

Grammar Lesson 6

Subjects and Predicates

The subject of a sentence tells whom or what the sentence is about.

Ex: **Aunt Louise** found a beautiful antique lamp at the garage sale.

The kitten with the white paws is called Boots.

A sealed envelope rested near the edge of the desk.

- Sometimes the subject may not begin the sentence. This is especially true in questions.

Ex: Laughing and running down the street were **two small boys**.

Can **horses and cattle** swim?

- The subject may also come after a part of the predicate.

Ex: Between 1660 and 1669, **Samuel Pepys** kept a diary. (“Between 1660 and 1669” does not describe the subject, Samuel Pepys, but instead describes *when* he kept the diary, so it is considered part of the predicate.)

In many entries **Pepys** told about his family and friends. (“In many entries” does not describe the subject, Pepys, but instead describes *where* he told about his family and friends.)

The simple subject is the main noun or pronoun that tells whom or what the sentence is about. In the following examples the complete subject--the simple subject and the words that describe it--is still bold-faced, but the simple subject has been underlined.

Ex: **The dangerous trip over the mountains** took four days.

Someone in this room is about to get a big surprise.

Pacing back and forth in the cage was a **hungry tiger**.

- Important tip: the simple subject (and the verb, too) of the sentence will never be in a prepositional phrase.

Ex: **Several of the players** hit home runs. (“of the players” is a prepositional phrase).

The predicate of a sentence tells something about the subject. Whatever is not part of the complete subject is part of the predicate. The main part of the predicate is the verb.

Ex: Marco's brother **delivers pizzas**.

A chickadee **perched on the tiny branch**.

Covering the side of the hill were wildflowers.

A compound subject is when two or more connected subjects share the same verb.

Ex: **Keshia and Todd** worked a jigsaw puzzle.

An astronaut, an engineer, and a journalist were among the guest speakers.

A compound predicate, or compound verb, consists of two or more verbs that share the same subject. The complete predicates are still bold-faced, but the compound predicates have been underlined.

Ex: The dog **barked and growled at the stranger**.

The man **was convicted but later was found innocent of the crime**.

You **can leave now or wait for the others**.

Diagramming subjects and predicates

A sentence diagram will always have a line that is split with a vertical line that separates the subject from the predicate.

Ex: A sealed envelope rested near the edge of the desk.

A sealed envelope | rested near the edge of the desk

However, only the *simple* subject will go on the left side of the vertical line. The predicate will go on the right side. Words that are part of the complete subject go on slanted lines **below** the simple subject.

Ex: A sealed envelope rested near the edge of the desk.

envelope | rested near the edge of the desk
A sealed

Compound subjects each get their own subject line that merge into the same predicate line.

Ex: Keshia and Todd worked a jigsaw puzzle. Keshia
Todd | worked a jigsaw puzzle

Compound predicates are just the opposite; they share one subject line and then split into two predicate lines.

Ex: The dog barked and growled at the stranger. dog | barked
growled at the stranger

Identifying Subjects and Predicates

Directions: For each of the following sentences, draw a vertical line to separate the complete subject from the complete predicate. Some sentences may require two lines because the subject may come after a part of the predicate. Then, circle the single noun or pronoun that is the simple subject. Finally, on a separate sheet of paper, diagram the sentences as described previously on the hand out.

Ex: My favorite teams compete in the Caribbean Baseball Leagues.

1. People throughout Latin America enjoy going out to a ballgame.
2. The all-American sport of baseball has been very popular there for a long time.
3. In fact, fans in countries such as Cuba, Panama, and Venezuela go wild over the game.
4. As a result, the Caribbean Baseball Leagues were formed.
5. Each year the teams in Latin America play toward a season championship.

-----Compound Subjects-----

6. Children and nature are honored with their own festivals in Japan.
7. The Cherry Blossom Festival and the Chrysanthemum Festival are among the nature festivals in Japan.
8. Fierce dragons and even huge ships fly in the sky during Singapore's Kite Festival.
9. Elaborate masks and costumes are an important part of the Carnival Lamayote in Haiti.
10. In Munich, Germany, floats and bandwagons add color to the Oktoberfest parade.

-----Compound Predicates-----

11. One Chorotega folk tale tells the story of the Chorotegan treasure and praises Princess Nosara for protecting it from the Chirenos.
12. Chireno warriors landed on the Nicoya Peninsula and attacked the Chorotegas.
13. The Chorotegas were surprised but reacted quickly.
14. Princess Nosara grabbed the treasure and ran to her friend's house for help.
15. Nosara and he took a bow and some arrows and ran to her friend's house for help.
16. The couple ran from the enemy all night and at last reached a river.
17. The brave girl dashed into the mountains alone, hid the treasure, and returned to the river.
18. Chireno warriors eventually killed the princess and her friend but never found the treasure.