

71 Subject-verb agreement

One of the basic principles of English is that subjects and verbs must agree in number. Some subjects, however, can act like singular or plural nouns depending on the context.

See also:
Present simple 1
Singular and plural nouns 69

71.1 PLURAL NOUNS WITH SINGULAR AGREEMENT

Books and other works of art that end in a plural noun are used as singular for agreement.

Even though "tales" is plural, *The Canterbury Tales* is a single work of literature.

***The Canterbury Tales* was first published in the 1400s.**



Other nouns look like they are plural because they end in an "-s," but have singular agreement. These include many place names and academic subjects.

Mathematics is becoming a more popular subject.



FURTHER EXAMPLES



***Little Women* is a novel by Louisa May Alcott.**



The Netherlands is famous for its tulip industry.



Gymnastics was the most enjoyable sport at school.



Politics is often a topic for academic debate.



Athletics was an important part of the ancient Olympic Games.