

**EXERCISE 20:** Each of the following sentences has one or more prepositional phrases between the subject and verb. Circle the prepositional phrases. Underline the subjects once and the verbs twice. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- C 1. The climbers (on the sheer face) (of the mountain) need to be rescued.
- I 2. The interrogation, conducted (by three police officers) have lasted for several hours.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The tenants in the apartment next to mine is giving a party this evening.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The president, surrounded by secret service agents, is trying to make his way to the podium.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The buildings destroyed during the fire are being rebuilt at the taxpayers' expense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Because of the seriousness of the company's financial problems, the board of directors have called an emergency meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Manufacture of the items that you requested have been discontinued because of lack of profit on those items.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Further development of any new ideas for future products has to be approved in advance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The scheduled departure time of the trains, posted on panels throughout the terminal buildings, are going to be updated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Any houses built in that development before 1970 have to be upgraded to meet current standards.

## SKILL 21: MAKE VERBS AGREE AFTER EXPRESSIONS OF QUANTITY

A particular agreement problem occurs when the subject is an expression of quantity, such as *all*, *most*, or *some*, followed by the preposition *of*. In this situation, the subject (*all*, *most*, or *some*) can be singular or plural, depending on what follows the preposition *of*.

All (of the *book*) was interesting.

SINGULAR

All (of the *books*) were interesting.

PLURAL

All (of the *information*) was interesting.

UNCOUNTABLE

In the first example the subject *all* refers to the singular noun *book*, so the correct verb is therefore the singular verb *was*. In the second example the subject *all* refers to the plural noun *books*, so the correct verb is the plural verb *were*. In the third example the subject *all* refers to the uncountable noun *information*, so the correct verb is therefore the singular verb *was*.

The following chart outlines the key information that you should understand about subject/verb agreement after expressions of quantity:

SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT AFTER EXPRESSIONS OF QUANTITY	
$\left( \begin{array}{c} \textit{all} \\ \textit{most} \\ \textit{some} \\ \textit{half} \end{array} \right)$	OF THE (OBJECT) 
When an expression of quantity is the subject, the verb agrees with the object.	

**EXERCISE 21:** Each of the following sentences has a quantity expression as the subject. Underline the subjects once and the verbs twice. Circle the objects that the verbs agree with. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- C 1. The witnesses saw that most of the (fire) in the hills was extinguished.
- I 2. Some of the (animals) from the zoo was released into the animal preserve.
- \_\_\_ 3. All of the students in the class taught by Professor Roberts is required to turn in their term papers next Monday.
- \_\_\_ 4. Half of the food that we are serving to the guests are still in the refrigerator.
- \_\_\_ 5. We believe that some of the time of the employees is going to be devoted to quality control.
- \_\_\_ 6. All of the witnesses in the jury trial, which lasted more than two weeks, have indicated that they believed that the defendant was guilty.
- \_\_\_ 7. She did not know where most of the people in the room was from.
- \_\_\_ 8. In spite of what was decided at the meeting, half of the procedures was not changed.
- \_\_\_ 9. I was sure that all of the questions on the test were correct.
- \_\_\_ 10. Most of the trouble that the employees discussed at the series of meetings was resolved within a few weeks.

## SKILL 22: MAKE INVERTED VERBS AGREE

We have seen that sometimes in English the subject comes after the verb. This can occur after question words (Skill 15), after place expressions (Skill 16), after negative expressions (Skill 17), after omitted conditionals (Skill 18), and after some comparisons (Skill 19). When the subject and verb are inverted, it can be difficult to locate them, and it can therefore be a problem to make them agree.