

**LESSON PACKET FOR MEDIEVAL BALLADS
ENGLISH III, BRITISH LITERATURE
MR. CHAFFIN/A-315
JUNE 2016**

**(GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR)
(SIR PATRICK SPENS)**

THE OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON ARE:

- Students will comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and respond to a variety of complex texts of all genders from a variety of perspectives.
- Students will identify and analyze main idea, theme, claims, point of view, and literary elements, within informational and literary texts.
- Students will cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support inferences or conclusions drawn from the text.
- Students will read and comprehend a broad range of complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of sounds in oral language.
- Students will recognize sight words and decode and read words by applying phonics and word analysis skills.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print, including book handling skills and the understanding that printed materials provide information and tell stories.
- Students will orally read appropriately leveled texts smoothly and accurately, with expression that connotes comprehension at the independent level.
- Students will apply knowledge of print concepts, phonological awareness, and phonics in written form.
- Students will write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- Students will build and apply vocabulary using various strategies to make meaning and communicate ideas.
- Students will demonstrate command of Standard English grammar, mechanics, and usage when communicating.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and use information technology tools to carry out research, including the use of discipline-related software and on-line resources.

MATERIALS PROVIDED IN THIS PACKET:

- * vocabulary puzzle
- * study/answer questions
- * guide to sentence subjects
- * example of written composition

OBJECTIVES TO BE TESTED:

- * vocabulary
- * story content
- * sentence subjects

FINDING THE SUBJECT OF A SENTENCE

by Neill J. Chaffin

The simple subject of a sentence is either what is doing or performing some action or it is what is being written about in the sentence. The subject of a sentence must be either a noun or a pronoun. This would include phrases or clauses that can be used as nouns. The subject of a sentence may appear in a number of places in the sentence. Finding the subject of a sentence is important in terms of subject and verb agreement and in terms of pronoun form. There are some things you can do to help you find the simple subject of a sentence.

Learn to recognize words or phrases that cannot be a subject:

Prepositional phrases cannot be the subject of a sentence.

Participial phrases cannot be the subject of a sentence.

The words **“here”**, **“there”**, and **“where”** cannot be the subject of a sentence.

Conjunctions cannot be the subject of a sentence.

The **articles (a, an, and the)** cannot be the subject of a sentence.

A **verb** cannot be the subject of a sentence.

Adjectives and **adverbs** cannot be the subject of a sentence.

A **subject complement** cannot be the subject of a sentence.

Stunned by the news, he sat there in his chair and shook his head.

“Stunned by the news” is a participial phrase; “there” is an adverb; “in his chair” is a prepositional phrase; “sat” and “shook” are verbs; “and” is a conjunction. Thus, if you eliminate these because they cannot be the subject, then you are left with:

he...his head.

“His” is an adjective. Simply ask yourself who or what did the sitting and shaking. The answer is obvious: he. “He” is the subject of the sentence, the doer or maker of the action.

The tall gangly girl was the best player on the entire basketball team.

“The” is an article; “was” is always a verb; “the” is an article; “on the entire basketball team” is a prepositional phrase. Thus, if you eliminate these because they cannot be the subject, then you are left with:

tall gangly girl... best player

Since “tall”, “gangly”, and “best” are adjectives, not nouns, you are left with either “girl” or “player”. “Player” simply names the same thing as “girl” and thus is a subject complement. “Girl” is the subject of the sentence, who or what is being written about.

SENTENCE ORDER AND ARRANGEMENT

SUBJECT/VERB/OBJECT ORDER

A tall burly batter stepped up to the plate and immediately hit the ball.

(“A” is an article; “tall” and “burly” are adjectives; “stepped” is a verb; “up” is an adverb; “to the plate” is a prepositional phrase; “and” is a conjunction; “immediately” is an adverb; “the” is an article. Who did the stepping and hitting? The batter or the ball? “Batter” is obviously the subject of the sentence.)

SUBJECT/VERB/COMPLEMENT ORDER

My uncle is a man of few words.

(“My” is a possessive adjective; “is” is a verb; “a” is an article; “man” is a subject complement simply renaming “uncle”; “of few words” is a prepositional phrase. **“Uncle” is obviously the subject of the sentence.**)

SUBJECT/VERB/PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

Your book is on the table by the front door of the classroom.

(“Your” is a possessive adjective; “is” is a verb; “on the table”, “by the front door”, and “of the classroom” are prepositional phrases. **“Book” is obviously the subject of the sentence.**)

SUBJECT/VERB/ADVERB

We never walk slowly or aimlessly.

(“never” is an adverb; “walk” is a verb; “slowly” is an adverb; “or” is a conjunction; “aimlessly” is an adverb. **“We” is obviously the subject of the sentence.**)

SENTENCES IN UNUSUAL ORDER

Sentence structure in English is very fluid. We commonly put sentences in unusual order. If you follow what you have been shown to do above, you will still have no trouble finding the subject of the sentence.

Sentences beginning with “here”, “there” or “where”:

Here is the rest of the chicken.

(“Here” cannot be a subject; “is” is a verb; “the” is an article; “of the chicken” is a prepositional phrase. **“Rest” is the subject of the sentence.**)

Interrogative sentences:

Why are you going into the office?

(“Why” is an adverb; “are” is a verb; “going” is a verb; “into the office” is a prepositional phrase. Who is doing the going? You are! **“You” is the subject of the sentence.**)

Did you see that crazy motorcycle rider?

(“Did” is a verb; “see” is a verb; “that” is a demonstrative adjective; “crazy” is an adjective; “motorcycle” is an adjective; “rider” is whom or what you saw and thus a direct object. Who did the seeing? “You” did! **“You” is the subject of the sentence.**)

Subjects separated from the verb by a prepositional phrase:

The boys in the classroom appear tired and bored.

(“The” is an article; “in the classroom” is a prepositional phrase; “appear” is a verb; “tired” is a subject complement; “and” is a conjunction; “bored” is a subject complement. **“Boys” is the subject of the sentence.**)

An understood or implied “you” is the subject of every imperative (command) sentence, even though “you” is seldom written. This is true even if the sentence begins with a noun in direct address:

Charles, bring me the rest of your homework.

(“Charles” is a noun in direct address; “bring” is a verb; “me” is an indirect object; “the” is an article; “rest” is a direct object; “of your homework” is a prepositional phrase. **“You”, understood or implied, is the subject of the sentence.**)

Sentences in inverted order:

Far above the crowd and slowly off into the distance floated the untethered balloon.

(“Far” is an adverb; “above the crowd” is a prepositional phrase; “and” is a conjunction; “slowly” is an adverb; “off”

is an adverb; “into the distance” is a prepositional phrase; “floated” is a verb; “the” is an article; “untethered” is an adjective; **“Balloon” is what is doing the floating and is the subject of the sentence.**)

Sentences beginning with phrases or clauses:

Elated by the news, the students applauded wildly.

(“Elated by the news” is a participial phrase; “the” is an article; “applauded” is a verb; “wildly” is an adverb; **“students” did the applauding and therefore the subject of the sentence.**)

With a loud bang and a blinding flash of lights of many colors, the show began.

(“With a loud bang and a blinding flash” is a compound prepositional phrase; “of lights” is a prepositional phrase; “of many colors” is a prepositional phrase; “the” is an article; “began” is a verb; **“show” is the subject of the sentence.**)

Swimming is his favorite form of recreation.

(“is” is a verb; “his” is a possessive adjective; “favorite” is an adjective; “form” is a subject complement; “of recreation” is a prepositional phrase; **the gerund “swimming” is what is being written about and is the subject of the sentence.**)

To win was his goal.

(“was” is a verb; “his” is a possessive adjective; “goal” is a subject complement; **the infinitive “to win” is what is being written about and is the subject of the sentence.**)

What he saw was unusual.

(“was” is a verb; “unusual” is a subject complement; the noun clause **“What he saw” is the subject of the main clause of the sentence.** In the noun clause itself, “what” is the introductory word; “saw” is the verb. Who did the seeing? He did! **“He” is the subject of the noun clause.**)

After we finished the test, some of us went to the cafeteria.

(“After we finished the test” is an adverb clause; “of us” is a prepositional phrase; “went” is a verb; “to the cafeteria” is a prepositional phrase; **“some”, an indefinite pronoun, is the subject of the main clause of the sentence.** In the adverb clause itself, “after” is a subordinating conjunction; “the” is an article; “test” is a direct object. Who did the finishing? We did!. **“We” is the subject of the adverb clause.**)

COMPOUND SUBJECTS

There may be more than one subject in a sentence. If there is more than one subject, but the sentence is not compound, then you have a compound subject:

All of the girls but few of the boys went to the show.

(“of the girls” is a prepositional phrase; “but” is a conjunction; “of the boys” is a prepositional phrase; “went” is a verb; “to the show” is a prepositional phrase. **“All” and “few”, indefinite pronouns, are the subjects.**)

SUMMARY

As you can see, if you want to be able to find the subject of a sentence, it is imperative that you know the parts of speech and be able to determine what every word in a sentence is doing. If you do this, you will never go wrong when it comes to subject and verb agreement, which is a major source of problems in English. You will also never have problems with pronoun case, another major source of problems.

EXERCISE ON FINDING THE SUBJECT

Directions: Circle the simple subject(s):

01. Sticking the numbers on the old satellite dish, he fashioned an outdoor clock.

02. In the middle of the garden in the back yard stood an armillary-sphere on an old tree trunk.
03. Charles, please bring me a new box of paper clips.
04. Not only the letters but also the bills have arrived in the mail. (2)
05. Have any of the boxes been filled?
06. When will the better kinds of staplers be available?
07. Faster and faster flew the racing pigeons.
08. Parched by the howling winds and burnt by the scorching sun, none of the hikers continued the trip.
09. Which of these tables would you prefer?
10. Through the dark and silent streets sped the car.
11. On his desk sat an Atmos clock; it didn't work, but it looked nice. (3)
12. Either the old men or the young boys will have to guard the wall. (2)
13. Abandoned by its parents, in a deep den in the bank of a river cringed a young otter.
14. Where in the world is the Bight of Benin?
15. To swim was his greatest pleasure.
16. Reading is an enjoyable pastime
17. Begin the exam now.
18. Where is my new watch?
19. Many old clocks ticked incessantly in his house.
20. Did any of you really need another explanation?

VOCABULARY FOR GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR AND SIR PATRICK SPENS

Directions: Match the definition to the word by writing the letter of the definition in front of the word:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 01. bar | |
| 02. coal | a. Happy; merry |
| 03. combs | b. Sausages made of intestines stuffed with meat, suet, etc. |
| 04. fans | c. Said |
| 05. foremost | d. Close; shut |
| 06. gay | e. Husband |
| 07. gentlemen | f. Pact; agreement |
| 08. goodman | g. Men |
| 09. lords | h. Black combustible mineral burned for heat |
| 10. morn | i. A jump or hop from first one foot to the other |
| 11. paction | j. First; initial |
| 12. puddings | k. One who goes to sea on a ship |
| 13. quoth | l. Affixed ones signature, as to a letter |
| 14. sail | m. Morning |
| 15. sailor | n. Members of the peerage; noblemen holding the title of earl, viscount, etc. |
| 16. signed | o. Thin strip of metal, plastic, etc. with teeth, used to groom the hair |
| 17. skips | p. Work as a sailor on a ship |
| | q. Cloth or paper devices used to move air to refresh oneself |

The Ballads *by Neill J. Chaffin*

Medieval ballads are generally anonymous; we don't know who wrote them. They were probably originally an oral tradition and were eventually written down by various people in various places. Because

they sprang from an oral tradition, there is a great deal of variation among them. The language is Middle English and often Scottish dialectic. While the modern reader can read them, there are many words that are not immediately easy to understand. They are invariably rhymed, since rhyme makes it easier to remember something that is being recited from memory. Their subject matter is very diverse: comedy, tragedy, love, etc. They are generally down-to-earth in their subject matter and sentiments. Below is a list of the words from the two ballads we will study that may be difficult to understand.

boild=boiled	o'=of	blude=blood	laith=loath
sae-so	tho=though	reid=red	weet=wet
cauld-cold	muckle=a lot	what=where	shoon=shoes
gae=go	hersel=herself	guid=good	lang=long
hussyfskap=housework	spake=spoke	spak=spoke	owre=ere, before
ye=you	tak=take	eldern=ancient	a=all
an=and	aff=off	knicht=knight	aboon=above
nae=not	auld=old	richt=right	kembs=combs
barrd=barred	ails=makes sick	braid=broad	ain=own
twa=two	een=eyes	lauch=laugh	thame=them
whae'er=whatever	scad=scauld	ee=eye	mair=more
ne'er=never	wi=with	wha=what	o'er=over
wad=would	bree=broth	mirry=merry	fadom=fathoms
ane=one	gied=gave	na=not	

Since Sir Patrick Spens is not in the school literature book, I have included it below. (Source: *Norton Anthology of English Literature*)

The king sits in Dumferline town, Drinking the blude-reid wine: "O whar will I get a guid sailor To sail this ship of mine?"	"O wha is this has done this deed, This ill deed done to me, To send me out this time of year, To sail upon the sea?"	O lang, lang may their ladies sit, Wi' their fans into their hand, Or e'er they see Sir Patrick Spens Come sailing to the land.
Up and spak an eldern knicht, Sat at the king's richt knee: "Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor That sails upon the sea."	"Make haste, make haste, my mirry men all, Our guid ship sails the morn." "O say no sae, my master dear, For I fear a deadly storm."	O lang, lang may the ladies stand, Wi' their gold kembs in their hair, Waiting for their ain dear lords, for they'll see thame na mair.
The king has written a braid letter And signed it wi' his hand, And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens, Was walking on the sand.	"Late late yestre'en I saw the new moon Wi' the auld moon in her arm, And I fear, I fear, my dear master, That we will come to harm."	Half o'er, half o'er to Aberdour, It's fifty fadom deep, And there lies guid Sir Patrick Spens, Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.
The first line that Sir Patrick read, A loud lauch lauched he; The next line that Sir Patrick read, The tear blinded his ee.	O our Scots nobles were richt laith To wee their cork-heeled shoon, But lang owre a' the play were played Their hats they swam aboon.	

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR AND SIR PATRICK SPENS

Directions: Answer the following questions:

Get Up and Bar the Door

01. Why is the wife doing the cooking? Remember that this is about 1300-1400 A.D.
02. What caused the door to open?
03. What does her husband tell her to do?
04. Do we know what the husband was doing?
05. What reason does the wife give for not closing the door?
06. What agreement do they make?
07. Who arrive about midnight?
08. What is the rhyme scheme of the ballad?
09. Cite the awful things the two visitors do.
10. The poem calls them “two gentlemen”. Is this an apt description? Why or why not?
11. Who wins the contest?
12. What modern appeal does this outcome have?

Sir Patrick Spens

01. What is the king doing at the beginning of the ballad?
02. What does he call for?
03. Who advises him?
04. What does it mean to say the “eldern knight” “sat at the king’s richt knee”?
05. How does the king summon Sir Patrick Spens?
06. How does Sir Patrick react to the first line of the summons?
07. How does he react to the next line? Why?
08. What does he do in response to the message in the letter?
09. Why do you suppose he did this, against his better judgement?
10. What is the rhyme scheme of the ballad?
11. What omen does one of Sir Patrick’s men cite?
12. What happens to Sir Patrick and the Scots lords?

COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENT

Directions: Find information about a ship sinking. Write a paragraph summarizing it. Bring it to class and be read to share it with the class. Limit the paragraph to about 150-200 words.

Here is my example:

History is filled with the story of shipwrecks. One in modern times was given broad general recognition in a song by Gordon Lightfoot, “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald”. The true story behind the song took place in 1975. The Edmund Fitzgerald was the largest vessel on the Great Lakes at the time of her sinking. The ship had taken on something over 13,000 tons of iron ore in Wisconsin and was headed for a steel mill in Detroit in November 1975. Caught in a severe storm, the Fitzgerald sank about 7:00 P.M. There was no distress call from the ship before it sank. No bodies were ever recovered. No definitive reason has ever been given for the ship sinking, although speculation includes swamping through failed or unsecured cargo hatches, structural failure, or bottoming out in shoal waters. The sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald resulted in considerable improvements in shipping practices on the Great Lakes.