

GRAMMAR REVIEW PACKET 3

**RECOGNIZING SUBJECTS, VERBS, AND
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES**

In Review Packet 2, you learned to identify verbs and prepositional phrases. Now, you need to learn how to identify subjects.

Subject - is a noun or pronoun. Although there may be more than one noun or pronoun in the sentence, **the subject is the noun or pronoun which answers the question “who or what” before the verb.**

Examples: A. John drove the car well.

- (1) Find the verb – drove
- (2) Ask “who or what drove?”
- (3) The answer to this question is the subject – John

B. Yesterday it rained for six hours.

- a. Find the verb – rained
- b. Ask “who or what rained?”
- c. The answer to this question is the subject – it

Hints for finding subjects:

- (1) Before locating the subject of a sentence, block out all prepositional phrases because **the subject is never in a prepositional phrase.**

Example: One (of my friends) lives (in Sacramento.)

Most (of the team) went (on the trip.)

- (2) Here, there, and where are never the subjects of sentences. In these cases, the subject will follow the verb.

Examples: Where are the boys?

Here are my two sisters.

There go the band members.

Hints for finding verbs:

- (1) Note that words like **not**, **ever**, **never**, **only**, **always**, **just**, **really**, **already**, and **often**, are not part of the verb even though they may be in the middle of the verb.

Keith had never driven to the cottage before.

I had always driven to the cottage by myself.

- (2) Two other forms – **driving** and **to drive** – look like verbs but neither can ever be the verb of a sentence. No **-ing** word by itself can ever be the verb of a sentence; it must have a helping verb with it.

Larry driving home. (not a sentence because there is no proper verb)

Larry was driving home. (a sentence)

No verb with **to** in front of it can ever be the verb of a sentence.

To drive down the river road. (not a sentence because there is no proper verb and no subject)

I like to drive down the river road. (a sentence)

These two forms, **driving** and **to drive**, may be used as subjects, or they may have other uses in the sentence.

Driving is fun.

To drive is fun.

Neither of them can ever be the verb of a sentence.

- (3) The infinitive form of the verb (to + a verb) is not a prepositional phrase.

Tom decided to run (to the store.)

Note: “to run” is an infinitive; “to the store” is a prepositional phrase.

- (4) Not only may a verb be composed of more than one word, but also there may be more than one verb in a sentence:

Steve painted the house and planted trees in the yard.

Also there may be more than one subject.

Steve and Marie painted the house and planted trees in the yard.

For all exercises follow these directions.

1. Put parentheses () around prepositional phrases.
2. Underline the verb twice.
3. Underline the subject once.

EXERCISE 1

1. There have always been periodic forest fires.
2. Before the coming of people, fires were started by lightning.
3. Conditions must exist for vegetation to burn.
4. Vegetation usually contains too much water and will not burn.
5. During dry seasons, fires start and burn easily.
6. Can fire race across a forest at express-train speed?
7. The land can change in minutes from an area of life to an area of ashes.
8. Sometimes only heavy rain will extinguish a fire.
9. With the coming of people, the number of forest fires has increased.
10. Constant vigilance is necessary to save our forests.

EXERCISE 2

1. For years she had been collecting shells.
2. Would she identify each one carefully?
3. Then she would place it in a cabinet with a neatly typed label.
4. Limpets had always been her favorites.
5. Those shells could be found only at low tide.
6. Others could be found only on the ocean floor.
7. That morning she awoke at sunrise and looked at the lake below.
8. She went to the shore and wandered for several miles.

9. She gathered shells and took them home to identify.
10. In the evening, she and her friends went for a boat ride on the lake and later had their supper on the shore under the stars.

EXERCISE 3

1. The national bird of the United States is the bald eagle.
2. With its white head and white tail, it is easy to identify.
3. Are bald eagles now an endangered species?
4. Cedar Glen, along the Mississippi River in Illinois, is a haven for these birds.
5. After their breeding season in the northern states and Canadian provinces, they gather for the winter.
6. For five or six months each winter, they stay in this protected place.
7. An area of about 580 acres around Cedar Glen is now a sanctuary.
8. On frigid winter nights, the eagles perch side-by-side on the branches of large sycamore trees.
9. Many bald eagles spend the winter at Cedar Glen.
10. Havens like this ensure a future for our national bird.

EXERCISE 4

1. Along the railroad track and between the rails, California poppies grow profusely.
2. On one side of the lake, a mountain rose abruptly.
3. On the other side was a huge garden with beds of exotic plants.
4. In the garden, we found a small reflecting pool.
5. During that afternoon, we spent much of our time beside it.
6. At the edge of the pool, a sandpiper scuttled away.
7. Beyond the pool, we saw two deer.
8. During our stay in the area, will we hike up the mountain?

9. Our farthest trip was to the cliffs by the ocean.
10. Few forms of sea life survive in the pounding surf at the cliff's base.

EXERCISE 5

1. Neither of my best friends owns a car.
2. Each of them drives the family car.
3. There are advantages to that arrangement.
4. Both of the cars are large and expensive.
5. Furthermore, someone in the family pays for the gas.
6. In her new job, she found challenging problems and congenial associates.
7. Many of her associates were long-time employees.
8. Most of them helped her on occasion.
9. Should one of us call her closest friend?
10. The head of the records department was a good administrator.

REVIEW SECTION

For all exercises follow these directions.

1. Put parentheses () around prepositional phrases.
2. Underline the verb twice and underline the subject once.

1. The wildflowers along the roads are protected by law.
2. The cornerstone of the Washington National Monument was laid in 1848.
3. The first school in America opened in 1640.
4. Forest fires are often located from scouting airplanes.
5. Good manners pay in every walk of life.
6. True friendship is a plant of slow growth.
7. Eli Whitney's cotton gin revolutionized the cotton industry.

8. The people of Canada enjoy winter sports.
9. Uruguay is a small republic in South America.
10. Unfortunately, others did not survive the hurricane of 1964.
11. It killed hundreds of people and injured thousands.
12. Who is the person in the next apartment?
13. Every person in the boat is wearing a life jacket.
14. A column of smoke rose from the chimney.
15. Which of you can help me with this problem?
16. The swimmer broke the world record in several events.
17. Should we go to the game?
18. He plays baseball for the San Francisco Giants.
19. Which state produces the most wheat?
20. The paper on this wall was copied from an old colonial design.