

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT III (pp. 34-35; #s 8-10) • Name _____

You must carefully consider the number indicated by compound subjects. In addition to considering the nouns or pronouns, you must also notice the coordinating conjunction. With *and* you will, of course, be adding the elements of the compound and considering them all together. With *or*, however, the verb will agree with each element of the compound considered individually. Sometimes one part of the compound is singular and the other is plural. In that case, the verb agrees with the element closer to it in the sentence.

A Recognize the Number of Compound Subjects: In these sentences, (a) underline the simple subject once and the verb twice. (b) Put a box around the coordinating conjunction. Then in the blank to the left of the sentence, (c) write *S* if the subject is singular, *P* if the subject is plural, or *M* if the subject is mixed.

Example: Either a bird or a bat just flew overhead.

- 1. Wilbur and Orville Wright were famous for their flying machines.
- 2. Either neckties or books are good gifts.
- 3. Both Linda and Natasha want popcorn.
- 4. Spain or Portugal is a good choice for a vacation.
- 5. Neither the nurses nor the doctor schedules appointments.
- 6. Neither fresh fruit nor chips are on the table.

B Choose the Correct Verb: (a) Underline the subject. (b) Put a box around the coordinating conjunction. Notice whether the subject is singular or plural. Then (c) circle the verb that agrees with the subject in number.

Example: Precious stones and metals (come) comes) from the earth.

- 1. South Africa and Australia (is, are) the major sources of diamonds.
- 2. Gold or copper (occur, occurs) in nearly pure form in the earth.
- 3. Neither a garnet nor an amethyst (is, are) as hard as a diamond.
- 4. Rubies and emeralds (rank, ranks) with diamonds as precious jewels.
- 5. Either gold or oil (spark, sparks) migration to the area of discovery.
- 6. Jewels or a rose (express, expresses) love.

C Quiz Yourself

- 1. Circle the best choices: Two singular subjects joined by *and* take a (singular, plural) verb. Two singular subjects joined by *or* take a (singular, plural) verb. Two plural subjects will always take a (singular, plural) verb.
- 2. Complete: If one subject is singular and the other is plural, the verb agrees with _____.