

1. Do you know what happened during Michelle's boat trip?
2. Down the rapids on the Colorado River.
3. At first her boat drifted calmly through the Grand Canyon.
4. Then the river dropped suddenly.
5. And became foaming rapids full of dangerous boulders.
6. Many of which can break a boat.
7. Michelle's boat was small.
8. With one guide and four passengers.
9. Some passengers prefer large inflatable boats with outboard motors.
10. Carrying eighteen people.

Subject and Predicate

Sentences consist of two basic parts: subjects and predicates.

The Subject

1b. The **subject** tells *whom* or *what* the sentence is about.

EXAMPLES **Nicholasa Mohr** is a writer and an artist.

The girls on the team were all good students.

He shared his lunch with the boy on the other team.

Swimming is good exercise.

To find the subject, ask *who* or *what* is doing something or *whom* or *what* is being talked about. The subject may come at the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence.

EXAMPLES **The pitcher** struck Felicia out. [*Who struck Felicia out? The pitcher struck Felicia out.*]

After practicing for hours, **Tim** bowled five strikes. [*Who bowled five strikes? Tim bowled five strikes.*]

How kind **you** are! [*Who is kind? You are kind.*]

When will **the afternoon train** arrive? [*What will arrive? The afternoon train will arrive.*]

Hiding in the tall grass was **a baby rabbit**. [*What was hiding? A baby rabbit was hiding.*]

Reference Note

A compound noun, such as *Nicholasa Mohr*, is considered one noun. For information about **compound nouns**, see page 25.

Exercise 1 Writing Subjects and Punctuating Sentences

Provide subjects to fill in the blanks in the following sentences. Use a different subject in each sentence.

EXAMPLE 1. ____ is very heavy.

1. *That box is very heavy.*

1. ____ is an exciting game to play.
2. ____ works in the post office.
3. Luckily for me, ____ was easy to repair.
4. Tied to the end of the rope was ____.
5. Did ____ help you?
6. ____ eventually became President of the United States.
7. Have ____ always wanted to visit Peru?
8. Luis, ____ was the score?
9. Before the game, ____ will meet in the gym.
10. ____ has always been one of my favorite books.
11. What a great basketball player ____ is!
12. Has ____ called you yet?
13. In the afternoon ____ takes a nap.
14. ____ is playing at the theater this weekend?
15. When did ____ start making that sound?
16. In a minute ____ will feed you, Spot.
17. Under the pile of leaves in the front yard was ____.
18. ____ is the group's best-known song?
19. In my opinion, ____ is a better goalie than Alex.
20. Where in the world did ____ get that hat?

TIPS & TRICKS

Here is a test to find the simple subject of most sentences: If you leave out the simple subject, a sentence does not make sense.

EXAMPLE

The frisky cat chased its tail.

The frisky . . . chased its tail. [Cat is the simple subject.]

Simple Subject and Complete Subject

1c. The *simple subject* is the main word or word group that tells *whom* or *what* the sentence is about.

The *complete subject* consists of all the words that tell *whom* or *what* a sentence is about.

EXAMPLES The four new students arrived early.

Complete subject

The four new students

Simple subject

students

Is the winner of the go-cart race present?

Complete subject

the winner of the go-cart race

Simple subject

winner

A round walnut table with five legs stood in the middle of the dining room.

Complete subject

A round walnut table with five legs

Simple subject

table

A simple subject may consist of one word or several words.

EXAMPLES **Jets** often break the sound barrier. [one word]

Does **Aunt Carmen** own a grocery store? [two words]

On the library shelf was **The Island of the Blue Dolphins**. [six words]

NOTE

In this book, the simple subject is usually referred to as the *subject*.

Exercise 2 Identifying Subjects

Write the subject of each of the following sentences.

EXAMPLE 1. A book by N. Scott Momaday is on the table.
1. *book*

1. Born in 1934 in Oklahoma, Momaday lived on Navajo and Apache reservations in the Southwest.
2. Momaday's father was a Kiowa.
3. As a young man, Momaday attended the University of New Mexico and Stanford University.
4. In *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, he tells about the myths and history of the Kiowa people.
5. The book includes poems, an essay, and stories about the Kiowa people.
6. *The Way to Rainy Mountain* was published in 1969.
7. After Momaday's book came works by other modern American Indian writers.
8. William Least Heat-Moon traveled in a van across the United States and wrote about his journey.
9. Was he inspired to write by his travels?
10. Readers of this Osage writer enjoy his beautiful descriptions of nature.

Exercise 3 Identifying Complete Subjects and Simple Subjects

Write the complete subject in each of the following sentences. Then, underline the simple subject.

- EXAMPLES**
1. Stories about time travel make exciting reading.
1. Stories about time travel
 2. Samuel Delany writes great science fiction.
2. Samuel Delany
 1. Ray Bradbury is also a writer of science fiction.
 2. *The Golden Apples of the Sun* is a collection of Bradbury's short stories.
 3. Is your favorite story in that book "A Sound of Thunder"?
 4. The main character in the story is called Mr. Eckels.
 5. For ten thousand dollars, Mr. Eckels joins Time Safari, Inc.
 6. He is looking for the dinosaur *Tyrannosaurus rex*.
 7. With four other men, Bradbury's hero travels more than sixty million years back in time.
 8. On the safari, trouble develops.
 9. Because of one mistake, the past is changed.
 10. Do the results of that mistake affect the future?

The Predicate

1d. The *predicate* of a sentence tells something about the subject.

- EXAMPLES**
- The phone **rang**.
- Old Faithful **is a giant geyser in Yellowstone National Park**.
- Jade Snow Wong **wrote about growing up in San Francisco's Chinatown**.

Like the subject, the predicate may be found anywhere in a sentence.

- EXAMPLES**
- Outside the tent was** a baby bear.
- Late in the night we heard a noise.** [The predicate in this sentence is divided by the subject, *we*.]

Has the dough **risen enough**? [The predicate is divided by the subject, *the dough*.]

Stop right there! [The subject in this sentence is understood to be *you*.]

Exercise 4 Identifying Predicates

Write the predicate in each of the following sentences.

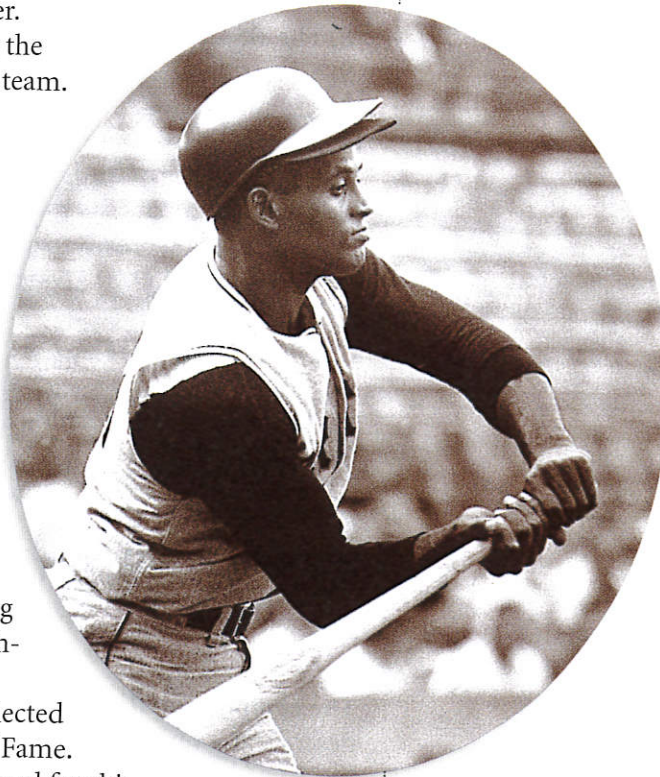
EXAMPLES 1. My favorite sports poster is this one of Roberto Clemente.

1. *is this one of Roberto Clemente*

2. Have you heard of this famous sports hero?

2. *Have heard of this famous sports hero*

1. Also among my baseball treasures is a book about Clemente's life and career.
2. Clemente played right field for the Pittsburgh Pirates, my favorite team.
3. During his amazing career, he won four National League batting titles.
4. In 1966, he was named the league's Most Valuable Player.
5. Twice Clemente helped lead the Pirates to World Series victories.
6. In fourteen World Series games, Clemente never went without a hit.
7. Roberto Clemente died in a plane crash off the coast of his homeland, Puerto Rico.
8. The plane crash occurred during a flight to Nicaragua to aid earthquake victims.
9. After his death, Clemente was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.
10. In New York, a park has been named for this beloved ballplayer.



Exercise 5 Writing Predicates

Make a sentence out of each of the following word groups by adding a predicate to fill the blank or blanks.

- EXAMPLES**
1. A flock of geese ____
1. *A flock of geese flew high overhead.*
 2. ____ a poster of Nelson Mandela.
2. *Over Kim's desk hung a poster of Nelson Mandela.*
1. My favorite food ____.
 2. A course in first aid ____.
 3. ____ our car ____?
 4. Rock climbing ____.
 5. Spanish explorers in the Americas ____.
 6. Several computers ____.
 7. ____ a new pair of in-line skates.
 8. The skyscrapers of New York City ____.
 9. Some dogs ____.
 10. ____ my family ____.
 11. Victory in the championship ____.
 12. ____ all sorts of birds ____.
 13. The new store at the mall ____.
 14. ____ a small, brown toad.
 15. The flowers in Mr. Alvarez's garden ____.
 16. ____ my chores ____.
 17. Gerry's allowance ____.
 18. ____ we ____?
 19. The cool of the morning ____.
 20. The tiny kittens ____.

Simple Predicate and Complete Predicate

1e. The **simple predicate**, or **verb**, is the main word or word group that tells something about the subject.

The **complete predicate** consists of a verb and all the words that describe the verb and complete its meaning.

- EXAMPLES**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| The pilot broke the sound barrier. | |
| Complete predicate | broke the sound barrier |
| Simple predicate (verb) | broke |

We should have visited the diamond field in Arkansas.

Complete predicate should have visited the
diamond field in Arkansas

Simple predicate (verb) should have visited

The telephone on the table rang.

Complete predicate rang

Simple predicate (verb) rang

NOTE In this book, the simple predicate is usually referred to as the *verb*.

Exercise 6 Identifying Complete Predicates and Verbs

Write the complete predicate of each of the following sentences. Then, underline the verb.

EXAMPLE 1. Who created the U.S. flag?

1. created the U.S. flag

1. Many scholars are unsure about the history of the Stars and Stripes.
2. The Continental Congress approved a design for the flag.
3. The flag's design included thirteen red stripes and thirteen white stripes.
4. The top inner quarter of the flag was a blue field with thirteen white stars.
5. The name of the designer has remained a mystery.
6. During the American Revolution, the colonists needed a symbol of their independence.
7. George Washington wanted flags for the army.
8. Unfortunately, the flags did not arrive until the end of the Revolutionary War.
9. According to legend, Betsy Ross made the first flag.
10. However, most historians doubt the Betsy Ross story.

The Verb Phrase

Some simple predicates, or verbs, consist of more than one word. Such verbs are called **verb phrases** (verbs that include one or more helping verbs).

EXAMPLE Kathy **is riding** the Ferris wheel.

Reference Note

For information about **helping verbs**, see page 49.