

# Practice Test I

## A Quick Review of Subjects and Verbs

The **subject** of a sentence is the person, place, thing, or idea that the sentence is about. It is always a noun or pronoun. The **verb** tells what the sentence is saying about the subject. Look at the following sentence:

The tiny pig squealed loudly.

This sentence is about a pig, so PIG is the subject. The verb is SQUEALED—that's what the pig did.

A subject is never in a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition (such as OF or FROM) and ends with a noun or pronoun. Now look at this sentence:

Most of my friends are married.

The subject of this sentence is MOST. Because OF MY FRIENDS is a prepositional phrase, the subject cannot be FRIENDS. The verb is ARE, a linking verb that connects the subject to the descriptive word MARRIED.

Here are a few more things to remember about verbs:

The verb of a sentence may be a main verb plus one or more helping verbs. The verb of a sentence never begins with the word TO. Also, a word ending in –ING can be part of a verb only if a helping verb comes before it. Finally, words such as NOT and ALWAYS are never part of the verb.

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**Directions: Choose the answer choice of the subject or verb, as needed.**

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The supermarket across the street accepts credit cards as well as cash.

1. The **subject** of this sentence is

- a. supermarket.
- b. across.
- c. street.
- d. accepts.

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The supermarket across the street accepts credit cards as well as cash.

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2. The **verb** of this sentence is

- a. across.
  - b. street.
  - c. accepts.
  - d. cards.
- 

The electric drill in the dentist's office buzzes like an angry bee.

3. The **subject** of the sentence is

- a. electric.
  - b. drill.
  - c. office.
  - d. bee.
- 

The electric drill in the dentist's office buzzes like an angry bee.

4. The **verb** of the sentence is

- a. electric.
  - b. dentist's.
  - c. buzzes.
  - d. angry.
- 

Spaghetti tastes especially good with grated cheese.

5. The **subject** of the sentence is

- a. spaghetti.
- b. tastes.
- c. good.
- d. cheese.

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Spaghetti tastes especially good with grated cheese.

6. The **verb** of the sentence is

- a. tastes.
  - b. good.
  - c. with.
  - d. cheese.
- 

Numerous baseball fans of all ages come to watch the World Series.

7. The **subject** of the sentence is

- a. numerous.
  - b. baseball.
  - c. fans.
  - d. come.
- 

Numerous baseball fans of all ages come to watch the World Series.

8. The **verb** of the sentence is

- a. of.
  - b. ages.
  - c. come.
  - d. to watch.
- 

During supper, the children of the family were arguing about which movie to see.

9. The **subject** of the sentence is

- a. during.

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- b. supper.
  - c. the.
  - d. children.
- 

During supper, the children of the family were arguing about which movie to see.

10. The **verb** of the sentence is

- a. were.
  - b. arguing.
  - c. were arguing.
  - d. to see.
- 

THE END

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## A Quick Review of Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

**Misplaced** and **dangling modifiers** can lead to incorrect and even humorous interpretations of your writing. To avoid them, place words as close as possible to what they describe.

The dog chased the automobile foaming at the mouth.

The intended meaning—that the dog was foaming at the mouth—is clear if the modifier “foaming at the mouth” is moved before the word “dog”: “Foaming at the mouth, the dog chased the automobile.”

Hanging safely in the closet, Paul discovered his favorite jacket.

The intended meaning—that the jacket hung safely in the closet—is clear if the words “hanging safely in the closet” are placed after the word “jacket”: “Paul discovered his favorite jacket hanging safely in his closet.”

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**Directions: Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers: Choose the sentence in which modifiers are used properly.**

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## Group 1

- a. I'm returning the swimsuit to the store that makes me look fat.
  - b. I'm returning the swimsuit that makes me look fat to the store.
- 

## Group 2

- a. The plants with small purple blossoms by the lamp are violets.
  - b. The plants by the lamp with small purple blossoms are violets.
- 

## Group 3

- a. We watched with helpless anger as our house burned to the ground.
  - b. We watched as our house burned to the ground with helpless anger.
- 

## Group 4

- a. The woman in that boat that is waving is trying to tell us something.
  - b. The woman that is waving in that boat is trying to tell us something.
- 

## Group 5

- a. The two students eating pizza at the corner table were laughing loudly.
  - b. The two students at the corner table eating pizza were laughing loudly.
-

# Practice Test I

**Directions: Choose the sentence in which modifiers are used properly.**

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## Group 1

- a. Carrie has sixty freckles nearly on her face.
  - b. Carrie nearly has sixty freckles on her face.
  - c. Carrie has nearly sixty freckles on her face.
- 

## Group 2

- a. I only studied one hour for my midterm test.
  - b. I studied only one hour for my midterm test.
  - c. I studied one hour for my midterm only test.
- 

## Group 3

- a. I didn't make even one mistake on the midterm test.
  - b. I didn't even make one mistake on the midterm test
  - c. I didn't make one even mistake on the midterm test.
- 

## Group 4

- a. The terrible fall nearly broke every bone in the skier's body.
  - b. The terrible fall broke nearly every bone in the skier's body.
  - c. The terrible fall broke every bone nearly in the skier's body.
-

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Group 5

- a. By the end of the war, twenty countries were almost involved in the fighting.
  - b. By the end of the war, twenty countries were involved almost in the fighting.
  - c. By the end of the war, almost twenty countries were involved in the fighting.
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THE END

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## A Quick Review of Word Choice

**Wordiness, slang, and clichés weaken communication.**

**Wordy writing** uses more words than necessary to get a message across.

**Wordy:** I have made the decision to work for a company that is small in size.

**Revised:** I have decided to work for a small company.

**Slang**, colorful and informal language, is generally inappropriate in formal writing.

**Slang:** The President lost his cool today because of the Congress's in-your-face attitude.

**Revised:** The President became quite impatient today because of Congress's opposition.

**Clichés** are worn-out sayings that should be avoided in all writing.

**Cliché:** Mr. Sherman drove like a maniac before being arrested for driving under the influence.

**Revised:** Mr. Sherman drove wildly before being arrested for drunk driving.

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**Directions: Choose the sentence in which modifiers are used properly.**

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Group 1

- a. Tiffany did not have a clue about what was being taught in her science class.

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b. Tiffany did not understand what was being taught in her science class.

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## Group 2

a. When my parents see my final grades, I will be in trouble.

b. When my parents see my final grades, I will be dead meat.

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## Group 3

a. Everyone was disgusted when the cat brought home a dead rat.

b. Everyone was grossed out when the cat brought home a dead rat.

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## Group 4

a. Exhausted by their trip, the twins sacked out as soon as they got home.

b. Exhausted by their trip, the twins fell asleep as soon as they got home.

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## Group 5

a. Freddie is really unrealistic if he thinks he can make a living as a juggler.

b. Freddie is really in la-la land if he thinks he can make a living as a juggler.

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## A Quick Review of Subject-Verb Agreement

The subject and verb of a sentence must agree in number. A singular subject needs a singular verb, and a plural subject needs a plural verb. The four rules below will help you avoid mistakes in subject-verb agreement. (The subjects and verbs in the example sentences are written in capital letters.)

1. The subject and verb must agree even when they are separated by a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition (such as “in,” “of,” “to,” and “across”) and ends with a noun or pronoun. A prepositional phrase never contains the subject of a sentence.

The GROCERIES in this store COST too much.

2. The subject and verb must agree even when the verb comes first.

Why ARE so many MOSQUITOES in here?

3. Some indefinite pronouns are singular (including “each,” “either,” “anyone,” “everybody,” and “nothing”), and therefore they take singular verbs.

EVERYBODY in the class HOPES the tests will be postponed.

4. A compound subject—two or more subjects joined by “and”—requires a plural verb.

ROLLERSKATING and PLAYING the piano ARE my favorite activities.

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Directions: Select the verb form that correctly completes the sentence.

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1. Recess time! Reading and writing \_\_\_\_\_ important parts of the school day.

is

are

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2. But games on the playground \_\_\_\_\_, too.

are

is

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3. The little kids in Teron’s class \_\_\_\_\_ racing around on their scooterboards.

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love

loves

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4. The exercise and fresh air \_\_\_\_\_ their bodies and minds.

benefits

benefit

---

5. It's time to head back into class. The smiles on the kids' faces \_\_\_\_\_ Teron feel good.

makes

make

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6. They remind him of why he is a teacher. Teron grew up in a poor neighborhood without his father around. Drugs and crime \_\_\_\_\_ everywhere he looked.

was

were

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7. The teachers in his own life \_\_\_\_\_ very important to him. They let him know they believed he could succeed in life.

was

were

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8. Adult support and encouragement \_\_\_\_\_ a big difference in the life of a child. Teron wants to provide that kind of support to the children he teaches.

make

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makes

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9. Boys and girls \_\_\_\_\_ how to be adults from observing the grownups around them.

learns

learn

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10. Teron saw lots of negative role models, such as drug dealers, as he was growing up. But he focused on the positive people in his life. He hopes the kids in his class \_\_\_\_\_ the same thing.

does

do

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THE END

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