

Subjects and Predicates

APSU Writing Center Handout

Subjects and Predicates

Every complete sentence has two main parts: a subject and a predicate.

- **Subject:** Tells us who or what the sentence is about.
- **Predicate:** Tells us what the subject does or describes its condition.

Subject

A subject usually includes a noun or pronoun and any modifiers.

It answers the question "Who?" or "What?" before the verb.

1. Simple Subject

The main noun or pronoun in the sentence, without any extra description.

- **Example:** The tutor provided helpful feedback. (Who provided feedback? The tutor.)

2. Complete Subject

The simple subject plus all its modifiers (descriptive words).

- **Example:** The experienced writing tutor provided helpful feedback.

3. Compound Subject

Two or more subjects joined by a conjunction (such as "and" or "or").

- **Example:** Professors and tutors assist students with their writing.

Predicates

Includes the verb and any words that describe the action or condition of the subject.

It answers, "What is the subject doing?" or "What is happening to the subject?"

1. Simple Predicate

The main verb in the sentence.

- **Example:** The tutor provided helpful feedback. (What did the tutor do? Provided.)

2. Complete Predicate

The verb plus all its modifiers and complements.

- **Example:** The students carefully revised their papers before submission.

3. Compound Predicate

Two or more verbs or verb phrases sharing the same subject.

- **Example:** The tutor reviewed the essay and suggested revisions.

Identifying Subjects and Predicates

Ask "Who or what is the sentence about?" → Subject

Ask "What is happening in the sentence?" → Predicate

- **Example:** The writing center (subject) offers free tutoring for students. (predicate)
- **Example:** My professor and I (compound subject) discussed my thesis and revised my outline. (compound predicate)

- **Example:** Attending a writing workshop (subject) can improve academic writing skills.
(predicate)

Extra Practice

Identify the subject and predicate in these sentences:

- The writing center provides resources for research and citation.
- She revised her paper carefully and submitted it before the deadline.
- Writing a clear introduction is essential for a well-structured paper.

References

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