

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).