

SKILL 23: MAKE VERBS AGREE AFTER CERTAIN WORDS

Certain words in English are always grammatically singular, even though they might have plural meanings.

Everybody are going* to the theater.

Even though we understand from this example that a lot of people are going to the theater, *everybody* is singular and requires a singular verb. The plural verb *are going* should be changed to the singular verb *is going*.

The following chart lists the grammatically singular words that have plural meanings:

SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT AFTER CERTAIN WORDS				
These words or expressions are grammatically singular, so they take singular verbs:				
<i>anybody</i>	<i>everybody</i>	<i>nobody</i>	<i>somebody</i>	<i>each (+ noun)</i>
<i>anyone</i>	<i>everyone</i>	<i>no one</i>	<i>someone</i>	<i>every (+ noun)</i>
<i>anything</i>	<i>everything</i>	<i>nothing</i>	<i>something</i>	

EXERCISE 23: Each of the following sentences contains one of the words that are grammatically singular but have plural meanings. Underline these words once and underline the verbs twice. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- I 1. It is impossible to believe that somebody actually admire that man.
- C 2. Each of the doctors in the building needs to have a separate reception area.
- ___ 3. The president felt that no one were better suited for the position of chief staff advisor.
- ___ 4. Everybody participating in the fund-raiser are to turn in the tickets by 8:00.
- ___ 5. Because of the low number of orders, nothing has to be done now.
- ___ 6. Every time someone take unnecessary breaks, precious moments of production time are lost.
- ___ 7. Anybody who goes to the top of the Empire State Building is impressed with the view.
- ___ 8. Every man, woman, and child in this line are required to sign the forms in order to complete the registration process.
- ___ 9. It is nice to believe that anything is possible if a person tries hard enough.
- ___ 10. The company reiterated to reporters that nobody have been dismissed because of the incident.

EXERCISE (Skills 20–23): 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).

- _____ 1. The contracts signed by the company has been voided because some stipulations were not met.
- _____ 2. Ten miles beyond the river was the farmlands that they had purchased with their life savings.
- _____ 3. Each package that is not properly wrapped have to be returned to the sender.
- _____ 4. She would not have to enter the house through the bedroom window were the keys where they were supposed to be.
- _____ 5. The proposal brought so much new work to the partnership that there was not enough hours to complete all of it.
- _____ 6. The box of disks for the computer have been misplaced.
- _____ 7. It is disconcerting to believe that every possible candidate has been rejected for one reason or another.
- _____ 8. Only once have there been more excitement in this city about a sporting event.
- _____ 9. Bobby has a bigger bicycle than does the other children in the neighborhood.
- _____ 10. If nobody have bought that car from the dealer, then you should return and make another offer.

TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 20–23): Choose the letter of the word or group of words that best completes the sentence.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Among bees _____ a highly elaborate form of communication.</p> <p>(A) occur
(B) occurs
(C) it occurs
(D) they occur</p> | <p>2. _____ heated by solar energy have special collectors on the roofs to trap sunlight.</p> <p>(A) A home is
(B) Homes are
(C) A home
(D) Homes</p> |
|---|---|

Choose the letter of the underlined word or group of words that is not correct.

- _____ 3. Each number is binary system are formed from only two symbols.
A B C D
- _____ 4. Scientists at the medical center is trying to determine if there is a relationship between saccharine and cancer.
A B C D

- _____ 5. On the rim of the Kilauea volcano in the Hawaiian Islands are a hotel called the Volcano Hotel.
A B C D
- _____ 6. The great digital advances of the electronic age, such as integrated circuitry and a microcomputer, has been planted in tiny chips.
A B C D
- _____ 7. There are many frequently mentioned reasons why one out of four arrests involve a juvenile.
A B C D
- _____ 8. Kepler's Laws, principles outlining planetary movement, was formulated based on observations made without a telescope.
A B C D
- _____ 9. Only with a two-thirds vote by both houses are the U.S. Congress able to override a presidential veto.
A B C D
- _____ 10. Of all the evidence that has piled up since Webster's paper was published, there is no new ideas to contradict his original theory.
A B C D

TOEFL REVIEW EXERCISE (Skills 1–23): Choose the letter of the word or group of words that best completes the sentence.

1. _____ several unsuccessful attempts, Robert Peary reached the North Pole on April 6, 1909.
 (A) After
 (B) He made
 (C) When
 (D) His
2. The musical instrument _____ is six feet long.
 (A) is called the bass
 (B) it is called the bass
 (C) called the bass
 (D) calls the bass
3. One problem with all languages _____ they are full of irregularities.
 (A) when
 (B) so
 (C) is that
 (D) in case
4. _____ of economic cycles been helpful in predicting turning points in cycles, they would have been used more consistently.
 (A) Psychological theories
 (B) Psychological theories have
 (C) Had psychological theories
 (D) Psychologists have theories
5. Hospital committees _____ spent weeks agonizing over which artificial kidney candidate would receive the treatments now find that the decision is out of their hands.
 (A) once
 (B) that once
 (C) have
 (D) once had

There are several situations in which you should be particularly careful of parallel structure. Parallel structures are required in the following situations: (1) with coordinate conjunctions, such as *and*, *but*, *or*; (2) with paired conjunctions, such as *both...and*, *either...or*, *neither...nor*, *not only...but also*; and (3) with comparisons.

SKILL 24: USE PARALLEL STRUCTURE WITH COORDINATE CONJUNCTIONS

The job of the coordinate conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *or*) is to join together equal expressions. In other words, what is on one side of these words must be parallel to what is on the other side. These conjunctions can join nouns, or verbs, or adjectives, or phrases, or subordinate clauses, or main clauses; they just must join together two of the same thing. Here are examples of two nouns joined by a coordinate conjunction:

I need to talk to the manager *or* the assistant manager.
 She is not a teacher *but* a lawyer.
 You can choose from activities such as hiking *and* kayaking.

Here are examples of two verbs joined by a coordinate conjunction:

He only eats *and* sleeps when he takes a vacation.
 She invites us to her home *but* never talks with us.
 You can stay home *or* go to the movies with us.

Here are examples of two adjectives joined by a coordinate conjunction:

My boss is sincere *and* nice.
 The exam that he gave was short *but* difficult.
 Class can be interesting *or* boring.

Here are examples of two phrases joined by a coordinate conjunction:

There are students in the classroom *and* in front of the building.
 The papers are on my desk *or* in the drawer.
 The checks will be ready not at noon *but* at 1:00.

Here are examples of two clauses joined by a coordinate conjunction:

They are not interested in what you say *or* what you do.
 I am here because I have to be *and* because I want to be.
 Mr. Brown likes to go home early, *but* his wife prefers to stay late.