

Exercises for Tutorial 3. Basic Subject/Verb Agreement

Principle I: When the subject of a sentence is *he, she, it* or any noun for which *he, she* or *it* can substitute, the last letter of the present-tense verb should be “s.” For all other subjects, do not add an “s” to the end of the present-tense verb. This is what we mean by correct subject/verb agreement.

Exercise 1

Instructions: Decide whether *he, she, it* or *they* could substitute for each subject in column 1. Write that pronoun in **column 2**. Then, write the subject and correct present tense verb in **column 4**. The first one has been done for you. *Type or write in the answer spaces.*

1 subject	2 pronoun	3 verb	4 subject and correct present-tense verb
1. Lakisha	<u>she</u>	(swim)	<u>Lakisha swims</u>
2. Chris	_____	(know)	_____
3. the man	_____	(eat)	_____
4. locket	_____	(shine)	_____
5. Ashok and Pria	_____	(skate)	_____

Principle II: When the subject of a sentence is *he, she, it* or any noun for which *he, she* or *it* can substitute and the present-tense verb ends in “s”, “x”, “o,” or “ch,” add an “es” to the end of the verb for correct subject/verb agreement.

Principle III: When the subject of a sentence is *he, she, it* or any noun for which *he, she* or *it* can substitute and the present-tense verb ends with a vowel + “y,” simply add “s” to the end of the verb for correct subject/verb agreement. However, if the verb ends with a consonant + “y,” drop the “y” and add “ies” to the end of the verb.

Exercise 2

Instructions: In each of the following sentences, the verb is in parentheses. Underline the subject. Using the “Correct Subject/Verb Agreement” chart, decide whether you need to add “s,” “es,” or drop the “y” and add “ies.” Then, write the correct present-tense verb for each of the following sentences. Remember that there can be more than one verb in a sentence. The first two sentences have been done for you. *Type or write in the answer spaces.*

1. Farhad (dress) **dresses** every day before breakfast.
(The verb “dress” is in parentheses. To find the subject, we ask: Who or what “dress every day before breakfast”? The answer is “Farhad.” He can substitute for the subject “Farhad.” Using the “Correct Subject/Verb Agreement” chart, we see that we should add “es” to “dress” to create correct subject/verb agreement.)
2. Juanita and Kathleen (work) **work** in the Writing Center from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm.
(The verb “work” is in parentheses. To find the subject, you ask: Who or what “work in the Writing Center from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm”? The answer is “Juanita and Kathleen.” They can substitute for the subjects “Juanita and Kathleen.” Using the Correct Subject/Verb Agreement chart, you see that no change is necessary to create correct subject/verb agreement.)
3. We (love) _____ skateboarding on the boardwalk.
4. Ludmilla and Tom (rise) _____ early and (catch) _____ the bus by 9:00 am to get to their jobs on time every morning.
5. Uto and Heilala (study) _____ organic chemistry diligently and (relax) _____ afterward.
6. Alapacita always (catch) _____ many fish out on the lake, but she (toss) _____ the small ones back into the water.
7. Jennifer (create) _____ dramatic oil paintings with deep, strong colors, and she (play) _____ with light and shadow in her paintings.

Exercise 3

Instructions: First, find the verb and subject in each sentence and underline them. Then, using the principles and charts in this tutorial, correct all the subject/verb agreement errors in the following paragraph. The first sentence has been done for you. *To underline in this PDF, type or copy-paste the paragraph below into the answer box; then select and underline all the subjects and verbs. After that, type your corrections after each subject or verb that has an agreement error. To make your corrections stand out, please make them **bold**.*

I teaches **teach** English Composition at CSM. The first day I always notices many worried students in my classes. Most students enters the classroom reluctantly, apprehensive and nervous about writing essays and reading books. Many student remember unpleasant experiences in middle school or high school. Some students is worried about second language interference; they does not feel confident about using English grammar rules. Others is afraid of the challenge of writing college-level essays; in high school they was not expected to write anything but personal narratives—stories based on their own lives. They has never written text-based essays, analysis of articles and books. Still others hates reading and prefers TV, computers or movies instead. Because these student has very little experience with reading, they needs practice and comprehension strategies. Homework are another cause for concern; most student know that my class will require more homework than they ever had in high school. Despite all these concerns, soon the students begins to relax. By the end of the semester, most student read and write much more skillfully and confidently, and their self-esteem increase immeasurably.