ENGLISH, LITERACY, AND COMMUNICATION

Subject and predicate

Difficulty level: Easy

English, Literacy, and Communication

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Overview of the concept

This is how you check a sentence is complete, like making sure a text or an essay sentence says who did what, so your reader never has to guess. Every complete sentence has a subject, the person or thing it is about, and a predicate, what that subject does or is. If either part is missing, the sentence is a fragment, and the reader is left filling in the gap. Checking for both parts is how you make sure every sentence you write actually says something.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q In the sentence 'The dog barked loudly', what is the subject and what is the predicate?

SOLUTION

Ask: who or what is the sentence about? The dog. That is the subject.

The rest tells what the subject did: barked loudly. That is the predicate.

So subject: The dog; predicate: barked loudly.

EXAMPLE 2

Q In the sentence 'Sara and Tom play chess', what is the subject and what is the predicate?

SOLUTION

Ask: who is the sentence about? Sara and Tom. That is the subject.

The rest tells what they do: play chess. That is the predicate.

So subject: Sara and Tom; predicate: play chess.

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Practice questions

1 Split: The birds sang. Give the subject.

- A The birds
- B sang
- C The birds sang
- D My brother

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2 Split: The birds sang. Give the predicate.

- A The birds
- B sang
- C The birds sang
- D runs fast

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3 Split: My brother runs fast. Give the subject.

- A runs fast
- B My brother runs fast
- C My brother
- D fell

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4 Split: My brother runs fast. Give the predicate.

- A My brother
- B The tall tree
- C My brother runs fast
- D runs fast

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5 Split: The tall tree fell. Give the subject.

- A fell
- B The tall tree
- C The tall tree fell
- D We

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6 Split: The tall tree fell. Give the predicate.

- A The tall tree
- B The tall tree fell
- C fell
- D ate lunch

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7

Split: We ate lunch. Give the subject.

A ate lunch

B We ate lunch

C The old car

D We

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8

Split: We ate lunch. Give the predicate.

A ate lunch

B We

C We ate lunch

D stopped

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9

Split: The old car stopped. Give the subject.

A stopped

B The old car stopped

C The old car

D The birds

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10

Split: The old car stopped. Give the predicate.

A The old car

B stopped

C The old car stopped

D sang

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ANSWER KEY

1. The birds

2. sang

3. My brother

4. runs fast

5. The tall tree

6. fell

7. We

8. ate lunch

9. The old car

10. stopped

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