

Seminar 5B – Tasks / Worksheet 5

I. Questions

1. Explain the term ‘*subject-verb concord*’ and give at least two examples (sg and pl) in sentences.
2. Which three main number classes do we distinguish? Name them and give examples of each.
3. Give at least three examples of
 - a) regular plurals
 - b) irregular plurals
 - c) foreign plurals
4. All the following nouns belong to the so-called singular invariable nouns. What does it mean? Do they take singular or plural verbs? Use them as subjects in sentences.

news, aerobics, politics, measles, billiards

5. Plural invariable nouns include the so-called ‘summation plurals’. What are they?

+ Choose the correct form in the following sentences:

- a) *This / These* trousers *is / are* too small for me, so I won’t take *it / them*.
 - b) *That / Those* pair of trousers *is / are* bigger, I’ll try *it / them* on.
6. Explain the term ‘*pluralia tantum*’ referring to nouns and give examples.
 7. Give examples of *unmarked* plural nouns.
 8. In certain circumstances the word ‘*people*’ is a regular C noun, so it can be used with ‘*a*’ and has a regular plural form. Give examples in sentences.
 9. What’s the plural of the following nouns:
 - a) February, Kennedy, donkey
 - b) radio, piano, photo
 - c) echo, hero, potato
 - d) tornado, volcano, buffalo

10. Which nouns ending in -f (e) have plurals in:
- ves
 - regular plural -s
 - both
11. Some irregular plurals involve a change of the vowel. Which ones?
12. The word 'penny' has got two plurals. What's the difference between 'pence' and 'pennies'?
13. 'The word 'brother' has two plurals. Besides the usual 'brothers', there is one more used in specific context. Which one?
14. Why do we say 'Englishmen' but not 'Germen'?
15. Using the example of '*sheep*' explain what is '*zero plural*' + give examples in sentences. What verb (sg or pl) is used with them? Can you name some other similar nouns?
16. How do we use words such as '*hundred*' and '*thousand*'. Do they have plural forms? Give examples.
17. What do the following nouns have in common? Give examples in sentences: *means, species, series*. Can you name any others like that?
18. *Foreign plurals*:
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| a) analysis - | e) medium - |
| b) appendix - | f) phenomenon - |
| c) bacterium - | g) stimulus - |
| d) crisis - | h) fungus - |
19. Some *compounds* take plural -s in the last element, some in the first element. Give examples of each.
20. When do *collective* nouns have a singular and when a plural verb?
21. Give examples of '*appositional compounds*'.

II. PRACTICE

1. Choose the correct form of the verb, singular or plural.

1. Gymnastics *is / are* my favourite sport.
2. The trousers you bought for me *doesn't / don't* fit me.
3. The police *want / wants* to interview two men about the robbery last week.
4. Physics *was / were* my best subject at school.
5. Fortunately the news *wasn't / weren't* as bad as we expected.
6. Where *does / do* your family live?
7. Three days *isn't / aren't* long enough for a good holiday.
8. I can't find my binoculars. Do you know where *it is / they are*?
9. *Does / Do* the police know how the accident happened?
10. I don't like very hot weather. Thirty degrees *is / are* too warm for me.
11. Economics *is / are* an interesting subject.
12. Rabies *isn't / aren't* a very common disease in Britain.
13. My family *live / lives* in the North of England.
14. Two weeks *isn't / aren't* a very long time, is it / are they?
15. My hair *is / are* greasy. *It needs / They need* washing.
16. The news *was / were* quite surprising.

2. Most of the following sentences are wrong. Correct them where necessary:

1. The government want to increase taxes.
2. Susan was wearing a black jeans.
3. Brazil are playing Italy in a football match next Wednesday.
4. I like Martin and Jill. They're very nice persons.
5. I need more money than that. Ten pound are not enough.
6. I'm going to buy a new pyjama.)
7. The committee haven't made a decision yet.
8. There was a police standing at the corner of the street.
9. Has the police arrived yet?
10. This scissors is not very sharp.

3. Supply 'is' or 'are', 'has' or 'have', in some sentences both forms (sg and pl) are possible:

1. The government _____ bringing in a new bill.
2. The company _____ going to employ new staff.
3. All governments _____ trying to control crime.
4. The jury _____ trying to decide now.
5. The youth of today _____ many advantages.

6. There _____ vermin in this restaurant.
7. The military _____ occupied the house.
8. The police _____ interested in this case.
9. The public _____ concerned about it.
10. How many people _____ coming tonight?
11. The committee _____ meeting now.
12. The acoustics in this room _____ very good.
13. This crossroads _____ dangerous.
14. There _____ four crossroads in our village.
15. Acoustics _____ a subject I know little about.
16. Our company headquarters _____ in London.
17. The statistics in this report _____ inaccurate.
18. _____ there any statistics for road accidents?
19. Many species of moth _____ disappeared.
20. This species _____ green and white spots.
21. Our works _____ a good canteen.
22. My maths _____ got worse and worse!
23. There _____ crossroads every mile.

4. *Which of these nouns phrases are correct:*

- a) two hundreds of people
- b) thousands people
- c) thousands of children
- d) three hundred demonstrators
- e) a thousand soldiers
- f) three millions inhabitants
- g) two dozens of eggs
- h) three dozen eggs
- i) dozens of glasses
- j) a few million years