

This sentence has a subject *boy* and has part of a verb *going*; to be correct, some form of the verb *be* is needed to make the sentence complete. Answers (A) and (B) are incorrect because the sentence already has a subject *boy* and does not need the extra subject *he*. Answer (C) is incorrect because *relaxing* is an extra verb part that is unnecessary because of *going*. Answer (D) is the best answer; *will be* together with *going* is a complete verb.

The following chart outlines what you should remember about subjects and verbs:

SUBJECTS AND VERBS
A sentence in English must have at least one <i>subject</i> and one <i>verb</i> .

EXERCISE 1: Underline the subjects once and the verbs twice in each of the following sentences. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- I 1. Last week went fishing for trout at the nearby mountain lake.
- C 2. A schedule of the day's events can be obtained at the front desk.
- ___ 3. A job on the day shift or the night shift at the plant available.
- ___ 4. The new computer program has provides a variety of helpful applications.
- ___ 5. The box can be opened only with a special screwdriver.
- ___ 6. The assigned text for history class it contains more than twenty chapters.
- ___ 7. The papers in the wastebasket should be emptied into the trash can outside.
- ___ 8. Departure before dawn on a boat in the middle of the harbor.
- ___ 9. Yesterday found an interesting article on pollution.
- ___ 10. The new machine is processes 50 percent more than the previous machine.

SKILL 2: BE CAREFUL OF OBJECTS OF PREPOSITIONS

An object of a preposition is a noun, pronoun, gerund or noun clause that comes after a preposition, such as *in*, *at*, *of*, *to*, *by*, *behind*, *on*, and so on, to form a prepositional phrase.

(After his *exams*) Tom will take a trip (by *boat*).

This sentence contains two objects of prepositions. *Exams* is the object of the preposition *after*, and *boat* is the object of the preposition *by*.

An object of a preposition can cause confusion in structure questions on the TOEFL test because it can be mistaken for the subject of a sentence.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests


With his friend B found the movie theater.

- (A) has
- (B) he
- (C) later
- (D) when

In this example you should look first for the subject and the verb. You should notice the verb *found* and should also notice that there is no subject. Do not think that *friend* is the subject; *friend* is the object of the preposition *with*, and one noun cannot be both a subject and an object at the same time. Because a subject is needed in this sentence, answer (B), *he*, is the best answer. Answers (A), (C), and (D) are not correct because they cannot be subjects.

The following chart outlines the key information that you should remember about objects of prepositions:

OBJECTS OF PREPOSITIONS

A *preposition* is followed by a noun, pronoun, gerund or noun clause that is called an *object of the preposition*. If a word is an *object of a preposition*, it is not the *subject*.

NOTE: A lengthy list of prepositions and practice in recognizing prepositions can be found in Appendix D at the back of the text. You may want to complete these exercises before continuing with Exercise 2.

EXERCISE 2: Each of the following sentences contains one or more prepositional phrases. Underline the subjects once and the verbs twice. Circle the prepositional phrases that come before the verb. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- C 1. The interviews by radio broadcasters were carried live by the station.
- I 2. In the last possible moment before takeoff took his seat in the airplane.
- ___ 3. At the neighborhood flower shop, flowers in quantities of a dozen or a half dozen can be delivered for free.
- ___ 4. The progressive reading methods at this school are given credit for the improved test scores.
- ___ 5. For the last three years at various hospitals in the county has been practicing medicine.
- ___ 6. In the past a career in politics was not considered acceptable in some circles.
- ___ 7. Shopping in the downtown area of the city it has improved a lot in recent years.