



Parker Academics, LLC

Creating thoughtful, strategic, fearless problem solvers

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Signals: Prepositional phrases; underlined verbs

Rules: Subjects and verbs must agree in number; the main subject of a sentence will never be in a prepositional phrase or dependent clause

Strategy: Cross out all prepositional phrases; isolate the subject and the verb to determine if they agree.

Example: “The cage of animals rest on the floor.” You might be led to think that the subject is “animals”. However, “animals” falls within a prepositional phrase, begun by the preposition “of”. If you cross out the prepositional phrase (The cage ~~of animals~~ rest on the floor.) you are left with “The cage rest on the floor.” “Cage” is the subject, which means that the verb “rest” is not in agreement with it. The revised sentence should read: The cage of animals rests on the floor.

1. The stack of novels, magazines and newspapers sit comfortably on my grandmother’s old bookshelf.
2. Contrary to common belief, the popularity of recording artists such as Whitney Houston, Justin Beiber and Janet Jackson have never occurred overnight.
3. It is a common belief in intellectual circles that anthropologists only study remote cultures. The image of anthropologists only fascinated with exotic cultures, however, are not consistent with the current reality of the profession.
4. For scientists or science enthusiasts, the allure of exploding stars, exoplanets, asteroid belts and wormholes are likely to never expire.
5. The overwhelming majority of physicists, mathematicians and astronomers believe that time travel violates the physical laws of the known universe, and, therefore is impossible.
6. Many students at top universities feel that the road leading to medical careers are difficult and time-consuming.
7. Interestingly, the first chapter in philosophical monographs, psychoanalytic texts and religious works tend to reveal the authors’ biases.
8. Compared to the gestation periods of many insects and other smaller animals, the gestation period for humans and other large mammals are considerably longer.
9. Although modern medicine has achieved heights not imaginable just a century ago, the battle against many infectious diseases and heritable disorders are a long way from being over.
10. The number of New York City’s decaying buildings, roads and bridges far exceed what the local government can afford to repair.

Answers

1. The stack of novels, magazines and newspapers **sits** comfortably on my grandmother’s old bookshelf.
2. Contrary to common belief, the popularity of recording artists such as Whitney Houston, Justin Beiber and Janet Jackson **has** never occurred overnight.



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3. It is a common belief in intellectual circles that anthropologists only study remote cultures. The image of anthropologists only fascinated with exotic cultures, however, **is** not consistent with the current reality of the profession.
4. For scientists or science enthusiasts, the allure of exploding stars, exoplanets, asteroid belts and wormholes **is** likely to never expire.
5. The overwhelming majority of physicists, mathematicians and astronomers **believes** that time travel violates the physical laws of the known universe, and, therefore is impossible.
6. Many students at top universities feel that the road leading to medical careers **is** difficult and time-consuming.
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Subject-Verb Inversion/Compound Subjects

Definition: A compound subject occurs when there are two or more nouns linked by commas and/or the word "and".

Definition: A subject-verb inversion occurs when the typical ordering of subject, then verb is reversed—the verb comes first, then the subject.

Signals: Prepositional phrases, commas, a list or series, the word "and"; underlined verbs

Rules: Subjects and verbs must agree in number; the main subject of a sentence will never be in a prepositional phrase or dependent clause

Strategy: Cross out all prepositional phrases; Isolate the verb and all parts of the subject. Replace the subject parts with "they"; place the "they" before the verb to determine if the two agree.

In the following example, we will first get rid of all prepositional phrases: "~~In the magazine~~ is an ad ~~of my favorite show~~ and a photo ~~of my least favorite pop star~~." The two nouns linked by "and" are "ad" and "photo". Given that both items are in the magazine, we can replace the two with "they". When we place "they" next to "is" it is clear that the two do not agree. The "is" should change to "are". The revised sentence reads: "In the magazine **are** an ad of my favorite show and a photo of my least favorite pop star."

1. Beyond the earth's crust lies the mantle, which has never been completely penetrated, and the core, which protects us all from deadly solar radiation.



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2. Not invited to the party is my cousin Andy, my aunt Sue and my uncle Benny.
3. What makes Christmas so magical is that under the tree is gifts from so many people you never knew cared so much.
4. Across the street in the decrepit old house lives an old woman, whom, allegedly, no one has seen in over two years, and her son, who serves as her caretaker.
5. There is always a kernel of hurt and a hint of fear at the center of someone's hatred.
6. Right around the corner from my grandmother's house is a middle school, which many people in my family have attended, and a large recreation center.
7. What truly determines someone's degree of success in a school subject is the person's willingness to spend long hours completing assignments (One must actually take an assignment to its completion.) and, of course, an inborn aptitude for that subject.
8. Properly complementing a meal at a five-star restaurant is a delectable dessert—which does not necessarily have to be gourmet status—and, commencing the whole affair, a signature appetizer.
9. Underlying much of Toni Morrison's fiction is the idea that history is very much alive in the present moment and that race relations have been a defining feature of American society.
10. It is often said that at the heart of any successful business is an unrelenting determination to succeed and an aptitude for entrepreneurship.

Answers

1. Beyond the earth's crust **lie** the mantle, which has never been completely penetrated, and the core, which protects us all from deadly solar radiation.
2. Not invited to the party **are** my cousin Andy, my aunt Sue and my uncle Benny.
3. What makes Christmas so magical is that under the tree **are** gifts from so many people you never knew cared so much.
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