

OTHER AGREEMENT PROBLEMS (I)

Collective Nouns. A collective noun names a group of people or things: *band, jury, crew, group, team*. When a writer refers to a group acting together as one unit, the collective noun is used with a singular verb. When the writer refers to the individuals in the group acting separately, the collective noun is used with a plural verb.

Our band is the best in the country. (united action--singular)

Our band were wearing their new uniforms. (separate actions--plural)

Nouns Plural in Form. Some nouns are plural in form but are singular in meaning: *news, mumps, measles*. There are many words ending in -ics that may be singular or plural: *politics, athletics, economics*. These words are singular when used to refer to a subject or a practice.

Athletics is the department headed by Mr. Smith. (singular)

His favorite athletics are track and golf. (plural--separate sports)

Choosing the Standard Verb Form. Underline the standard verb form in each sentence below.

Example: The news of the day (is, are) the subject of Mrs. Martin's commentary.

1. The team (was, were) all grinning after their victory.
2. The jury (has, have) reached a verdict.
3. Measles (is, are) a disease Mr. Smith avoided until he was thirty.
4. The company (was, were) started in 1968 and immediately elected its directors.
5. (Is, Are) mumps prevalent in your town now?
6. Economics (is, are) the science of the production of wealth.
7. The audience (is, are) taking their seats now.
8. Our class (is, are) posing for their yearbook pictures today.
9. Civics (is, are) a study of the rights and duties of citizens.
10. The senator's politics (is, are) sometimes questioned by his constituents.
11. The committee (is, are) taking their places around the conference table.
12. The news on the front page (was, were) all bad today.
13. The contents of the briefcase (was, were) a notebook, a newspaper, and a chess set.
14. Economics (is, are) taught in the senior year.
15. Mr. Brown's ethics (was, were) seriously questioned.
16. The old couple (is, are) living on Elm Street.
17. Politics (is, are) the practice of managing affairs of public policy.
18. The United States (is, are) sending a delegate to the conference.
19. The West Indies (is, are) a part of the world I'd like to visit.
20. Economics (was, were) Vicky's major in college.

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