The Basic Sentence • Practice 1

The Two Basic Parts of a Sentence  A sentence must contain a subject and a verb. The subject is the word or group of words that answers the question Who? or What? before the verb. The verb tells what the subject does, what is done to the subject, or the condition of the subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy</td>
<td>dove off the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The truck</td>
<td>was hit by a snowball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>looks bored.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using Subjects and Verbs to Express Complete Thoughts  A group of words expresses a complete thought if it has a subject and verb, can stand by itself, and make sense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incomplete Thoughts</th>
<th>Complete Thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the deer on the hill</td>
<td>The deer is climbing the hill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was beautiful at sunset</td>
<td>The sky was beautiful at sunset.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 1  Identifying Subjects and Verbs.  In each of the following sentences, underline the subject once and the verb twice.

EXAMPLE:  The sailors boarded the ship.

1. Shakespeare wrote the play <i>Macbeth</i>.
2. We saw the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.
3. Bob sang a solo in the Christmas pageant.
4. The dog looks very old and tired.
5. Doves flew over the city.
6. They are skating at the indoor rink.
7. The building was destroyed in the earthquake.
8. That quarterback is being tackled from behind.
9. An unexpected visitor delayed our departure.
10. This salad was made with vegetables from my garden.

Exercise 2  Recognizing Sentences.  Read the items below. If the item is a sentence, write <i>sentence</i> in the blank. If the item is an incomplete thought, write <i>incomplete</i> in the blank.

EXAMPLE:  The long day's march.  <i>incomplete</i>

1. We ate lunch along a cool stream.  <i>complete</i>
2. Vincent painted that mural on the wall.  <i>complete</i>
3. Our new library with so many books.  <i>incomplete</i>
4. Walked in the door one hour late.  <i>incomplete</i>
5. I miss my old job at the restaurant.  <i>incomplete</i>
6. A large red fox with its young.  <i>complete</i>
7. Dana mailed another letter to her pen pal.  <i>complete</i>
8. Slid into third base ahead of the throw.  <i>complete</i>
9. A day sunbathing on the beach.  <i>complete</i>
10. They went swimming along the reef.  <i>complete</i>