Subject Verb Agreement Lesson 1

What is a subject?
• The person, place, or thing that is performing the action of the sentence. • Represents what or whom the sentence is about. • Usually contains a noun or pronoun

What is a verb?	
Action verbs	Tell us the action of someone or something. **Examples:** sing, sleep, think
Linking verbs	Do not describe an action, but tell us about the state or condition of subjects Link the subject with a noun or an adjective → I am happy. **Examples:** all 'be' verbs, become, seem, appear, grow, feel
Helping verbs	Do no describe an action Must be used before action or linking verbs Part of verb phrases that "help" give additional information (possibility or tense) to the main verb **Examples:** modal verbs (will, must, can, etc), 'be' verbs, has, have, do
Difference between linking and helping verbs	Some verbs ('be' verbs, modal verbs, do, have) can either be linking or helping verbs **Examples:** Sarah is moving to a new house. (helping) Sarah is ready to go to the new house. (linking) Joanne did finish her homework last night! (helping) Joanne did her homework last night. (action)

Basic SVA Rule: Singular and Plural
Singular subject → singular verb Plural subject → plural verb

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Examples:
Incorrect → The cat sleep on the bed.
Correct → The cat sleeps on the bed.

Incorrect → The girls likes ice cream.
Correct → The girls like ice cream.

Question 1

She _____ her office by 9am daily.

(1) reach
(2) reaches
(3) reached
(4) reaching

Or, Either/or, Neither/nor

When two singular subjects are used, a singular verb is required.

Examples:
Incorrect → The cat or the dog are hiding in the cupboard.
Correct → The cat or the dog is hiding in the cupboard.

Incorrect → Either Jay or Kylie are going to buy some takeout for dinner.
Correct → Either Jay or Kylie is going to buy some takeout for dinner.

Incorrect → Neither my brother nor my sister are home from school yet.
Correct → Neither my brother nor my sister is home from school yet.

Question 2

Neither of Sally's children _____ going to Sentosa tomorrow.

(1) is
(2) are
(3) was
(4) were

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Or, Either/or, Neither/nor, Not only, But also

When one of the subjects is plural, the verb needs to agree with the closest subject.

Examples:
Incorrect → Neither the plates nor the bowl has been washed.
Correct → Neither the bowl nor the plates have been washed.

Incorrect → Not only Janie but also Sarah want to go to Sentosa this weekend.
Correct → Not only Janie but also Sarah wants to go to Sentosa this weekend.

Question 3

Neither Sally nor her children _____ interested in going to the school play next week.

(1) is
(2) are
(3) was
(4) were

And

A plural verb is required when two or more subjects are connected by 'and'

Example:
Jenny and her best friend are at school right now.

Question 4

Tim and Tam _____ been business partners for ten years.

(1) is
(2) are
(3) has
(4) have

Adverbs (with, along with, as well as, besides, together with, etc)

When the subject is separated from the verb with words, such as 'as well as', we can ignore them. The verb only needs to agree with the main subject of the sentence.

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Examples:
Incorrect → The dog, along with its puppies, are walking towards the park.
Correct → The dog, along with its puppies, is walking towards the park.

Incorrect → Jane, as well as Jack, have been invited to give a speech at our school assembly tomorrow.
Correct → Jane, as well as Jack, has been invited to give a speech at our school assembly.

Question 5

Mr Ng, including his colleagues, _____ asked to attend the meeting yesterday.

(1) is
(2) are
(3) was
(4) were

Practice 1 [5 marks]

1. Jane and her brothers (is, are) at school.
2. Neither my mother or my father (is, are) coming to the parent-teacher conference.
3. The dog or the cats (is, are) eating the food my mother put out for them.
4. Either my shoes or your shirt (is, are) always on the floor.
5. George and Jerry (doesn't, don't) want to go to the zoo tomorrow.

Practice 2 [5 marks]

1. Either answer to this question _____ acceptable.
    a. is
    b. are
    c. has
    d. have

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2. Kendra _____ know how to answer the questions in the test.
    a. is not
    b. do not
    c. are not
    d. does not

3. The movie, including all the other movie trailers and advertisements, _____ about two hours to watch.
    a. take
    b. takes
    c. taken
    d. taking

4. The man with all the pet birds still _____ in the same block as my aunt today.
    a. live
    b. lives
    c. lived
    d. living

5. The President has just arrived and the Prime Minister, together with his wife, cordially _____ him a drink.
    a. offer
    b. offers
    c. offered
    d. offering

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Practice 3 [12 marks]

1. **Fill in the blanks with the correct word.**
2. **Write the correct word for each of the underlined words which contain grammatical errors.**

is (x3) or are (x4) have

Some people can get by on three meals a day, but for most of us, snacking 1) _____ a regular and enjoyable part of our daily routine. If you do snack, you are either really hungry 2) _____ just craving food.

Hunger is how our body 3) response when nourishment is needed. If you 4) _____ feeling hungry, you may experience stomach discomfort. Craving for food, moreover, 5) _____

psychological. It 6) referred to our minds being affected by outside influences such as sight or smell of food. It can also be habitual and imaginative.

If you really 7) _____ hungry, eat healthy snacks rather than wait for the next meal. This 8) _____ beneficial to you as it will reduce the temptation to eat unhealthy food unnecessarily. Good choices of healthy snacks 9) including fresh or dried fruit, raw vegetables, low-fat yoghurt, rice cakes with peanut butter, and nuts and seeds. Stock up on healthy snacks for home, travel and work so you always 10) _____ them in hand.

Healthy snacks 11) _____ particularly important for children, who have small stomachs and so 12) _____ unlikely to eat enough to meet their nutritional requirements in three meals. Regular healthy snacks are important for everyone in maintaining energy levels, however, we will have to ensure that they are always taken in moderation.

Adapted from 'Nutrition for Life' by Lisa Hark and Dr Darwin Deen

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