

ELEMENTS OF GREAT WRITING

What Is a Sentence?

A **simple sentence** is a group of words that:

- expresses a complete thought
- has a subject and a verb
- has an object and/or other information after the verb

SUBJECT	VERB	OBJECT	OTHER INFORMATION
Maria	sings.		
Maria and her sister	play	the piano.	
They	sing and play	beautiful songs	every day.
Maria's brother	plays	soccer and basketball.	

The subject:

- is the person or thing that does the action
- can be a noun or a pronoun

The verb:

- shows the action or state of the subject
- is sometimes an action word, such as *go, speak, write, swim, or watch*
- is sometimes a non-action word, such as *be, like, want, or need*

The object:

- receives the action of the verb
- can be a noun or a pronoun

ACTIVITY 1 | Identifying subjects, verbs, and objects

Underline the subject in each sentence. Circle the verb(s). Double underline any objects.

1. My friend and I play tennis.
2. Eun and Hae-Won skate.
3. The university has business and education classes.
4. Abdullah and Salem take and share pictures.
5. The science class studies climate change.

6. The history professors give long lectures.
7. Eva reads newspapers, magazines, and books.
8. The performer sings, acts, and dances.

Fill in each blank with the correct subject, verb, or object. Use words from the word box.

Amazon Go	Caroline	enjoys	She	wakes up
arrives	classes	her job	takes	works

WORDS TO KNOW Paragraph 1.1

attend: (v) to go to a meeting, class, and so on

break: (n) a pause or stop in work or activity

PARAGRAPH 1.1

A Great Place to Work

1 _____ has a great job at Amazon Go. 2 _____ works there on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. She does not work there on Wednesdays because she **attends** 3 _____ at Jefferson Community College. On her workdays, Caroline 4 _____ at 6 a.m. She 5 _____ at the store at 8 a.m. She 6 _____ from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. She 7 _____ her **break** from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Caroline likes 8 _____ very much. She 9 _____ her coworkers, too. For Caroline, 10 _____ is a great place to work.



Avoiding Fragments

A **fragment** is an incomplete sentence. It:

- is missing a subject or a verb
- does not have a complete idea

✓ John is my brother. **He** works at Ames Bank.

✗ John is my brother. Works at Ames Bank.

✓ Many people **have** white cars.

✗ Many people white cars.

Check your work to avoid writing fragments.

WRITER'S NOTE Using *It* as a Subject

Use *It* as the subject to talk about weather and time. Without the *It* subject, you have a fragment.

✓ It snows a lot this time of year.

✗ Snows a lot this time of year.

✓ It is five o'clock now.

✗ Is five o'clock now.

ACTIVITY 3 | Identifying fragments

Write F for *fragment* and S for *complete sentence*. Then correct the fragments.

1. S Hans lives in a big apartment.

2. F ^{makes} My mother ^ breakfast every morning.

3. _____ Is sunny today.

4. _____ Abdul has a car.

5. _____ They my cousins from Miami.

6. _____ It twelve o'clock.

7. _____ Michael likes football.

8. _____ Nicole and Jean best friends.

9. _____ Colombia is in South America.

10. _____ Has a subject and a verb.

Sentences with the Verb *Be*

Be is a very common verb in English. It has three forms in the simple present: *am*, *is*, *are*. *Be* is never followed by an object. Here are three common sentence patterns of *be*.

Subject + *Be* + Adjective(s)

SUBJECT	BE	ADJECTIVE(S)
I	am	happy.
You/We/They	are	young.
He/She/It	is	fun and interesting.

Subject + *Be* + Noun(s)/Noun Phrase

SUBJECT	BE	NOUN(S)/NOUN PHRASE
I	am	a mother and a doctor.
The players	are	a team.
Ceviche	is	a seafood dish.

Subject + *Be* + Prepositional Phrase

SUBJECT	BE	PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE
I	am	at school.
My keys	are	on the table.
The test	is	in the morning.

You can use more than one pattern at a time in a sentence:

adj prep phr
I am happy at work.

n phr prep phr
She is a top chef in Asia.



ACTIVITY 4 | Identifying sentence patterns of *be*

Read the paragraph. Then follow the directions below.

1. Circle the sentence(s) with the pattern *be* + adjective(s).
2. Underline the sentence(s) with the pattern *be* + noun(s)/noun phrase.
3. Double underline the sentence(s) with the pattern *be* + prepositional phrase.

WORDS TO KNOW Paragraph 1.2

border: (n) the line that divides two countries

research: (n) the study of information

scientist: (n) someone who works in science

PARAGRAPH 1.2

A Language Scientist

Sandhya Narayanan is a National Geographic Explorer. She is from Boston, USA, and Toronto, Canada. She speaks many languages. She is a language **scientist**. Sandhya works in the Andes Mountains on the **border** of Peru and Bolivia. She studies two languages there. These languages are old. They are Quechua and Aymara. She studies the change of these languages over time. Her **research** teaches us about languages in the world.

Sandhya Narayanan



ACTIVITY 5 | Scrambled sentences

Unscramble the words and phrases to write complete sentences.

1. My name / Angela / is

My name is Angela

2. from Kearney, Nebraska / I / am

3. in the middle of the United States / a small city / Kearney / is

4. a professor / My mother / is

5. My father / a small business owner / is

6. am / the oldest child / I / in my family

7. tall / I / am

8. Hiking / is / my hobby

9. am / I / an / English teacher

10. is / Teaching / exciting and fun

ACTIVITY 6 | Writing sentences

A. Write eight simple sentences about yourself. Follow the examples in Activity 5.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____