



I agree, she agrees, you agree, we all agree!

CAPS Statement

Language structures and conventions

Working with words and sentences:

Builds on use of subject verb concord, e.g. There is one book/ There are two books ...

Note

Concord means agreement:

In a sentence, the verb has to agree with the subject. If there is one subject, the verb has to play along. If the subject is plural, the verb changes accordingly.

In the present tense we use **am** or **is** for a singular subject.

Example

I **am** walking to school today.
He **is** riding a bicycle.



In the past tense we use **was** for a singular subject.

Example

I **was** walking to school yesterday.

For plurals: in the present tense we use **are** and in the past tense we use **were**.

Example

In the present tense: 'We **are** singing in the choir.'

In the past tense: 'We **were** singing in the choir.'



One special rule for the simple present tense: If the subject is either the pronoun **he** or **she** or if it is a singular noun, then an action verb takes on an -s.

Example

Themba plays soccer every Saturday.

Singular noun.

If a personal pronoun replaces the singular noun, the verb stays the same:

She plays soccer every Saturday.

However, if we change the sentence to:

I play soccer every Saturday.

The pronoun 'I' changes 'plays' to 'play'. The same applies to the pronoun 'you' and all the plural pronouns and nouns.

Activity 1

Help Themba circle the correct form of the verb. The verbs are all in the present tense. The subjects are enlarged. Remember, the verb needs to agree with the subject of the sentence.

Example

Sam is / are a boy.

- ① I is / am mopping the floor.
- ② The class is / are ready for the lesson.
- ③ The children is / are happy.
- ④ Simon is / are listening to the speech.
- ⑤ You is / are lovely.

Activity 2

Choose the correct verb from the word well. Fill in the verb that agrees with the subject in each sentence.

are

is

were

am

was

- ① Today Themba _____ swimming after school.
- ② It _____ raining yesterday.



③ I _____ trying to play the piano, so can you please play outside.

④ They _____ learning to swim last year.

⑤ We _____ going to cook right now.



Activity 3

Fill in the correct form of the verb.

Example

I _____ into the pool. (jump/jumps)

I **jump** into the pool.

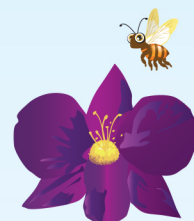
① The children _____ quietly in class. (sit/sits)

② She _____ at the joke. (laugh/laughs)

③ You must not _____ the boxes. (open/opens)

④ He _____ the TV off. (switch/switches)

⑤ The bee _____ around the flower. (buzz/buzzes)



Teacher Tip

Practise concord with learners. A common error of concord is seeing a collective noun as plural. For example: The class **is** quiet. Not The class **are** quiet.

A flock of birds is seen as singular. Focus on the flock, not on the birds. Therefore, it is: 'A flock of birds was flying overhead'. Alternatively 'The birds were flying overhead.'

Remind learners about the simple present tense. This is a special tense where the infinitive form of the verb changes to -s if the subject is third person singular or a singular noun. Go through the plural rules: words that end in -ss, -zz, -tch and so on change to -es when in plural form, whether they are verbs or nouns.

For example, **watch** becomes **watches**.

