Module 1 Unit 5
Grammar: Subject-verb agreement

Summary

- Singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs.
- If there is more than one noun/pronoun in the subject, you need to work out which one the verb refers to. This is the head noun and the verb must agree with it. It will not always be the noun or pronoun directly in front of the verb.
- If two nouns are joined by and, you use a plural verb.
- If two nouns are joined by or or nor, you generally use a singular verb.
- Words like each, every and neither take singular verbs.
- Words like several, many, and few take plural verbs.
- Words like all, most, many and some take a singular verb with non-count nouns, but a plural verb with plural nouns.
- Collective nouns like family, community, and majority take a singular verb if their focus is on the whole entity. However, they take a plural verb if the focus is on individual members of the entity.
- Some words appear to be plural but are actually singular, so they take a singular verb e.g. politics, athletics, news.
- You cannot make plurals out of some commonly used academic words e.g. evidence, information.