



# Agreement in Number

Teaching

A verb must agree with its subject in number. **Number** refers to whether a word is singular—naming one—or plural—naming more than one.

A singular subject takes a singular verb.

That **boy follows** a trail. (singular subject, singular verb)

A plural subject takes a plural verb.

Those **boys follow** a trail. (plural subject, plural verb)

In a sentence with a verb phrase, the first helping verb must agree with the subject.

For the past hour the **boys have been following** the trail.

The **contractions** *doesn't* and *don't* are short forms of *does not* and *do not*. Use *doesn't* with all singular subjects except *I* and *you*. Use *don't* with all plural subjects, *I*, and *you*.

**Doesn't** this tree look old? **Don't** those trees look tall?

## A. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number

In each sentence, underline the subject. Then underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

1. The turtles (was, were) sunning themselves on a log.
2. Marie (was, were) looking for dragonflies.
3. Her teacher (want, wants) her to write a paper on them.
4. Arthur (sketches, sketch) in his notebook.
5. Anna and Marie (has, have) never seen cattails before.
6. The teacher (says, say) cattails are edible.
7. They (was, were) disappointed when they tried eating one.
8. Jim (has, have) captured a garter snake.
9. He (assures, assure) everyone that it is not poisonous.
10. Fred (is, are) calling it a "garden snake."

## B. Identifying Subjects and Verbs That Agree in Number

In each sentence, underline the subject and circle the verb. On the line following the sentence, write whether the two parts of the sentence **Agree** or **Disagree** in number.

1. Fred and John wants adventure on this hike. \_\_\_\_\_
2. They is grabbing at a turtle. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Their teacher reminds them of their promise not to remove any plants or animals. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The students has agreed to that rule. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The turtles have disappeared under the water. \_\_\_\_\_

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Lesson 1

# Agreement in Number

More Practice

CHAPTER 9

## A. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number

On the line following each sentence, write the present tense form of the verb that agrees with the subject.

1. The captain (board) the ship early this evening. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The musicians (practice) diligently. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Usually, the plumber (arrive) on the work site before the carpenter. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The French teacher (like) browsing through bookstores. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Tom (be) searching for a quote from Shakespeare. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Fritz (think) the pasta dish is delicious. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The team members (go) to the library together. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Thomas (have) been working on that problem for a half hour. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I (be) the one who spoke up when nobody else would. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Marty (feel) she knows the piece well enough now. \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Correcting Agreement Errors

In each sentence, underline the subject and circle the verb. If the verb agrees with the subject, write **Correct** on the line to the right. If it does not agree, write the correct verb.

1. Jose are searching for leopard frogs. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Mary were looking among the bushes. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I were observing the water striders. \_\_\_\_\_
4. They actually stand on the water surface. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Their feet makes little indentations on the surface. \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many students is on that bus? \_\_\_\_\_
7. They were told to bring their lunches. \_\_\_\_\_
8. One student have brought a net. \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many sets of wings do dragonflies have? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How do dragonflies and damselflies differ? \_\_\_\_\_

will do

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Lesson 1

# Agreement in Number

## Application

### A. Proofreading for Errors in Agreement

Underline the five verbs in this paragraph that do not agree with their subjects. On the lines below, write the numbers of the sentences in which you find agreement errors. After each sentence number, write the subject and the verb form that agrees with it.

(1) Mr. Johnson love swamps. (2) Therefore, on our field trip we went to Green Swamp. (3) Most of us would have chosen a day at the beach. (4) According to Mr. Johnson, the neatest things happens in swamps. (5) He have lectured more than once on the topic of metamorphosis. (6) His examples has been caterpillars turning into butterflies and tadpoles turning into frogs. (7) He gets pretty excited about tadpoles. (8) Actually, the metamorphosis is amazing. (9) One week the animals are breathing with gills, like fish; and the next week they have lungs, like us. (10) Even the dedicated beach goers wants another visit to the swamp this fall.

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### B. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Writing

Choose one of the topics below and write a paragraph of at least four sentences about it. Use the present tense throughout. Make sure the subjects and verbs of all the sentences agree.

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|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Exploring a swamp             | Exploring a forest |
| A memorable field trip        | Science class      |
| Animals and plants in a swamp | Respect for nature |
| Useful insects                | Tadpoles and frogs |

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