Lesson Seven: Subjects and Predicates

1. The subject of the sentence is a word, phrase, or clause which identifies the performer of the action. It is the topic, the thing which the sentence is about.
   Ex. Tom threw the ball.
   Tom is a noun, the performer of the action.
   The poor thing collapsed of exhaustion.
   The poor thing is a noun phrase performing the action. Thing is the subject noun.
   The subject noun is called the simple subject. In our exercises, it is the simple subject we will ask you to identify.

2. Although in most sentences the subject begins the sentence, sometimes the subject will follow an introductory phrase or clause.
   Ex. In the afternoon, I usually take a nap.

3. In interrogative sentences (questions), the subject often comes after part of the verb.
   Ex. Did you eat your peas?

4. In many imperative or exclamatory sentences (direct commands), the subject is often not expressed but is understood to be “you.”
   Ex. Eat your peas.
   (You) Eat your peas.

5. In passive voice sentences, the subject is the receiver of the action rather than the performer. Still, it is the topic or focus of the sentence.
   Ex. Bill was hit by the ball.

6. When searching for the simple subject, first cross out all prepositional phrases. The simple subject is never in a prepositional phrase. Remembering this rule will eliminate many problems in identification of subjects and also in writing.
   Ex. In the morning one of the sailors got sick.
   The subject is one not sailors.

7. The predicate of the sentence is everything in the sentence which is not the subject or part of the subject. It contains the verb and its modifiers and complements.
   Ex. Simon cried.— verb
   Christine hugged Paul.— verb, direct object
   John gave Sue the ring.— verb, indirect object, direct object
   The verb, with any helping verbs, is called the simple predicate. In the exercises, we ask you to circle the simple subject and underline the simple predicate.
   Ex. In the morning, (Frank) will give you the details.

8. Simple predicates, or verbs, describe an action, or they signify a state of being.
   Ex. walk, run, jump, throw, break
   Ex. am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been
9. In the active voice, simple predicates may be used alone.
   Ex. You walk to the store.
       Elroy is my best friend.

10. In the passive voice, simple predicates may be used together.
    Ex. The bat was broken.

11. Other verbs that may be used alone or used as helping verbs are as follows:
    Ex. have, has, had, may, might,
        will, would, can, could, shall, should,
        do, does, did, must, must have
    He has my bat.
    He has broken my bat.

12. Sometimes the predicate is split.
    Ex. Are you leaving now?
        When did Frank see you?

13. In complex and compound sentences, each clause has its own simple subject and simple predicate.
    Ex. When the rain stops, we will go home.
        The team played well, but the other team was too strong.

14. Some sentences have compound simple subjects and/or compound simple predicates.
    Ex. The boys and girls wrote their names on the board.
        The sailors chipped and painted the ship.
        The boys and girls sang and danced all night.

15. “Not” or “n’t” is always an adverb, and it is never part of the simple predicate.
Circle the simple subject and underline the simple predicate.

1. The sun finally came out after weeks of rain.
2. His illness left him deadly thin.
3. Why didn’t Randy and Jim come together?
4. All visitors should report to the office.
5. In the office, our principal and his secretary will take your name.
6. Help the baby.
7. Did you see Jim when he came home?
8. You could tell by the look in his eyes that he missed her.
9. How many times do I have to ask?
10. The man, his wife, three daughters, two sons, and dog were all caught in the stranded boat.
11. In autumn, many people like to watch the geese fly overhead in formation.
12. The drama club had to cancel its production.
13. The magazine ad offered Superman-muscles in three weeks.
14. The corny, old war movie was loaded with propaganda.
15. Jim turned to see who was calling him.
16. Runners take your marks; get set; go!
17. Did the airline tickets finally arrive?
18. In only a few, short seconds, the crowd was on its feet and cheering.
19. He blushed because they were cheering for him.
20. His favorite baseball team was the N.Y. Yankees.
21. Don’t worry about me.
22. The New York Yankees played the Boston Red Sox for the league pennant.
23. “Bill is coming to dinner,” Randy said.
Subjects and Predicates Practice 2

Circle the simple subject and underline the simple predicate. Some sentences will contain more than one set of answers.

1. Each soldier dug his own fox hole.

2. Why didn’t they run for cover?

3. Do you believe in Santa Claus?

4. Does Santa Claus believe in you?

5. There was a deafening noise outside.

6. When you are frightened, it is good to have a friend.

7. General Sherman said, “War is hell.”

8. When I was in a burning house, I was frightened.

9. He didn’t know that he had done anything wrong.

10. When do you think they will be here?

11. Are they usually late?

12. People have no consideration for others if they are always late for appointments.

13. Anyone can see I am right.

14. What do people think of the new rule?

15. Brush your teeth after every meal.

16. The fact still remains that daily exercise is essential for good health.

17. The young child rode on the swing for hours.

18. The combined forces of the Marines, Navy, and Army made an attack on the island.

19. The enemy troops tried to hold their ground, but in the end the superior American soldiers won.

20. All in all, it wasn’t a bad movie.
Circle the simple subject and underline the simple predicate.

1. She rudely changed channels on him.
2. “Whenever I get depressed,” said the woman, “I buy a new outfit.”
3. Her enormous wardrobe of skirts, sweaters, and dresses is evidence of her psychological state.
4. The end of the ordeal was finally in sight.
5. A problem with his car made him late.
6. The major went to radio for help, and his assistant searched for a means of escape.
7. Wouldn’t it be great if we were all rich?
8. In the final analysis, the accident was caused by negligence.
9. Didn’t that old war movie end strangely?
10. Because they wanted to play with the toy, the two children had to share.
11. If you were me, would you ask her to go with you?
12. Tony Randall was visiting New York.
13. People in New York are not rude and surly, but no one really believes that.
14. The winner of the cooking contest spent her prize money.
15. I don’t know why they were hiding in the hotel.
16. Marietta and Marie were college roommates.
18. Michael Jones’ favorite song was “Fool on a Hill.”
19. The little baby girl cried herself to sleep.
20. His old electric typewriter broke once and for all.
21. Didn’t anyone ever tell you that you should not talk with your mouth full?
Subjects and Predicates Practice 4

Circle the simple subject and underline the simple predicate.

1. The mother of the twins changed one baby’s diaper and gave the other a bottle.
2. How can a person find anything in that house?
3. Because of the blackout, Jim and Randy could not watch television.
4. Since they are both avid television watchers, they had to find something else to do.
5. Many people find candlelight romantic.
6. A school of fish swam toward the net.
7. Romantic poetry has nothing to do with life.
8. The students at the university staged a demonstration.
9. Romance, at a moment’s notice, was her style.
10. Are you pulling my leg?
11. My company is willing to offer you a position.
12. His youngest child, upon graduating from college, toured Europe for a year.
13. The girl on that commercial really cracks me up.
14. Quite frankly, I don’t see what is so exciting about it.
15. It takes a lot of paint to cover that barn.
16. His favorite pastime is going bowling.
17. I always thought we were kind of a team.
18. His grandfather’s recycled suit fit him perfectly.
20. Don’t talk to me like that!
Lesson Seven - Subject and Predicates  [We have bolded the simple subject]

Practice 1
1. sun came
2. illness left
3. Randy, Jim did come
4. visitors should report
5. principal, secretary will take
6. (you) help
7. you did see
8. You could tell / he missed
9. I do have
10. man
11. people like / geese fly
12. club had
13. ad offered
14. movie was loaded
15. Jim turned / who was calling
16. Runners take, (you) get set, (you) go
17. tickets did arrive
18. crowd was, (was) cheering
19. He blushed / they were cheering
20. team was
21. (You) do worry
22. N.Y. Yankees played
23. Bill is coming, Randy said

Practice 2
1. soldier dug
2. they did run
3. you do believe
4. Santa Claus does believe
5. noise was
6. You are / it is
7. General Sherman said / War is
8. I was, I was
9. He did know / he had done
10. you do think / they will be
11. they are
12. People have / they are
13. Anyone can see / I am
14. people do think
15. (you) brush
16. fact remains /exercise is
17. child rode
18. forces made
19. troops tried / soldiers won
20. it was

Mastery Test I
Practice 3
1. She changed
2. I get / woman said / I buy
3. wardrobe is
4. end was
5. problem made
6. major went / assistant searched
7. it would be / we were
8. accident was caused
9. movie did end
10. they wanted; children had
11. you were, you would ask
12. Tony Randall was visiting
13. People are / no one believes
14. winner spent
15. I do know / they were hiding
16. Marietta, Marie were
17. I feel / I call
18. song was
19. girl cried
20. typewriter broke
21. anyone did tell / you should talk

Practice 4
1. mother changed, gave
2. person can find
3. Jim, Randy could watch
4. they are / they had
5. people find
6. school swam
7. poetry has
8. students staged
9. Romance was
10. you are pulling
11. company is willing
12. child toured
13. girl cracks
14. I do see / what is
15. It takes
16. pastime is
17. I thought / we were
18. suit fit
20. (You) do talk

Mastery Test II