

EXERCISE 18: Each of the following sentences contains a conditional with a stated or an implied *if*. Circle the conditionals, or put an asterisk (*) where *if* has been omitted. Look at the clauses that follow and underline the subjects once and the verbs twice. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- C 1. *Were our neighbors a bit more friendly, it would be somewhat easier to get to know them.
- I 2. There are plenty of blankets in the closet if should you get cold during the night.
- ___ 3. Has he enough vacation days left this year, he will take two full weeks off in December.
- ___ 4. Had we been informed of the decision, we might have had something to say about it.
- ___ 5. I would like to know could you help me pack these boxes.
- ___ 6. He would have been in big trouble had not he remembered the assignment at the last minute.
- ___ 7. If your friends come to visit, will they stay in a hotel or at your house?
- ___ 8. He might be a little more successful today were he a little more willing to do some hard work.
- ___ 9. Should you ever visit this town again, I would be delighted to show you around.
- ___ 10. Do you think that she would give the speech were she asked to do so?

SKILL 19: INVERT THE SUBJECT AND VERB WITH COMPARISONS

An inverted subject and verb may also occur after a comparison. The inversion of a subject and verb after a comparison is optional, rather than required, and it is a rather formal structure. There have been a number of inverted comparisons on recent TOEFL tests, so you should be familiar with this structure.

My sister spends *more* hours in the office *than* John.

My sister spends *more* hours in the office *than* John does.

My sister spends *more* hours in the office *than* does John.

All three of these examples contain the comparison *more...than*, and all three are correct in English. It is possible to have the noun *John* alone, as in the first example; it is possible that the comparison is followed by the subject and verb *John does*, as in the second example; it is also possible that the comparison is followed by the inverted subject and verb *does John*, as in the third example.

The following example shows how this sentence pattern could be tested in structure questions on the TOEFL test.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



The results of the current experiment appear to be more consistent than _____ the results of any previous tests.

- (A) them
- (B) were
- (C) they were
- (D) were they

In this example you should notice the comparison *more consistent than*, and you should also understand that *the results of the current experiment* is being compared with *the results of any previous tests*. Because *the results of any previous tests* is the subject, only a verb is needed; the best answer to this question is therefore answer (B). We know that it is possible for a subject and a verb to be inverted after a comparison, and in this case the subject *the results of any previous tests* comes after the verb *were*.

The following chart lists the sentence patterns used with comparisons:

INVERTED SUBJECTS AND VERBS WITH COMPARISONS					
The subject and verb <i>may</i> invert after a comparison. The following structures are both possible.					
S	V	comparison		S	V
We	were	more prepared than	the other performers	were.	
S	V	comparison	V	S	
We	were	more prepared than	were	the other performers.	
NOTE: A subject-verb inversion after a comparison sounds rather formal.					

EXERCISE 19: Each of the following sentences contains a comparison. Circle the comparisons. Look at the clauses that follow and underline the subjects once and the verbs twice. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- C 1. This candidate has received more votes than has any other candidate in previous years.
- I 2. Obviously we were much more impressed with the performance than did the other members of the audience.
- _____ 3. The film that we saw last night at the festival was far better than any of the other films.
- _____ 4. The vegetables at the market this morning were far fresher than were those at the market yesterday.
- _____ 5. I am afraid that is the condition of these tires as bad as the condition of the others.

- _____ 6. We firmly believed that our team could achieve a much faster time than any of the others.
- _____ 7. This apple pie is not as good as the last one that you made.
- _____ 8. On the fishing trip, Bobby caught twice as many fish as anyone else did.
- _____ 9. The final speaker gave us more details than had any of the previous speakers.
- _____ 10. Do you know why does he need to sleep so many more hours than do the others?

EXERCISE (Skills 15–19): Each of these sentences contains a structure that could require an inverted subject and verb. Circle the structures that may require inverted subjects and verbs. Underline the subjects once and the verbs twice. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- _____ 1. The town council is not sure why have the land developers changed their plans.
- _____ 2. Never in the world I believed that this would happen.
- _____ 3. The day might have been a little more enjoyable had the sun been out a little more.
- _____ 4. Only once did the judge take the defense lawyer's suggestion.
- _____ 5. Down the hall to the left the offices are that need to be painted.
- _____ 6. Did the scientist explain what he put in the beaker?
- _____ 7. Hardly ever it snows in this section of the country.
- _____ 8. Elijah scored more points in yesterday's basketball final than had any other player in history.
- _____ 9. In the state of California, earthquakes occur regularly.
- _____ 10. He should ever call again, please tell him that I am not at home.

TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 15–19): Choose the letter of the word or group of words that best completes the sentence.

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| <p>1. Rarely _____ located near city lights or at lower elevations.</p> <p>(A) observatories are</p> <p>(B) are</p> <p>(C) in the observatories</p> <p>(D) are observatories</p> | <p>2. There are geographic, economic, and cultural reasons why _____ around the world.</p> <p>(A) diets differ</p> <p>(B) do diets differ</p> <p>(C) are diets different</p> <p>(D) to differ a diet</p> |
|--|--|

3. Were _____ millions of dollars each year replenishing eroding beaches, the coastline would be changing even more rapidly.
- (A) the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers not spending
 (B) the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers not spend
 (C) the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does not spend
 (D) not spending the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
4. Nowhere _____ more skewed than in the auto industry.
- (A) that retail trade figures
 (B) retail trade figures are
 (C) are retail trade figures
 (D) retail trade figures
5. New York City's Central Park is nearly twice as large _____ second smallest country, Monaco.
- (A) as
 (B) is the
 (C) as is
 (D) as is the
6. Potassium has a valence of positive one because it usually loses one electron when _____ with other elements.
- (A) does it combine
 (B) it combines
 (C) in combining
 (D) combination
7. The economic background of labor legislation will not be mentioned in this course, _____ be treated.
- (A) trade unionism will not
 (B) nor trade unionism will
 (C) nor will trade unionism
 (D) neither trade unionism will
8. _____ test positive for antibiotics when tanker trucks arrive at a milk processing plant, according to federal law, the entire truckload must be discarded.
- (A) Should milk
 (B) If milk
 (C) If milk is
 (D) Milk should
9. Located behind _____ the two lacrimal glands.
- (A) each eyelid
 (B) is each eyelid
 (C) each eyelid are
 (D) each eyelid which is
10. Only for a short period of time _____ run at top speed.
- (A) cheetahs
 (B) do cheetahs
 (C) that a cheetah can
 (D) can

TOEFL REVIEW EXERCISE (Skills 1–19): Choose the letter of the word or group of words that best completes the sentence.

1. _____ variety of flowers in the show, from simple carnations to the most exquisite roses.
- (A) A wide
 (B) There was a wide
 (C) Was there
 (D) Many
2. The wedges _____ dart board are worth from one to twenty points each.
- (A) they are on a
 (B) are on a
 (C) are they on a
 (D) on a

3. _____ producing many new movies for release after the new season begins.
- (A) His company is
 (B) His companies
 (C) The company
 (D) Why the company is
4. _____ that Emily Dickinson wrote, 24 were given titles and 7 were published during her lifetime.
- (A) Of the 1,800 poems
 (B) There were 1,800 poems
 (C) Because the 1,800 poems
 (D) The 1,800 poems
5. Since an immediate change was needed on an emergency basis, _____ by the governor to curtail railway expenditure.
- (A) so it was proposed
 (B) was proposed
 (C) because of the proposal
 (D) it was proposed
6. In the Morgan Library in New York City _____ of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts.
- (A) a collection is
 (B) in a collection
 (C) is a collection
 (D) which is a collection
7. Some fishing fleets might not have been so inefficient in limiting their catch to target species _____ more strict in enforcing penalties.
- (A) the government had been
 (B) if the government had
 (C) had the government been
 (D) if the government
8. The Dewey Decimal System, currently used in libraries throughout the world, _____ all written works into ten classes according to subject.
- (A) dividing
 (B) divides
 (C) it would divide
 (D) was divided
9. Individual differences in brain-wave activity may shed light on why some people are more prone to emotional stress disorders _____.
- (A) that others are
 (B) and others are
 (C) others are
 (D) than are others
10. _____ squeezed, the orange juice in a one-cup serving provides twice the minimum daily requirement for vitamin C.
- (A) It is freshly
 (B) If freshly
 (C) You freshly
 (D) If it freshly

THE WRITTEN EXPRESSION QUESTIONS

(PAPER TOEFL® TEST AND COMPUTER TOEFL® TEST)  

Written expression questions that test your knowledge of the correct way to express yourself in English writing appear on both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test. Each question consists of one sentence in which four words or groups of words have been underlined. You must choose the underlined word or group of words that is not correct. Look at an example of a written expression question from the paper TOEFL test.

Example from the Paper TOEFL® Test 

A nerve is actually many nerve fiber bound together.
A
B
C
D

In this example, you should notice that the plural quantifier *many* is accompanied by the singular noun *fiber*. *Many* should be accompanied by the plural noun *fibers*. You should choose answer (C) because answer (C) is not correct.

Now, look at an example of a written expression question from the computer TOEFL test.

Example from the Computer TOEFL® Test 

Venus emits very intense radio waves of thermally origin.

In this example, you should notice that the adverb *thermally* is used to describe the noun *origin*. The adjective *thermal* should be used to describe the noun. You should click on the word *thermally* to answer this question because *thermally* is not correct.

PROCEDURES FOR THE WRITTEN EXPRESSION QUESTIONS

(Paper TOEFL® Test and Computer TOEFL® Test)  

1. **First, look at the underlined words or groups of words.** You want to see if you can spot which of the four answer choices is *not* correct.
2. **If you have been unable to find the error by looking only at the four underlined expressions, then read the complete sentence.** Often an underlined expression is incorrect because of something in another part of the sentence.

Next, you should move on to the language skills. The following language skills will help you to implement the appropriate strategies and procedures in written expression questions on both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test.

PROBLEMS WITH SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT _____

Subject/verb agreement is simple: if the subject of a sentence is singular, then the verb must be singular; if the subject of the sentence is plural, then the verb must be plural. An *s* on a verb usually indicates that a verb is singular, while an *s* on a noun usually indicates that the noun is plural. (Do not forget irregular plurals of nouns, such as *women*, *children*, and *people*.)

The boy walks to school.

The boys walk to school.

In the first example the singular subject *boy* requires a singular verb, *walks*. In the second example the plural subject *boys* requires a plural verb, *walk*.

Although this might seem quite simple, there are a few situations on the TOEFL test when subject/verb agreement can be a little tricky. You should be careful of subject/verb agreement in the following situations: (1) after prepositional phrases, (2) after expressions of quantity, (3) after inverted verbs, and (4) after certain words, such as *anybody*, *everything*, *no one*, *something*, *each*, and *every*.

SKILL 20: MAKE VERBS AGREE AFTER PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Sometimes prepositional phrases can come between the subject and the verb. If the object of the preposition is singular and the subject is plural, or if the object of the preposition is plural and the subject is singular, there can be confusion in making the subject and verb agree.

The key (to the doors) are* in the drawer.

SINGULAR PLURAL

The keys (to the door) is* in the drawer.

PLURAL SINGULAR

(* indicates an error)

In the first example you might think that *doors* is the subject because it comes directly in front of the verb *are*. However, *doors* is not the subject because it is the object of the preposition *to*. The subject of the sentence is *key*, so the verb should be *is*. In the second example you might think that *door* is the subject because it comes directly in front of the verb *is*. You should recognize in this example that *door* is not the subject because it is the object of the preposition *to*. Because the subject of the sentence is *keys*, the verb should be *are*.

The following chart outlines the key information that you should understand about subject/verb agreement with prepositional phrases:

SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT WITH PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES		
S	(prepositional phrase)	V
When a <i>prepositional phrase</i> comes between the <i>subject</i> and the <i>verb</i> , be sure that the <i>verb</i> agrees with the <i>subject</i> .		