Agreement Detectives

Sort sentences by subject-verb agreement.

11.L.GC.1 "Grammar, Usage, & Mechanics: Draw from knowledge of the conventions of Standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics when analyzing, evaluating, and constructing texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

STANDARD AGREEMENT

The main subject and its verb match in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb.

A cluster of stars appears near the horizon.

AGREEMENT ERROR

The main subject and its verb do not match in number. Check past words and phrases to find the true subject.

A cluster of stars appear near the horizon.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle the tag that fits each sentence; choose two items and explain how the subject and verb show why each belongs in its category.

1.	The series of lectures begins at noon.	STANDARD	ERROR
2.	Neither the editors nor the photographer were available.	STANDARD	ERROR
3.	The final results of the survey was surprising.	STANDARD	ERROR
4.	Every applicant and every adviser receives a badge.	STANDARD	ERROR
5.	The engines in the older buses require new filters.	STANDARD	ERROR
6.	One of the windows were left open.	STANDARD	ERROR
7.	Either the manager or the assistants is attending the briefing.	STANDARD	ERROR
8.	Mathematics remain a required course.	STANDARD	ERROR

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new STANDARD sentence and one new ERROR sentence that each show subject-verb agreement or disagreement.

STANDARD _____

ERROR _____

CHALLENGE

Choose two ERROR sentences from Part 1, revise them so they are STANDARD, and explain each verb choice.

ANSWER KEY

Agreement Detectives

GRADE 11 · 11.L.GC.1

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The series of lectures begins at noon.	**STANDARD**	The singular subject, series, takes the singular verb begins.
2	Neither the editors nor the photographer were available.	**ERROR**	With neither/nor, the verb agrees with the nearer subject; photographer is singular, so was is needed.
3	The final results of the survey was surprising.	**ERROR**	The plural subject, results, needs the plural verb were.
4	Every applicant and every adviser receives a badge.	**STANDARD**	Subjects joined by and with every repeated take a singular verb.
5	The engines in the older buses require new filters.	**STANDARD**	The plural subject, engines, takes the plural verb require.
6	One of the windows were left open.	**ERROR**	The subject is one, which is singular and needs was.
7	Either the manager or the assistants is attending the briefing.	**ERROR**	With either/or, the verb agrees with the nearer subject; assistants is plural, so are is needed.
8	Mathematics remain a required course.	**ERROR**	Mathematics is treated as a singular subject and needs remains.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **STANDARD**: The stack of old journals occupies the corner shelf.
- **ERROR**: The stack of old journals occupy the corner shelf.

Challenge: Neither the editors nor the photographer was available because photographer, the nearer subject, is singular. Either the manager or the assistants are attending the briefing because assistants, the nearer subject, is plural.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Accept explanations that correctly identify the main subject and explain its number. For subjects joined by either/or or neither/nor, the verb agrees with the subject closest to it.