Subject-Verb Agreement III: Delayed Subjects

Often, the subject of a sentence will come after the verb. A simple way to identify the subject is as follows:

1. First identify the verb
2. Then ask the question "Who or what...?"

These steps may help you select the subject of most sentences.

Other points to remember:
§ The subject is never within a prepositional phrase.
§ To find the subject of a question, turn the question into a statement.
§ The words there and here are never the subjects.

In the following sentences, underline the subject once and the verb twice. Check to see if the subject and verb agree. If not, change the verb to agree with the subject.

1. There are many unverified legends about the life of Benjamin Franklin.

2. In the science building hangs the new projector screens.

3. There is almost seven million volumes in the Library of Congress.

4. How much is these bananas?

5. Where are Mary's brothers?

6. There is the socks you bought for soccer practice.

7. There was thousands of people at the parade.

8. In the small pond swims four large fish.

9. There's no one left in the room.

10. In later life comes great wisdom.

11. There is a ninety percent chance of rain in today's forecast.

12. There’s three finalists in the speech competition.

13. From the horizon comes an eerie, shimmering light.
14. Near the barn stands two old oak trees.

15. When is Christmas holidays scheduled on the school calendar?

This handout is adapted from the Hinds Community College Writing Center Website. Only the format has been changed.