer:

- (a) were – was (b) is
 – was
 (c) were – was

(ii)	Error	Correction
	are	is
Most of us has experienced (a) prejudice	_____	_____
in some way during our life. (b)	_____	_____
It may has been name-calling or (c)	_____	_____
bullying.		

Answer:

- (a) has – have
- (b) life – lives
- (c) has – have