

Sentence Correction

Keep in mind the following important points -

1. The verb in the sentence must comply with the subject of its sentence. A singular subject takes a singular verb while a plural subject takes a plural verb.

Example -

a) The school is closed today.

b) The schools are closed today.

Clearly, in the first sentence, school is singular and hence a singular verb accompanies it. Similar concept goes for the second sentence.

2. If two or more subjects are connected by 'and', then usually a plural verb is used with them.

Example -

a) My novel and notebook are on the shelf.

Here the two subjects, 'novel' and 'notebook' are connected through 'and' and hence a plural verb accompanies them.

3. If two singular subjects are connected by 'either/or' or 'neither / nor', they usually take a singular verb. If either of the one subjects is plural, the verb will be plural.

Example -

a) Either Saturday or Sunday is off this week.

b) Neither the teachers nor the students were ready for the proposed change.

As you can see, in the first sentence, both singular subjects, Saturday and Sunday are connected by either - or and hence are followed by a singular verb. In the second sentence, one of the subjects, teachers is plural and hence a plural verb is used.

4. If the subject is followed by words such as, 'besides', 'not', 'as well as', 'along with' etc, then the singular verb will follow singular subject.

Example -

a) The teacher, along with the students, is present in the class.

Here the subject teacher is followed by along with and is followed by a singular verb.

5. Sentences that begin with 'each', 'everyone' and 'anyone' will have a singular verb.

Example -

- a) Everyone has to submit the assignment.
- b) If anyone has any doubts, contact the teacher after the class.
- c) Each one of you has to attend the seminar.

In the above examples, everyone, each and anyone are followed by singular verbs.

6. Difference in the usage of 'I' and 'Me' - Both I and me are 1st person singular pronouns. However, 'I' is a Subject Pronoun whereas 'me' is an Object Pronoun.**Example -**

- a) Ria and I went for the movie.
- b) Priya asked Ria and me for the movie.

In the first example, I along with Ria is the subject of the sentence. In the second example, Priya is the subject and me is the object pronoun.

7. Do not forget to look up for error of repetition, also know as redundancy.**Example -**

- a) Sneha returned back from the concert.

In the above sentence, error is in the part 'returned back', which is repetitive.

The correct sentences would be -

Sneha returned from the concert. Or,
Sneha came back from the concert.

8. Modifier related errors - Ensure that the participle in the sentence is not without the subject.**Example -**

- a) Ritesh visited the place where Shahjahan was imprisoned during his holidays.

If you go through the sentence, it seems that the participle 'during his holidays' is used for Shahjahan and hence makes the sentence incorrect. The correct sentence should be -

During his holidays, Ritesh visited the place where Shahjahan was imprisoned.

9. Difference in the use of few and less - Few is used for countable nouns whereas Less is used for an uncountable noun.**Example -**

- a) There were few guests at the venue.
- b) There was less time left for the exam to finish.

In the above examples, guests is countable and hence few is used for it whereas time is uncountable and so is used with less.

Key Points to Remember -

- If in doubt, try substituting the options (in case of Sentence Improvement) or read the sentence properly and try to understand if it sounds right to you.
- Read out the sentence and try eliminating the parts which require no improvement.
- Don't waste too much time if you're stuck with some question and move on to the next one.
- Look up both the grammatical errors as well as word usage in the sentence.
- Practice thoroughly to have a good hold of the topic.

Now let's go through the following examples to get a clear picture of the above tips -

I. a)/ We may have tons of wealth, but that doesn't b)/ make us generous, offering helping c)/ hand when we have nothing or very d)/ few wealth makes it more valuable. e)/ No error

If we look at the sentence, the error is in part d since wealth is considered uncountable and hence few cannot be used with it.

II. a)/ She did not even have proper clothes and b)/ seemed that she would not afford c)/ for good food, still d)/ gave everything she had. e)/ No error
In the above sentence, error is in part (b). Here 'could' should be used in place of would.

III. a)/ When he entered the store, the b)/ merchant knew something was c)/ coming, and soon found d)/ out what it were. e)/ No error

IV. a)/ He always desired to have lots and b)/ lots of money and never hesitate c)/ to cheat others d)/ to make money. e)/ No error