



Identifying Sentence Subjects

In a sentence, the **subject** is the person or thing performing the action. Knowing how to identify the subject in your sentences is essential to avoiding grammar mistakes and becoming a great writer. Two great strategies to remember when trying to find a sentence's subject are the following:

- ✓ Identify the verb first. Once you identify the verb, ask yourself, “*Who* or *what* is performing the action?”
- ✓ Identify the prepositional phrases. Prepositional phrases never contain subjects. Therefore, if you “clean” the sentence by identifying the prepositional phrases (which, again, never contain the subject), you will find the subject much more easily.

As practice, circle or underline the **subject** in the following sentences.

Example: One of the girls smiled at the dog under the tree.

1. The house among the trees stood beautifully.
2. The group of students excitedly remarked that their professor cancelled class.
3. During the press conference, the reporters demanded answers from the politician in regard to his alleged misuse of the party's funds.
4. The officer near the police station arrested the escaped criminal.
5. The heat of the fire melted the plastic dishes.
6. A series of disasters befell the explorers during their adventure.
7. Two of the boys from our class helped rescue Jane's kitten from a tree last week.
8. A large piece of the delicious chocolate cake filled my plate.
9. The quick action of the paramedic saved the boy's life.
10. Their reaction to the report about the economy truly shocked me.
11. The history of the company is a series of financial disasters.
12. None of the paintings really interested me at the art exhibition.
13. This type of injury heals very slowly despite additional treatments.
14. Both of us truly believe you can pass the class.
15. Neither of the gifts pleased my picky cousin.
16. In a state of reflection, the narrator of “The Tell-Tale Heart” admits the murder of the old man was not justified.

Once you are done, check your answers with either your writing instructor or a tutor.