

Exercise 1: Collective Nouns

Subject-verb agreement with collective nouns

Does a singular collective noun take a singular or plural verb? Well, it depends. If the collective noun refers to the group as a unit, then it takes a singular verb. If it refers to the individuals in the group or the parts that make up the group, then the verb should be plural. In the following sentences, decide whether the collective noun requires the singular or plural verb.

1. This organization (put, puts) on a barbecue every summer.
2. The flute ensemble (is, are) tuning (its, their) instruments.
3. The school choir (is, are) performing at the town fair.
4. Martin's family (is, are) planning to vacation in Hawaii this summer.
5. A huge swarm of locusts (have, has) destroyed the crops.
6. The pack of dogs (was, were) running off in different directions.
7. Every fall, the English class (writes, write) (their, its) book reports.
8. The 10th Grade English class (is, are) having difficulty understanding collective nouns.

Exercise 2: Count and Noncount nouns

Are the following nouns count or noncount? Put an N next to the noncount nouns and a C next to the count nouns. If the noun can be either noncount or count depending on the context, put a D next to it.

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| 1. world | 8. banana |
| 2. textbook | 9. conduct |
| 3. vinegar | 10. progress |
| 4. flame | 11. biology |
| 5. poetry | 12. essay |
| 6. applause | 13. gem |
| 7. thought | 14. shopping |