

**Lesson**  
**5**

# Subjects in Unusual Positions

*Teaching*

In some sentences, unusual word order makes the subject hard to find. To be sure that the verb agrees with the subject, you first need to locate the subject.

**Sentences That Begin with a Prepositional Phrase** In some sentences that begin with prepositional phrases, the subject comes after the verb.

Into the river **scurried** the **otter**. (*scurried*-verb., *otter*-subject.)

Turn the sentence around, putting the subject before the verb. Then make sure that the verb agrees with the subject.

The **otter** **scurried** into the river.

**Sentences That Begin with Here or There** In most sentences that begin with *here* or *there*, the subject comes after the verb. Again, check subject-verb agreement after reordering the words of the sentence.

There **are** the **boundaries** of the farm. (*There* is not the subject; *boundaries* is.)  
The **boundaries** of the farm **are** there.

**Questions** In many questions, the subject follows the verb or comes between parts of the verb.

**Does** this **river** **flow** south or east? (*Does flow* = verb, *river* = subject)

Change the parts around to normal word order. Then check subject-verb agreement.

This **river** **does flow** south or east.

## A. Recognizing Verbs and Subjects in Unusual Positions

In each sentence, find and underline the verb or parts of the verb. Then find the subject and underline it twice. On the line at the right, identify whether the noun and verb are both **Singular** or **Plural**.

1. Is Susan going to the dance? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Here are my grandparents now. \_\_\_\_\_
3. There were three hats on the rack earlier. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Peacefully flows the river to the sea. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is my brother playing on your team? \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Making Verbs Agree with Subjects in Unusual Positions

Underline both the subject and the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

1. (Does, Do) snakes eat toads?
2. There (is, are) some aphids on the stem.
3. Underneath every leaf (lurks, lurk) a caterpillar.
4. (Is, Are) the ladybugs eating the aphids?
5. Into the soil (goes, go) the seeds.
6. (Does, Do) you grow corn or beans?

**Lesson 5**

# Subjects in Unusual Positions

*More Practice*

## A. Making Verbs Agree with Subjects in Unusual Positions

In each sentence, underline the verb that agrees in number with the subject.

1. There (is, are) three nines in twenty-seven.
2. (Doesn't, Don't) Martin have any hobbies?
3. How (does, do) rain turn to snow?
4. After graduation (comes, come) the real tests.
5. To the victor (belongs, belong) the spoils.
6. (Is, Are) the job of trimming trees hard work?
7. What (does, do) that word mean?
8. Here (is, are) the way out.
9. Toward the sunset (flies, fly) the geese.
10. Once upon a time there (was, were) a poor boy and his widowed mother.

## B. Correcting Subject-Verb Agreement

If the verb agrees with its subject, write **Correct** on the line. If it disagrees, write the correct form of the verb.

1. Here is my best friend's parents. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is he asking for Tom? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is raisins one of the ingredients of mincemeat? \_\_\_\_\_
4. After the salad come the main course. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why do the chicken cross the road? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Out of the darkness rises a strange figure. \_\_\_\_\_
7. There is no more apples in the barrel. \_\_\_\_\_
8. How do the machines in this room work? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Don't chemistry class require special equipment? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Here, at last, was the graduates. \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson  
5**Subjects in Unusual Positions***Application***A. Proofreading for Agreement of Verbs with Subjects in Unusual Positions**

Proofread this paragraph for errors in subject-verb agreement. Draw a line through each incorrect verb. Then draw this proofreading symbol ↗ next to the word and write the correction above the error.

There was two creepy movies on television last night. I tried to watch both of them. Have you ever seen movies like these? In the first one, there was several strange characters who visit town. With nightfall arrives more strangers. But where does they go in the daylight? There is no answers until the end of the movie. They are vampires! The second movie begins on another planet. On this planet, there is voices, but no visible bodies. Where do these voices come from? Suddenly the action moves to Earth. On the people of this world falls terrible calamities. Unfortunately, over me fell a great sleepiness. How do the story end? I never found out.

**B. Using Verbs That Agree with Subjects in Unusual Positions**

Each of these sentences has correct subject-verb agreement. In each, change the subject from singular to plural, or from plural to singular. Change the verb to match. Write your new sentence. Only the subject and verb should change.

**EXAMPLE** Down the hill slides a toboggan.  
*Down the hill slide several toboggans.*

1. Here is your answer.

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2. Do the buses stop here?

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3. Over the hill rise the bright stars.

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4. Has your brother left the house yet?

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5. There are many reasons for the flood.

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