

## Subject/Verb Agreement, Intervening Words and Inverted Order



**Intervening Words** -- To find the correct verb, try this technique. When the subject and the verb are separated by other words between them, cross out those intervening words. Then, match the subject to the verb. For example, look at this sentence:

*Subj.* My brother, ~~as well as my sisters~~, (*Verb* attend, **attends**) the martial arts dojo. (dojo = school for training in self-defense)

You can easily see that "attends" is the correct verb.

**Under line the subject in each sentence first. Then, choose the correct verb in the following sentences. There are a few other errors as well. Can you find them?**

1. The teacher, as well as twenty-one students, ( is, are ) happy about the Columbus Day holiday. (Find an error.)
2. Each of the players ( take, takes ) team practice seriously.
3. A clairvoyant, say many faithful followers, ( predict, predicts ) the future.
4. Directions for the cinnamon rolls (is, are ) on the back of the package.
5. Kyle, together with Caleb and Zack, ( plan, plans ) to go to Tallahassee this month. (Find an error.)
6. The master plumber with several qualified assistants ( was, were ) on the scene to repair the downed power line. (Find an error.)
7. One of the English students at Haney Technical Center ( write, writes ) much better essays than the others. (Find an error.)
8. The Ford truck with the tinted windows and diamond plate rail caps ( need, needs ) to be polished.
9. The young mother with her three small children ( want, wants ) to catch a ride on the trolley.
10. The superintendent in addition to the school board members ( study, studies ) budget cuts.
11. A plan for several new schools in various locations ( is, are ) under consideration.
12. A large map of all 48 states and 11 Canadian provinces ( is, are) printed in a road atlas. (Find an error.)
13. One of the boys ( want, wants ) to go home.
14. This magazine, including all the articles about basket weaving, ( is, are ) boring.
15. The family van, filled with laughing children and their parents, ( wait, waits ) at the stoplight.
16. The mouse in the biscuit mix, accompanied by the weevils in the cereal box, ( embarrass, embarrasses ) us when we have guests. (Find an error.)
17. A hungry teacher, followed in line by three ravenous students, ( fight, fights ) for the last chicken breast in the serving tray.
18. One dollar, in addition to a 30 copper cents, ( is, are) my only money until I get payed. (Find an error.)
19. Every one of my six goldfish ( demand, demands ) tiny crumbs of fried shrimp for breakfast.
20. The flavor of Columbian coffees ( is, are) superior to the brews from Siberian beans.

BBFN

## Subject Verb Agreement (continued)

**Inverted Order** -- Sometimes the normal order of a sentence (subject → verb) is reversed. Writers do this to add variety to their sentences, and poets sometimes invert the order of sentences, too. For example, look at this sentence:

Verb                      subject

In the back of the closet under the shelving ( was, were ) a pair of old shoes.

*To decide if the verb is "was" or "were," reverse the order of the sentence like this:*

A pair of old shoes ( was, were ) in the back of the closet under the shelving.

**Choose the correct verb in the following sentences. There are a few other errors as well. Can you find them?**

21. In the refrigerator ( is, are ) an old sandwich and an opened can of soda. (Find an error.)
22. Over the river and through the woods ( is, are ) the route to grandmother's house.
23. Along the shoreline ( was, were ) a peice of driftwood and a small crab. (Find an error.)
24. Under the bed ( is, are ) much dust and dirt.
25. Behind the ramshackle old garage ( rest, rests ) a couple of vintage cars. (vintage = old, outmoded)
26. In distant galaxies far from earth (live, lives ) unknown peoples and civilizations. (Find an error.)
27. Below the sea near the Atlantic Ridge ( roam, roams) rare species of bioluminescent fish.  
bioluminescent = glow from living things
28. In ancient forests around the Smokey Mountains ( dwell, dwells ) an ancestor of modern ferns. (Find an error.)
29. In a cave forgotten for thousands of years ( lie, lies ) an stone blade made by a Neanderthal Man.
30. From nations all over the world ( come, comes) representatives to the United Nations.
31. ( Have, Has ) the mail for the Smiths arrived yet? (Hint: Turn the question into a statement.)
32. At the end of the driveway on High Point Road ( sit, sits ) two large eagles mounted on brick pillars.
33. Below the bridge ( live, lives ) a family of trolls.
34. From this project ( has, have ) come many important discoveries cause a grant paid for the research.  
(Find an error.)
35. ( Is, Are ) there going to be many people at tonight's homecoming bonfire? (Hint: Turn the question into a statement.)
36. Throughout the story of Dracula ( occur, occurs ) one scarey episode after another. (Find an error.)

Write a sentence in inverted order with correct subject verb agreement. Be sure it's school appropriate, and be prepared to share it.

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