# Subject-Verb Agreement



# At Home

Mother: Sunil, neither you nor Anita is helping me in the garden today.

Sunil: Sorry, Mom.

Anita: Neither I nor Sunil am studying now,
so we can help you in the garden, Ma.

Mother: Thanks!



# Remember

We see a singular subject and a singular verb to match in the two sentences

Examples:

Neither you nor Anita *is helping*. (singular verb)

Neither I nor Sunil *am studying*. (singular verb)



# In the market

Father: Neither the shopkeeper nor the attendants were helpful in this sports shop.

Mother: I know. Neither Anita nor her friends have bought anything here.

Father: Let’s go to the other shop nearby.



# Remember

We see the verb form agrees with the  part of the subject closer to the verb in the sentences.

Examples:

Neither the shopkeeper nor *the attendants (plural)* were helpful. *(matching plural verb)*

Neither Anita nor *her friends  (plural)* have bought *(matching plural verb)*

*When 'neither...nor' is used, the verb usually agrees with the noun closest to it.*

*In these examples:* ***attendants*** *and* ***friends***



# At the Zoo

Anita: Look ! A cute litter of cubs is playing near their mother.

Sunil: Yes, and a pride of lions was moving along slowly in their  enclosure.

Father: Look up. A flight of beautiful birds is flying above us right now.

Mother: Sunil, your new pair of shoes is getting wet.



# Remember

We see the subjects of the sentences have collective nouns.

Most collective nouns are taken as singular subjects.

So, the verb in the sentence will be a singular verb form.

**Examples from the conversation:**

- a litter of cubs (collective noun); *is playing (singular verb)*
- a pride of lions (collective noun); *was sleeping (singular verb)*
- a flight of beautiful birds (collective noun); *is flying (singular verb)*
- a pair of shoes (collective noun); *is getting (singular verb)*



# Try and Learn

**Fill in the blanks with the correct verb forms.**

1. A school of fish _____ (swim) near the edge of the lake.
2. Neither Rushmi nor  Fatima _____ (dance) today.
3. Neither the trainer nor the dancers _____ (happy) with the performance.
4. This box of chocolates _____ (decorate) very beautifully.
5. Neither my father nor your father  _____ (attend) the meeting.
6. Neither this week nor the following weeks _____ (go) to be sunny.

