



Practice

Use the list below to write the correct term for each definition on the line provided.

body paragraphs
essay
expository writing

paragraph
punctuation
purpose

sentence
subtopic
useful topic

- _____ 1. a part of the topic and thesis broken down into parts
- _____ 2. the sentences between the topic sentence and the ending sentence that develop the main idea of the paragraph
- _____ 3. the specific reason a person has for writing
- _____ 4. a short piece of writing on a single subject that expresses a specific point of view
- _____ 5. symbols or marks that help readers understand the meaning of a sentence
- _____ 6. a topic that has been limited and that points to something specific about the general topic
- _____ 7. writing that explains something or informs readers
- _____ 8. a group of words that expresses a complete thought and contains a subject and a verb
- _____ 9. a group of related sentences that present and develop one main idea



Practice

Read over the **body paragraphs** of “Winning the Fair Maiden in 1920.”
Then complete the activities that follow.

First of all, Mom said that the only proper place to meet a young man was at church. This provided satisfaction for all involved. Parents could watch their daughters closely, maybe even attempt a bit of matchmaking on occasion. However, they also felt free to attempt to “un-match” any budding disasters they could see. In addition, young ladies were strongly advised to marry young men who faithfully attended church: the *same* church as the young ladies. Mom was quick to point out that although girls at that time were expected to behave modestly, they seldom left matters simply to parents and chance. She shared her own example. Mom had known my father since they were in first grade together. She had also been “sweet” on him since the first time he smiled at her and she noticed he had dimples. On one particular Sunday, Mom made sure she was a bit late to service. Wearing her best Sunday dress, she glided in and made sure she sat on the pew in front of Dad. When the sermon was over, as was the custom, Mom, Dad, and all the young people grouped together outside while their parents visited. This “group courting” lasted perhaps a half hour with parents watching closely. Then the parents would reclaim their children and take them home.

The rules of dating were clear to both young men and women and were not to be broken. A proper young lady would never agree to be courted by a young man who had not first asked her parents’ permission to do so. After several weeks of “group courting,” the young man was expected to make an appointment with both parents. Mom smiled as she remembered Dad’s first visit to her home. He arrived in his best church clothes, nervous but determined. Granddad and Granny met Dad, then took him into the sitting room for the ritual “questioning.” Dad was asked about his family, his future plans, and his religious beliefs—all of which my grandparents knew already. Mom, *dressed to the nines*, waited in her room until the *grilling session* was over. Then Granny brought her downstairs for tea and a visit. Had Dad not presented himself appropriately, Granddad would have shown him the door without even a peek at Mom.



After calling on the young lady and her parents for a few more visits, it was then acceptable for the couple to go out unchaperoned to proper gatherings. Mom said their first official date was a cakewalk held at the church. They were also allowed to attend other church socials and community picnics, and even take afternoon (never evening!) rides in Dad's new car. It went without saying that the young lady would be treated with dignity and respect. Mom said that since everyone in her small community knew everyone else, her parents usually knew where she had been and for how long. The older members of the community were more than eager to pass along gossip and periodic "reports" on the couple's behavior. This stage of courtship was expected to last at least a year, maybe longer. This depended on the attitude of the parents and the growth of the relationship between the young couple. Mom and Dad courted for two years before they were married.

Answer the following.

1. Write each topic sentence below.

Topic sentence for body paragraph #1: _____

Topic sentence for body paragraph #2: _____

Topic sentence for body paragraph #3: _____



2. **Write the opposite of each topic sentence. Then** *circle* if a high school student (would / would not) agree with the opposite statement.

Opposite of topic sentence for body paragraph #1: _____

A high school student (would / would not) agree with this opposite statement.

Opposite of topic sentence for body paragraph #2: _____

A high school student (would / would not) agree with this opposite statement.

Opposite of topic sentence for body paragraph #3: _____

A high school student (would / would not) agree with this opposite statement.



3. Write down specific words that help the reader understand the writer's meaning.

4. Describe the way each topic sentence suggests that the rest of the paragraph will be developed.



Practice

Read the **first body paragraph** from “Winning the Fair Maiden in 1920.”
Then complete the activities that follow.

First of all, Mom said that the only proper place to meet a young man was at church. This provided satisfaction for all involved. Parents could watch their daughters closely, maybe even attempt a bit of matchmaking on occasion. However, they also felt free to attempt to “un-match” any budding disasters they could see. In addition, young ladies were strongly advised to marry young men who faithfully attended church: the *same* church as the young ladies. Mom was quick to point out that although girls at that time were expected to behave modestly, they seldom left matters simply to parents and chance. She shared her own example. Mom had known my father since they were in first grade together. She had also been “sweet” on him since the first time he smiled at her and she noticed he had dimples. On one particular Sunday, Mom made sure she was a bit late to service. Wearing her best Sunday dress, she glided in and made sure she sat on the pew in front of Dad. When the sermon was over, as was the custom, Mom, Dad, and all the young people grouped together outside while their parents visited. This “group courting” lasted perhaps a half hour with parents watching closely. Then the parents would reclaim their children and take them home.

Answer the following.

Here is the topic sentence.

First of all, Mom said, the only proper place to meet a young man was at church.

Explain how each of the detail sentences explains, supports, or illustrates this topic sentence.

- This provided satisfaction for all involved.

Explanation: _____



- Parents could watch their daughters closely, maybe even attempt a bit of matchmaking on occasion.

Explanation: _____

- However, they also felt free to attempt to “un-match” any budding disasters they could see.

Explanation: _____

- In addition, young ladies were strongly advised to marry young men who faithfully attended church: the *same* church as the young ladies.

Explanation: _____

- Mom was quick to point out that although girls at that time were expected to behave modestly, they seldom left matters simply to parents and chance.

Explanation: _____

- She shared her own example. Mom had known my father since they were in first grade together.

Explanation: _____

- She had also been “sweet” on him since the first time he smiled at her and she noticed he had dimples.

Explanation: _____



- On one particular Sunday, Mom made sure she was a bit late to service. Wearing her best Sunday dress, she glided in and made sure she sat on the pew in front of Dad.

Explanation: _____

- When the sermon was over, as was the custom, Mom, Dad, and all the young people grouped together outside while their parents visited.

Explanation: _____

- This “group courting” lasted perhaps a half hour with parents watching closely.

Explanation: _____

- Then the parents would reclaim their children and take them home.

Explanation: _____



Practice

Use the list below to replace the underlined word in each sentence to make the sentence **specific** and **more interesting** to a reader.

complained	explained	hinted
ordered	exclaimed	recited
suggested	reported	stated
wrote		

1. The teacher said, “ You have been a great class today!”
2. Mother said that if we were all extremely quiet, we could have our surprise.
3. My little sister said that I was bothering her.
4. The guidance counselor said that I will need a tutor in algebra next year.
5. Dad said, “You must complete your homework before you watch any television.”
6. “I’m late because my alarm didn’t ring,” I said to my teacher.
7. The author said that not all spiders can see.
8. The teacher said that my writing showed much promise.
9. I said the poem in front of the class.
10. The weatherman said that the cold front would bring below normal temperatures by the weekend.



Practice

Below are some **vague words** which could be **replaced by more exact words** to make for more interesting reading. For each word given, write two more words that give the reader a **vivid image**. The first two examples have been done for you.

A	B	C
1. laugh	<i>chuckle</i>	<i>guffaw</i>
2. walked	<i>ambled</i>	<i>strolled</i>
3. smile	_____	_____
4. cooked	_____	_____
5. throw	_____	_____
6. soft	_____	_____
7. happy	_____	_____
8. garbage	_____	_____
9. good	_____	_____
10. sing	_____	_____
11. play	_____	_____
12. clean	_____	_____
13. friend	_____	_____
14. look	_____	_____



Practice

Read each of the following sentences. Write an **S** if it is a **simple** sentence.
Write a **C** if it is a **compound** sentence.

- _____ 1. Finally the storm stopped, and the flight was allowed to take off.
- _____ 2. The dogs and cats were fighting.
- _____ 3. Alecia enjoys sports, but Antonio does not.
- _____ 4. Is Larry your brother, or is he your cousin?
- _____ 5. The capital of Florida is Tallahassee.
- _____ 6. I can't seem to forget you; your perfume is still on my jacket.
- _____ 7. The track team member ran and jumped the hurdles.
- _____ 8. Javier got up very early this morning, but he was still late.
- _____ 9. Do you know the way to San Jose?
- _____ 10. I'm grounded for a week, and I hate it.



Practice

Complete the following sentences by **adding another sentence** to make each statement a **compound sentence**.

1. We arrived at the concert early, and _____
_____ .
2. _____ , but he won the relay race.
3. You cannot eat hot dogs, nor _____ .
4. We tossed water balloons back and forth, and _____
_____ .
5. _____ ,
and in the evening we want to go to the movies.
6. The children were hungry, but _____
_____ .
7. _____ ,
yet the beach party was cancelled.
8. I've fallen, and _____ .
9. Report cards come out tomorrow, and _____
_____ .
10. I couldn't get my locker opened, so _____
_____ .



Practice

Combine the **two simple sentences** below to make **one compound sentence**.
Remember: *fanboys*.

1. The raccoon slept inside the log. The squirrel slept inside the tree.

2. The runner ran down the track. The skier skied down the mountain.

3. A robin perched upon her hand. A parrot perched upon her shoulder.

4. The cat crept into the room. The dog crept onto his bed.

5. Bright fish swim in the sea. Whales swim in the ocean.

6. This chair is old. It is comfortable.

7. Matt's watch is digital. Darron's watch is analog.

8. The kicker made the field goal. Our team won the game.



Practice

Read each of the following **groups of words**.

- Write **C** if it is a **correct sentence**.
- Write **F** if it is a **dependent clause fragment**.

- _____ 1. Because I wanted to go shopping.
- _____ 2. I did not answer the phone because I wanted to stay in bed.
- _____ 3. After we ate lunch, we went for a walk.
- _____ 4. After watching my favorite television program.
- _____ 5. Since Mattie is taking the bus.
- _____ 6. Since you are bringing movies, I will provide refreshments.
- _____ 7. Wipe your feet before coming inside.
- _____ 8. Before you leave for school.
- _____ 9. If you will be late getting home.
- _____ 10. Make sure to give us a call if you need help.



Here are some examples of dependent clauses beginning with words from the list.

- (1) *After* you return from your trek across India,
- (2) *Although* your idea is a good one,
- (3) *Before* you begin to yell at me,
- (4) *If* you only knew how important you are,
- (5) *Unless* we can find an alternative,
- (6) *When* you smile at me like that,
- (7) *While* you were gone,

Notice how each of these dependent clauses leaves us with a question. For example, after hearing clause (2), we wonder: My idea is a good one but what? Clause (5) leaves us wondering: What will happen if we can't find an alternative?

Here are the dependent clauses again, this time joined to independent clauses. Notice how the independent clause delivers the key piece of information that completes each thought. The independent clauses have been italicized.

- (1) After you return from your trek across India, *I will massage your feet.*
- (2) Although your idea is a good one, *we have tried it before without success.*
- (3) Before you begin to yell at me, *I should tell you I have turned off my hearing aid.*
- (4) If you only knew how important you are, *you wouldn't talk about yourself in such negative ways.*
- (5) Unless we can find an alternative, *we will have to carry our band instruments to the concert across town.*
- (6) When you smile at me like that, *I can't think straight.*
- (7) While you were gone, *I cleaned up your room and found \$50 in change on your floor.*



Correcting Run-on Sentences: When Words Run Stop Signs

A *run-on sentence* is two or more complete sentences that are written as one sentence. Run-on sentences do not show where one idea ends and another begins. Because of this, they can confuse readers. There are two kinds of run-on sentences: the **fused sentence** and the **comma splice**.

In a *fused sentence*, the writer has joined sentences *without any punctuation* between them.

Run-on: Athletes must be smart they need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.

Correct: Athletes must be smart. They need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.

In a *comma splice*, the writer has joined two sentences *with only a comma* between them.

Run-on: Athletes must be smart, they need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.

Correct: Athletes must be smart. They need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.

There are different ways to revise a run-on sentence.

- The easiest way to do this is to *make two sentences*, as in the above examples.

However, if the run-on sentences are closely related, you can make a **compound sentence** in the following ways.

- You can join the sentences with a semicolon.

Athletes must be smart; they need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.

- You can add a comma and a coordinating conjunction (one of the words in *fanboy* —*for, and, nor, but, or, you*).

Athletes must be smart, **so** they need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.



- **You can add a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb.** Conjunctive adverbs are words such as *therefore*, *instead*, *meanwhile*, *still*, *also*, *nevertheless*, or *however*. Always put a comma after the conjunctive adverb.

Athletes must be smart; **therefore**, they need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.

- You can also correct run-on sentences by making a **complex sentence**. To do this, you will need to turn one of the sentences into a dependent clause. You do this by adding a *subordinating conjunction*, which is a word such as those listed in the following chart.

Common Subordinating Conjunctions		
after	before	unless
although	even though	until
as	if	when
as if	in order that	whenever
as long as	provided that	where
as soon as	since	wherever
as though	so that	whether
as well as	than	while
because	though	why

Because **athletes must be smart**, they need to exercise their minds as well as their bodies.



Subject-Verb Agreement: Matching the Actor with the Action

To make sure that your writing is not misunderstood by your audience, follow the rule of **subject-verb agreement**. It may be obvious to you that nouns or subjects can be singular and plural. *Dog* is singular and *dogs* is plural. Verbs can also be singular or plural. *Was* is singular and *were* is plural. If you think about it, *The dog were here*, sounds funny. This is because *dog* is singular, but *were* is plural.

A good test to help you determine whether the subject and verb agree follows.

- Start with the subject. If it is singular, substitute “it” for the subject. If it is plural, substitute “they.”

Example: Apples taste best in fall and winter.

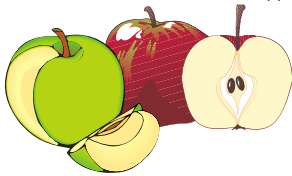
Apples is plural; substitute “they” for apples.

- Read the sentence aloud. Does it sound correct? If so, your subject and verb agree. If not, they do not agree and you should change the verb.

Example: They taste best in fall and winter.

This sounds correct, and it is.

If you changed the verb to singular, the sentence would read:



They tastes best in fall and winter.

This sounds incorrect, and it is.



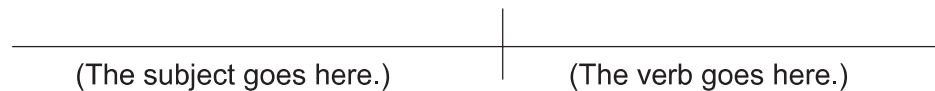
Determining Subject-Verb Agreement in Phrases and Clauses

In some sentences you may find it difficult to tell if a subject is singular or plural. For example, read the following sentence:

An answer to your letters is finally here.

Is the subject the singular noun *answer* or the plural noun *letters*? The subject is *answer*. It is an *answer*—not the *letters* that is finally here. Do not let the *phrase* or *clause* (*to your letter*) between the subject (*answer*) and its verb (*is*) confuse you.

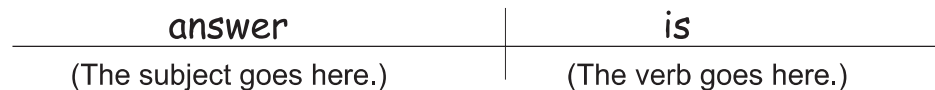
One way to locate the subject is to construct a simple subject/verb diagram. The diagram looks like the following:



Let's diagram the sentence: An answer to your letters *is* finally here. Start with the verb:



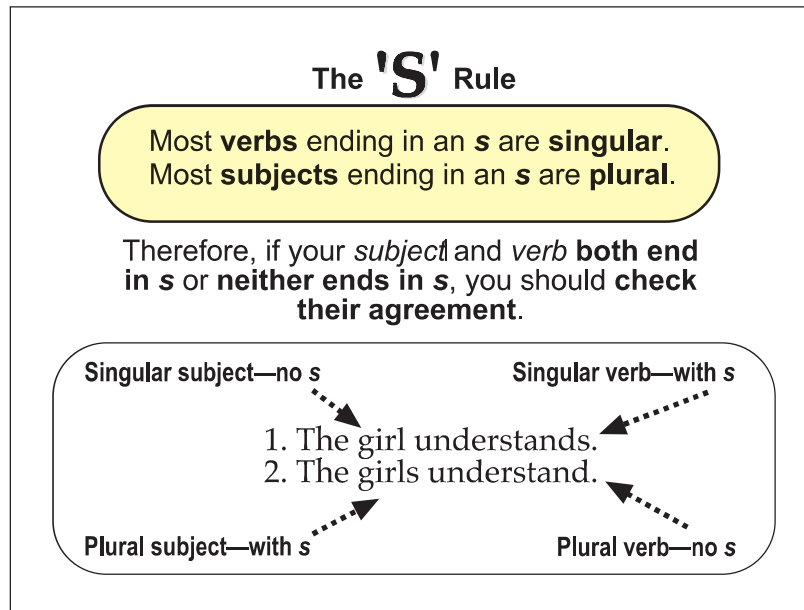
Ask yourself: What **IS** finally here? The *answer* is the subject, and it goes on the subject line.





Rules about Selecting Verbs That Agree with Pronouns

It is fairly easy to determine that *pronouns* such as *I*, *he*, and *she* are singular, but what about the pronouns *anyone* or *few*? Study and remember the following rules about pronouns and “The ‘S’ Rule” below.



1. A phrase that follows a subject does not change the number of the subject.
2. The following are singular pronouns and require singular verbs:

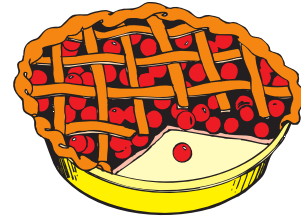
each, either, neither, one, another
someone, somebody, something
no one, nobody, nothing
anyone, anybody, anything
everyone, everybody, everything

3. The following are plural pronouns and require plural verbs: *several, many, both, and few*.



4. The following are singular or plural pronouns depending on the sentence: *some, all, most, any, and none*.

If the words refer to a singular noun, then they are also singular. For example—**Some pie** *was* still frozen.



Some pie *was* still frozen.

If the words refer to a plural noun, then they are also plural. For example—**Some birds** *were* captured.

Rules about Selecting Verbs That Agree with Compound Subjects

A *compound subject* has two or more subjects joined by a conjunction and share the same verb. Below are some rules and examples in selecting verbs to agree with compound subjects.

1. Subjects joined by *and* usually take a plural verb.

Example: **She** and her **brother** *like* saltwater fishing.

2. Subjects joined by *and* that name only one person, place, thing, or idea take singular verbs, as do singular compound nouns that contain *and*.

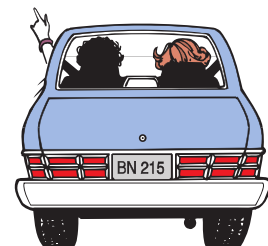
Examples: The school's **mascot and fastest track runner** *was* at the game last night. (one person)
Staying at a **bed and breakfast** *is* the best way to travel. (one place to stay)

3. Singular subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a singular verb.

Example: Neither our **cell phone** nor our **home phone** *was* working.

4. Plural subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a plural verb.

Example: Neither the **brake lights** nor the **back-up lights** *are* working on my car.





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

Examples: Either **Miguel** or his **uncles** *are* going to the mountains this fall.

Neither the **pies** nor the **pumpkin bread** *is* ready to be eaten.



Regular and Irregular Verbs: Hard Working Words

The *tense* of a verb tells the time of the action of the verb. Verbs in English have six tenses. These six tenses are formed from the four principal parts of verbs. The principal parts of the regular verb laugh are listed below.

Principal Parts of the Regular Verb Laugh

Base Form	Present Participle	Past	Past Participle
laugh	(is) laughing	laughed	have laughed
The six tenses, formed from the above principal parts, are as follows:			
Past	existing or happening in the past Yesterday, I laughed at Jenny's funny story		
Present	existing or happening now You laugh now, but I will win the race.		
Future	existing or happening in the future I will laugh when I cross the finish line first.		
Past Perfect	existing or happening before a specific time in the past Before I tasted the lychee fruit, I had laughed at its funny looks.		
Present Perfect	existing or happening sometime before now; maybe continuing now. I have laughed when I should not have, and it has always gotten me into trouble.		
Future Perfect	existing or happening before a specific time in the future By the time we have finished painting the fence, we will have laughed a great deal.		



Each tense of the verb has another form called the *progressive form*. The progressive form is used to express continuing action or state of being. This form consists of the present participle of a verb and the correct tense of the verb *to be*. (Remember: a verb form ending in *-ing* is *not* a verb without a helper).

present progressive:	am, are laughing
past progressive:	was, were laughing
future progressive:	will be laughing
present perfect progressive:	has, have been laughing
past perfect progressive:	had been laughing
future perfect progressive:	will have been laughing

The present and past tenses have another form. This is called the *emphatic form*. The emphatic form is used to show *emphasis*. In present tense, the emphatic form is made up of the helping verb *do* or *does* and the base form of a verb.

I **do laugh** whenever I watch this television program.

The past tense emphatic form is made up of the verb *did* and the base form of a verb.

We **did laugh** when Shaun slipped off the chair.