

# Unit 9

## Subject-verb

## Agreement #1



singular subject + singular verb

He talks to his friends.  
Mr.Park is talking to his friend.

plural subject + plural verb

They talk to their friends.  
Mr.Paul and his friends are talking.

## Exercise 1 : What do I already know ?

Add –s or –es where necessary. Do not change or omit any other words. All of the sentences are simple present.

1. Erica miss<sup>es</sup> her mother and father.
2. My parent<sup>s</sup> visit many countries when they travel in Europe.
3. Robert sing<sup>s</sup> when he take<sup>s</sup> a shower.
4. Chicken <sup>s</sup> , duck <sup>s</sup> and turkey<sup>s</sup> lay egg<sup>s</sup> .
5. Anna wear<sup>s</sup> glove<sup>s</sup> on her hand<sup>s</sup> when she work<sup>s</sup> in her garden.
6. She scratch<sup>es</sup> her chin when it itch<sup>es</sup> .

## Exercise 2 : Warm-up.

Look at the words that end in –s. Are they singular or plural? Are they nouns or verbs?

	Singular	Plural	Noun	Verb
1. A new car <b>costs</b> a lot of money.	✓			✓
2. New <b>cars</b> cost a lot of money.		✓	✓	
3. My neighbor <b>makes</b> a lot of noise.	✓			✓
4. My <b>neighbors</b> make a lot of noise.		✓	✓	
5. Bill <b>drinks</b> tea for breakfast.	✓			✓
6. Cold <b>drinks</b> taste good on a hot day.		✓	✓	

## Final -s /-es : Use and Spelling

เอกพจน์เติม **a** พหูพจน์เติม **S**

### Use

แต่ถ้านับไม่ได้จะไม่ใส่ **a** และก็ไม่เติม **S**

(a) **Noun + -s** : Friends are important.  
**Noun + -es** : I like my classes.

A final -s or -es is added to a noun to make the noun plural.  
*Friend* and *class* = singular nouns  
*Friends* and *classes* = plural nouns

(b) **Verb + -s** : Mary works at the bank.  
**Verb + -es** : John watches birds.

A final -s or -es is added to a simple present verb when the subject is a singular noun (e.g., Mary, my father, the machine) or third person singular pronoun (she, he, it).  
*Mary works* = singular      *She works* = singular  
*The students work* = plural      *They work* = plural

# Spelling

(f) sing → sings  
song → songs

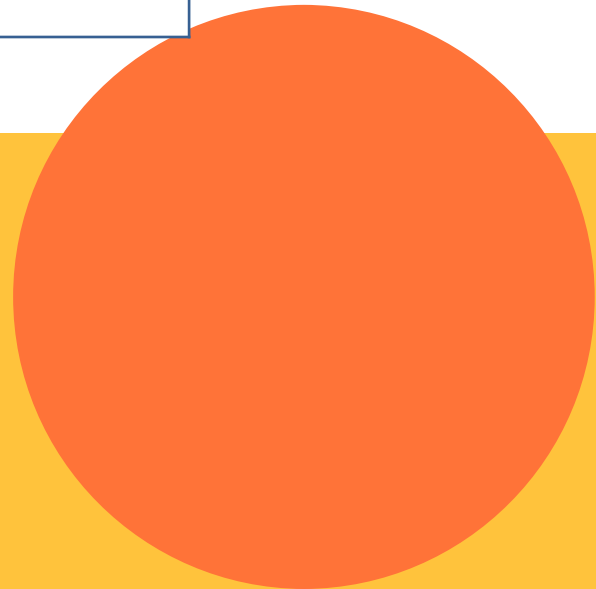
For most words (whether a verb or a verb or a noun), simply add a final -s to spell the word correctly.

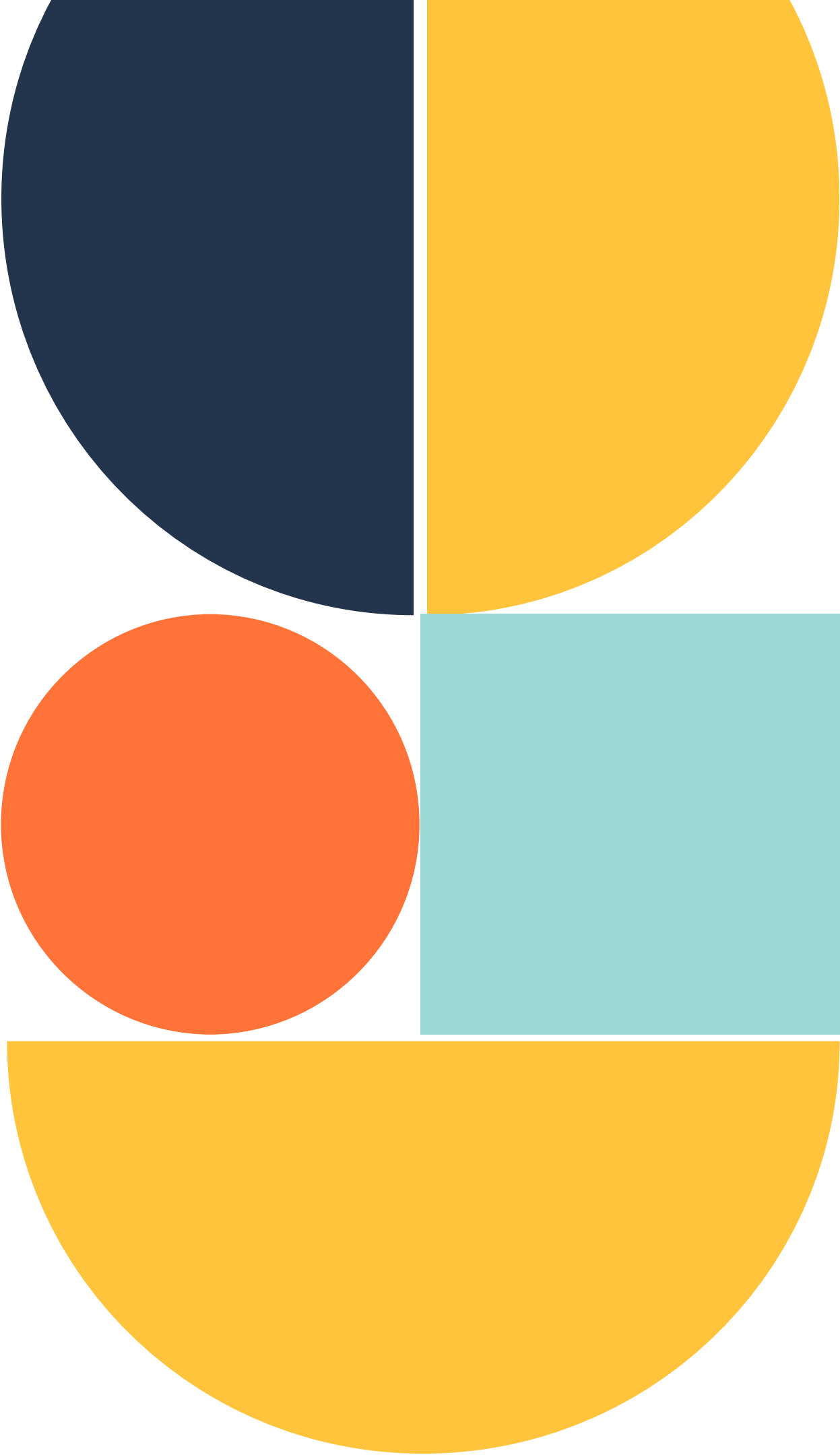
(g) wash → washes  
watch → watches  
class → classes  
buzz → buzzes  
box → boxes

Final -es is added to words that end in  
-s, -ss, -sh, -ch, -x, -o, and -z.

(h) toy → toys  
buy → buys  
(i) baby → babies  
cry → cries

For words that end in -y:  
In (h): If -y is preceded by a vowel, only -s is added.  
In (i): If -y is preceded by a consonant, the -y is changed to -i and -es is added.





Change roles.

6. mosquito bite \ itch

Mosquito bites itch.

A mosquito bite itches.

7. hungry baby \ cry

Hungry babies cry.

A hungry baby cries.

8. student \ ask questions

Students ask questions.

A student asks questions.

9. snake \ hiss

Snakes hiss.

A snake hisses.

10. dog \ say “arf-arf” in English

Dogs say “arf-arf” in English.

A dog says “arf-arf” in English.

## Exercise 7 : Warm-up

Look at the verbs in blue in each pair of sentences. How do you know when to use a singular or a plural verb?

1. a. A girl is in the classroom.  
b. Some girls are in the classroom.
2. a. A girl and a boy are in the classroom.  
b. Every girl and boy is in the classroom.
3. a. The fruit at those markets is cheap.  
b. The apples at that market are cheap.
4. a. Vegetables are good for you.  
b. Eating vegetables is good for you.



## Basic Subject – Verb Agreement

Singular Verb	Plural Verb	
(a) My friend <b>lives</b> in Boston	(b) My friends <b>live</b> in Boston.	Verb + -s/-es = third person singular in the simple present tense Noun + -s/ -es = plural
	(c) My brother <b>and</b> sister live in Boston. (d) My brother, sister, <b>and</b> cousin live in Boston.	Two or more subjects connected by and require a plural verb.
(e) <b>Every</b> man, woman, and child <b>needs</b> love. (f) <b>Each</b> book and magazine <b>is</b> listed in the bibliography.		EXCEPTION: Every and each are always followed immediately by singular nouns. In this case, even when there are two (or more) nouns connected by and, the verb is singular.

(g) That book **on political parties** is interesting.

(i) The book **that I got from my parents** was very interesting.

(h) The ideas **in that book** are interesting.

(j) The books **I bought at the bookstore** were expensive.

(k) **Watching** old movies **is** fun.

Sometimes a phrase or clause separates a subject from its verb. These interrupting structures do not affect basic agreement.

For example, in (g) the interrupting prepositional phrase on political parties does not change the fact that the verb is must agree with the subject book.

In (i) and (j): The subject and verb are separated by an adjective clause.

A gerund (e.g., watching) used as the subject of the sentence requires a singular verb.

## Exercise 8 : Looking at grammar

Choose the correct completions.

1. Lettuce (is, are) good for you.
2. The subjects you will be studying in this course (is, are) listed in the syllabus.
3. The extent of Fatima's knowledge on various subjects (astounds, astound) me.
4. Oranges, tomatoes, fresh strawberries, cabbage, and lettuce (is, are) rich in vitamin C.
5. Every man, woman, and child (is, are) protected under the law.
6. The professor and the student (agrees, agree) on that point.
7. Almost every professor and student at the university (approves, approve) of the choice of Dr. Brown as the new president.
8. Each girl and boy in the sixth-grade class (has, have) to do a science project.
9. Tomatoes (is, are) easy to grow. Growing tomatoes (is, are) especially easy in hot climates.
10. Getting to know students from all over the world (is, are) one of the best parts of my job.

## Exercise 10 : Warm-up.

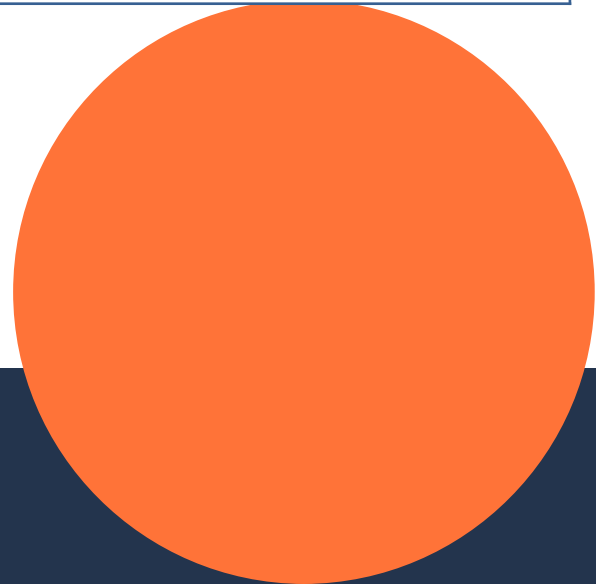
Look at the verbs in blue. How do you know when to use a singular or a plural verb?

1. Some of this book is interesting.
2. Some of those books are interesting.
3. Most of those books are interesting.
4. Most of the book is interesting.
5. One of those books is Linda's.
6. Each of those books is yours.

# Subject - Verb Agreement: Using Expressions of Quantity

Singular Verb	Plural Verb	
(a) Some of the <b>book</b> is good. (c) A lot of the <b>equipment</b> is new. (e) Two-thirds of the <b>money</b> is mine. (g) Most of our <b>homework</b> is easy.	(b) Some of the <b>books</b> are good. (d) A lot of my <b>friends</b> are here. (f) Two-thirds of the <b>boys</b> are here. (h) Most of our <b>assignments</b> are easy.	In most expressions of quantity, the verb is determined by the noun (or pronoun) that follows of. For example in (a) and (b) : some of + singular noun = singular verb some of + plural noun = plural verb
(i) <b>One of</b> my friends is here. (j) <b>Each of</b> my friends is here. (k) <b>Every one of</b> my friends is here.		EXCEPTIONS: One of, each of, and every one of take singular verb. <b>one of</b> } <b>each of</b> } + plural noun = <b>singular verb every one of</b>

(l) None of the boys is here.	(m) None of the boys are here.	Subjects with none of used to be considered singular in very formal English, but plural verbs are often used in informal English and sometimes even in formal writing.
(n) <b>The number of</b> students in the class <b>is</b> fifteen.	(o) <b>A number of</b> students <b>were</b> late for class.	COMPARE: In (n): The number is the <b>subject</b> . In (o): A number of is an expression of quantity meaning “ <b>a lot of</b> .” It is followed by a plural noun and a plural verb.





## Exercise 11 : Looking at grammar.

Choose the correct completions. Underline the word(s) that determine whether the verb is singular or plural.

1. Some of the fruit in this bowl (is, are) rotten.
2. Some of the apples in that bowl (is, are) rotten.
3. Most of the movie (is, are) funny.
4. Most of the movies (is, are) funny.
5. Half of the students in the class (is, are) from Arabic-speaking countries.
6. Half of this money (is, are) yours.
7. A lot of the students in the class (is, are) from Southeast Asia.
8. A lot of clothing in those stores (is, are) on sale this week.

9. One of my best friends (is, are) coming to visit me next month.
10. Each boy in the class (has, have) his own notebook.
11. Each of the boys in the class (has, have) his own notebook.
12. Every one of the students (is, are) required to take the final test.
13. None of the animals at the zoo (is, are) free to roam. All of them (is, are) in enclosures.
14. A number of students (is, are) absent to day.
15. The number of employees in my company (is, are) approximately ten thousand.



## Exercise 12 : Looking at grammar.

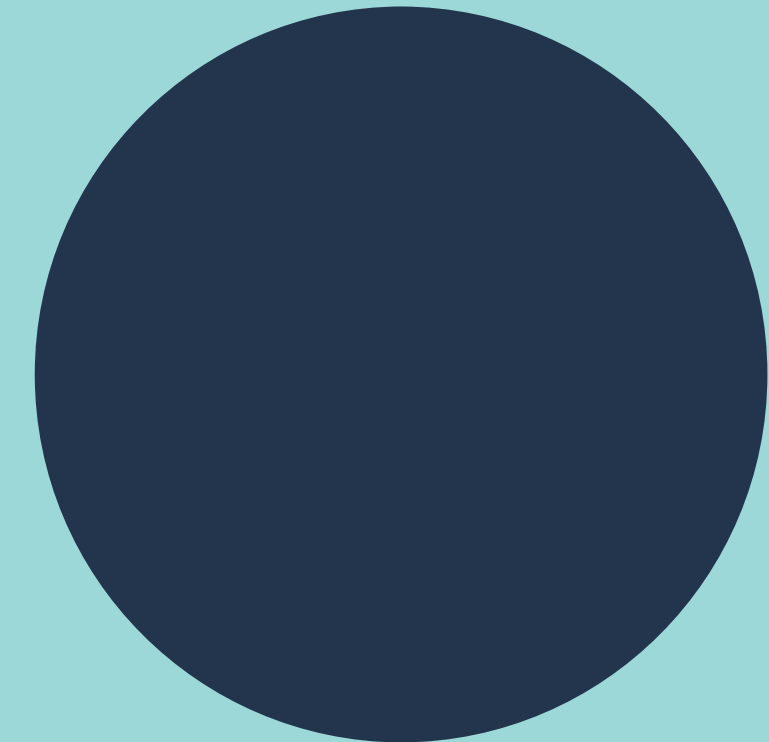
Take turns making sentences. Work with a partner or in small groups.

... is / are unusual.

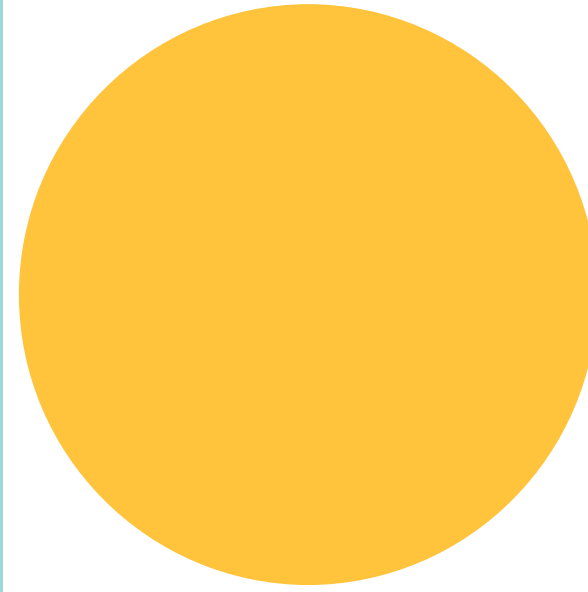
1. The story → The story is unusual.
2. The stories **are unusual**.....
3. Some of the story **is unusual**.....
4. some of the stories **are unusual**.....
5. Two – thirds of the story **is unusual**.....
6. One of the stories **is unusual**.....
7. Each of the stories **is unusual**.....
8. None of the story **is unusual**.....
9. None of the stories **are unusual**.....
10. A number of stories **are unusual**.....

...is / are secondhand.

11. The furniture is secondhand.
12. A lot of the furniture is secondhand.
13. A lot of the chairs are secondhand.
14. Some of the furniture is secondhand.
15. Half of the furniture is secondhand.
16. None of the furniture is secondhand.
17. Some of the chairs are secondhand.
18. Three-fourths of the furniture is secondhand.
19. Seventy-five percent of the furniture is secondhand.
20. Half of the chairs are secondhand.







THE END (#  
1)

# Unit 9

## Subject-verb

## Agreement #2



## Subject-Verb Agreement: Using There + Be

<p>(a) There is a fly in the room.</p> <p>(b) There are three windows in this room.</p>	<p>There + be introduces the idea that something exists in a particular place.</p> <p>There + be + subject + expression of place*</p> <p>The subject follows be when there is used.</p> <p>In (a): The subject is a fly. (singular)</p> <p>In (b): The subject is three windows. (plural)</p>
<p>(c) <b>INFORMAL:</b> There's two sides to every story.</p>	<p>In informal spoken English, some native speakers use a singular verb even when the subject is plural, as in (c). The use of this form is fairly frequent but is not generally considered to be grammatically correct.</p>



## Exercise 14 : Looking at grammar.

Choose the correct completions.

1. There (isn't, aren't) any **letters** in the mail for you today.
2. There (isn't, aren't) any **mail** for you today.
3. There (is, are) a lot of **problems** in the world.
4. There (is, are) **a hole** in his sock.
5. How many **kinds of birds** (is, are) there in the world?
6. Why (isn't, aren't) there **a hospital** close to those villages?

## Exercise 16 : Warm-up.

Look at the subjects and verbs (in blue) in each pair of sentences. Some of them are “exceptions to the rule.” For example, nouns that end in –s usually take a plural verb, but sometimes not. Look for these irregularities.

1. a. Nations are groups of people who share a common identity.  
b. The United Nations is an international organization.
2. a. Kilometers are measures of distance.  
b. Seven kilometers is too far for me to run.
3. a. Mix and fix are verbs.  
b. Six and six is twelve.
4. a. Whales are mammals.  
b. People are mammals.
5. a. English is a language.  
b. The English are concerned about global warming.

## Subject-Verb Agreement: Some Irregularities

### Singular Verb

(a) The United States <i>is</i> big.	Sometimes a proper noun that ends in <i>-s</i> is singular. In the examples, if the noun is changed to a pronoun, the singular pronoun <i>it</i> is used (not the plural pronoun <i>they</i> ) because the noun is singular. In (a): <i>The United States</i> = <i>it</i> (not <i>they</i> )
(b) The Philippines <i>consists</i> of more than 7,000 islands.	
(c) The United Nations <i>has</i> its headquarters in New York City.	
(d) Harrods <i>is</i> a department store.	
(e) The news <i>is</i> interesting.	<i>News</i> is singular.
(f) Mathematics <i>is</i> easy for her. Physics <i>is</i> easy for her too.	Fields of study that end in <i>-ics</i> require singular verbs.
(g) Diabetes <i>is</i> an illness.	Certain illnesses that end in <i>-s</i> are singular: diabetes, measles, mumps, rabies, rickets, shingles.

(h) Eight hours of sleep <i>is</i> enough.	Expressions of time, money, and distance usually require a singular verb.
(i) Ten dollars <i>is</i> too much to pay.	
(j) Five thousand miles <i>is</i> too far to travel.	
(k) Two and two <i>is</i> four. Two and two <i>equals</i> four. Two plus two <i>is/equals</i> four.	Arithmetic expressions require singular verbs.
(l) Five times five <i>is</i> twenty-five.	

# Plural Verb

- (m) Those people *are* from Canada.
- (n) The police *have* been called.
- (o) Cattle *are* domestic animals.
- (p) Fish *live* under water.

People,\* police, cattle, and fish do not end in *-s*, but they are plural nouns in the example sentences and require plural verbs.

## Singular Verb

## Plural Verb

- (q) English *is* spoken in many countries.
- (s) Chinese *is* his native language.

- (r) The English *drink* tea.
- (t) The Chinese *have* an interesting history.

In (q): *English* = language  
 In (r): *The English* = people from England  
 Some nouns of nationality that end in *-sh*, *-ese*, and *-ch* can mean either language or people, e.g., English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, French.

- (u) The poor *have* many problems.
- (v) The rich *get* richer.

A few adjectives can be preceded by the and used as a plural noun (without final *-s*) to refer to people who have that quality. Other examples: the young, the elderly, the living, the dead, the blind, the deaf, the disabled.

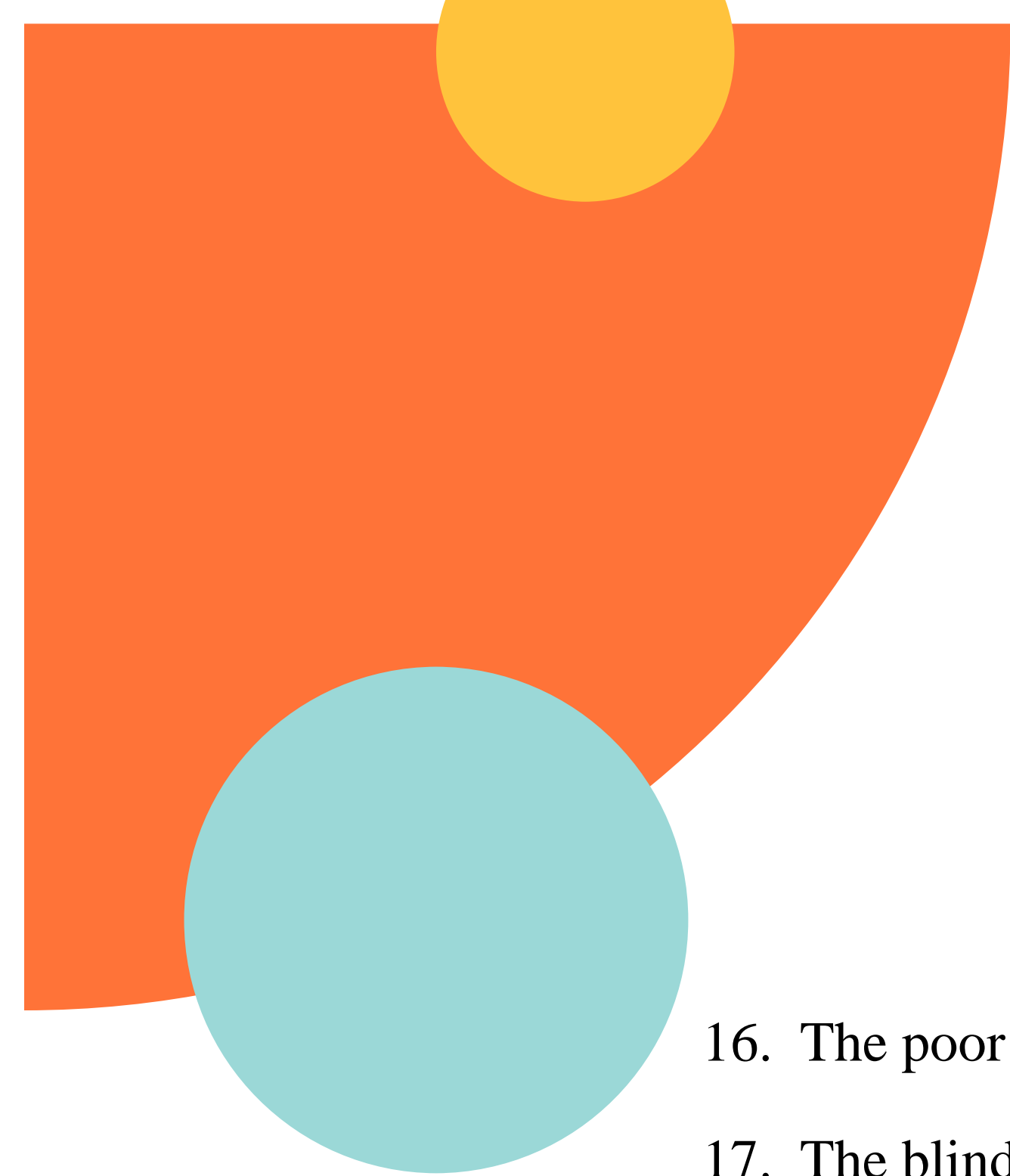
## Exercise 17 : Looking at grammar.

Choose the correct completions.

1. The United States (has, have) a populations of around 300 million.
2. The news about Mr. Gonzalez (is, are) surprising.
3. The New York Times (is, are) an established and respected newspaper.
4. Physics (seek, seeks) to understand the mysteries of the physical world.
5. Statistics (is, are) a branch of mathematics.
6. The statistics in that report on oil production (is, are) incorrect.\*
7. Fifty minutes (is, are) the maximum length of time allowed for the exam.





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8. Twenty dollars (is, are) an unreasonable price for the necklace.
  9. Many people in the world (does, do) not have enough to eat.
  10. The police (is, are) prepared in case there is a riot.
  11. Rabies (is, are) an infectious and often fatal disease.
  12. The French (is, are) proud, independent people.
  13. French (is, are) not my native language.
  14. Many Japanese (commutes, commute) to their places of work.
  15. Portuguese (is, are) somewhat similar to Spanish, (isn't it, aren't they)?
  16. The poor (is, are) helped by government programs.
  17. The blind (want, wants) the rest of us to treat them the same way we treat everyone else.
  18. The effect of a honeybee's sting on a human being (depends, depend) on that person's susceptibility to the bee's venom. Most people (is, are) not in danger if they are stung, but there (has, have) been instances of allergic deaths from a single honeybee sting.

## Exercise 19 : Looking at grammar.

Your teacher will give you phrases to complete with *is* or *are*. Close your book for this activity.

*Example :*



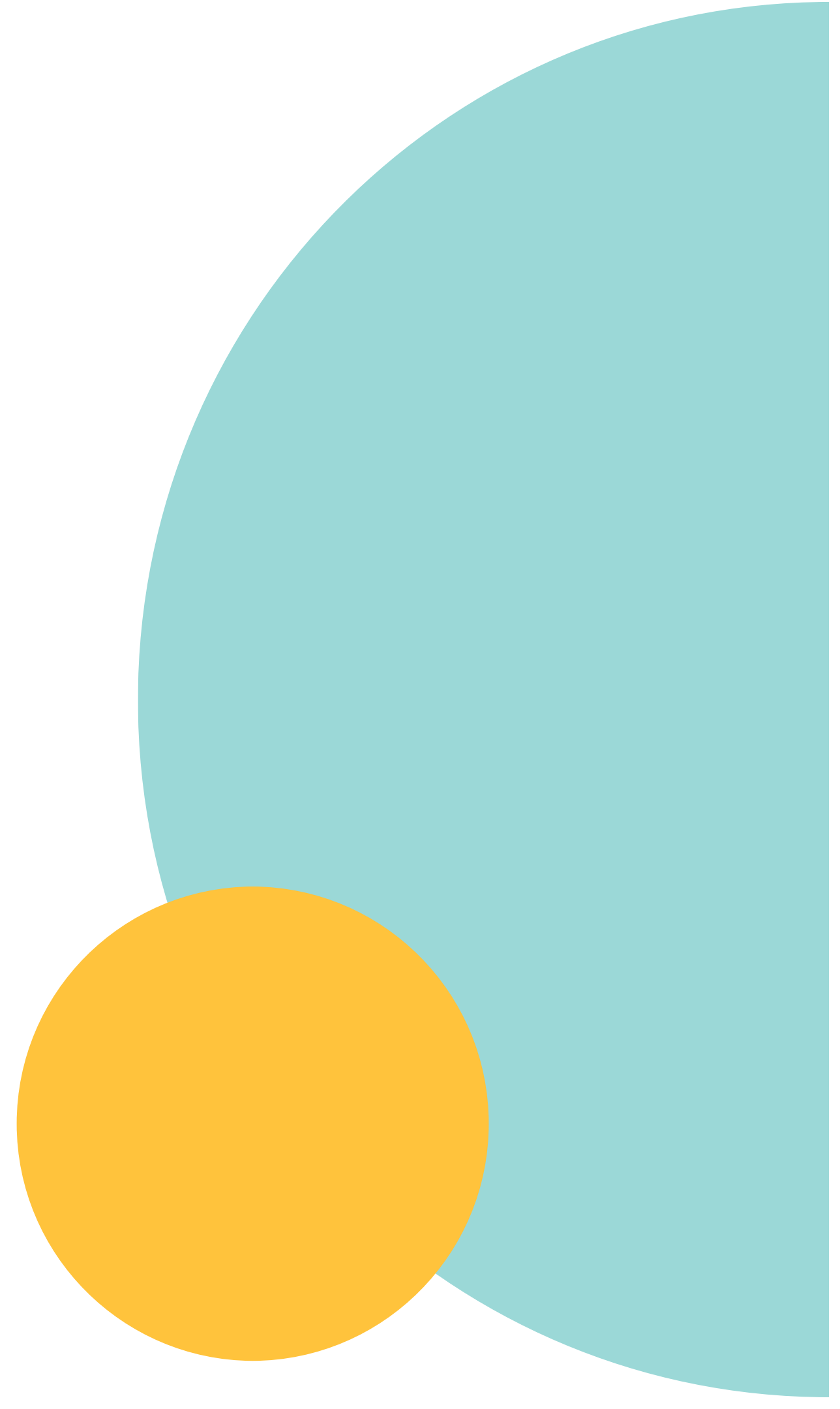
TEACHER (book open): Women

SPEAKER A : (book closed) : are

TEACHER (book open) : Every man, woman,  
and child

SPEAKER B (book closed) : is

1. A woman and her child ....**are**...
2. One of the countries I would like to visit ...**is**.....
3. Some of the cities I would like to visit ...**are**.....
4. A number of students ...**are**.....

- 
- 
- 
5. Ten minutes .....**is**.....
  6. Most people .....**are**.....
  7. Chinese .....**is**.....
  8. The Chinese .....**are**.....
  9. The poor in my country .....**are**.....
  10. Washing the dishes .....**is**.....
  11. The United States .....**is**.....
  12. This exercise on subject-verb agreement .....**is**.....

## Exercise 20 : Looking at grammar.

Your teacher will give you phrases to complete with is or are. Close your book for this activity.

*Example :*

TEACHER (book open) : His idea \ interesting

STUDENT A (BOOK CLOSED) : His idea is interesting.

1. His ideas \ interesting  
.....**His ideas are interesting.**.....
2. Some of the people \ friendly  
.....**Some of the people are friendly.**.....
3. One of the girls \ absent  
.....**One of the girls is absent.**.....



4. Italian \ a Romance language

*Italian is a Romance language.*

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5. Two-thirds of the food \ gone

*Two-thirds of the food is gone.*

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6. The clothes in that store \ expensive

*The clothes in that store are expensive.*

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7. The clothing in those stores \ inexpensive

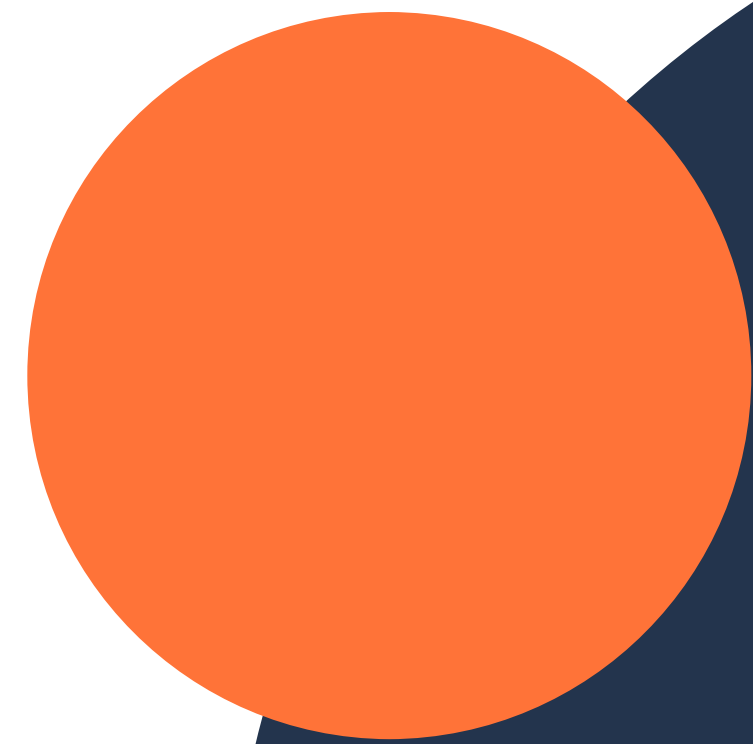
*The clothing in those stores is inexpensive.*

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8. Most of the stores in tourist towns \ overpriced

*Most of the stores in tourist towns are overpriced.*

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## Exercise 22 : Game

Work in teams. Decide if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I). If incorrect, make the necessary changes. Your teacher will give you a time limit. The team with the most correct answers wins.

C

I

..... ✓

✓  
.....

..... ✓

✓  
.....

✓  
.....

1. The news about the economy **was** disappointing.

2. The economy is not doing well.

3. Economists **are** worried.

4. Economics is a field of study.

5. Where's Kenya on the map?

C

I

..... ✓ .....

..... ✓ .....

..... ✓ .....

..... ✓ .....

..... ✓ .....

6. Where **are** my gloves? I can't find them.

7. More men than women are left-handed.

8. Chinese **has** more than fifty thousand written characters.

9. About two-thirds of the Vietnamese **work** in agriculture.

10. Two hours is too long to wait, don't you think?





C

I

..... ✓ .....

✓ .....

✓ .....

reading.

..... ✓ .....

11. How many people **are** here in Canada?

12. What is the population of Canada?

13. Everybody in my family enjoys music and

reading.

14. Some of the movies these days **contain** too much violence.




## Exercise 24 : Check your knowledge.

Correct the errors in subject-verb agreement. Some sentences contain no errors.

1. The books in my office **are** very valuable to me.
2. All of the windows in our house were broken in the earthquake.  
**no errors**
3. A lot of the people in my class **work** during the day and **attend** class in the evening.
4. Many of the satellites orbiting the earth **are** used for communications.



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5. The news about the long-range effects of air pollution on the development of children’s lungs is disturbing. **no errors**
  6. Studying a foreign language often **leads** students to learn about the culture of the countries where it is spoken.
  7. One of the most common names for dogs in the United States is “Rover.” **no errors**
  8. A number of planes were delayed due to the snowstorm in Denver. **no errors**
  9. Most of the mountain peaks in the Himalayan Range **are** covered with snow the year round.



10. The number of passengers affected by the delays was great.

no errors

11. Seventy-five percent of the people in New York City **live** in upstairs apartments, not on the ground floor.

12. Approximately 76 percent of all the data in computers around the world is in English. **no errors**

13. Unless there is a profound and extensive reform of government policies in the near future, the economic conditions in that country will continue to deteriorate. **no errors**

14. While I was in Paris, some of the best food I found **was** not at the well-known eating places but in small out-of-the-way cafés.





**THE END**