

SUBJECT / VERB AGREEMENT

Either...or; Neither...nor

Either means one or the other.

Neither means not either one.

RULE 1:

Subjects that are separated by neither...nor / either...or take a verb that agrees with the subject closer to it.

If a singular subject is closer a singular verb is used.

e.g. Neither the boy (singular) nor the girl (singular) has (singular) a pen.

Either the students (plural) or the teacher (singular) deserves (singular) credit.

Neither your parents (plural) nor the teachers (plural) want (plural) you to fail.

Either the child (singular) or his parents (plural) are (plural) to attend the meeting.

NOTE:

Neither by itself or either by itself always takes a singular verb.

e.g. Neither of the men (plural) was (singular) convicted.

Either of the girls (plural) is (singular) likely to win the prize.

Neither boy (singular) has (singular) his schoolbooks.

EXERCISE

1. Neither Tom nor Mary _____ a pencil.
2. Neither the petals nor the sepals _____ part in reproduction.
3. Neither plastic nor wood _____ attracted to magnets.
4. Either of the children _____ to visit Aunty Mary.
5. _____ either of the girls received a prize?
6. Neither the men nor the women _____ to work.
7. Neither the boy nor the men _____ hard.
8. Neither he nor she _____ to recite the poem.
9. Neither we nor they _____ willing to do the chores.
10. Either the boy or the girls _____ to wash the dishes.
11. Neither he nor she _____ well.
12. Either Nyheem or Treverson _____ correct.