

# Connect to Writing

## GRAMMAR

Have students take turns reading aloud the introductory text, rules, and sentences at the top of the page. Then have students reread pages 54 and 55 to find and write examples for each rule. (Rule 1 example: *A scavenger eats . . .*; Rule 2 example: *Producers consume . . .*; Rule 3 example: *People and animals breathe . . .*) Have students read their example sentences aloud and tell why the verb does or does not end in -es or -s.

## SCAFFOLDING

Model how to complete the activity. On the board, write *grow* and *grows*. Have volunteers come forward and point to the correct word to complete each sentence below. Have everyone repeat the entire sentence for each example.

- The plants [grow/grows] tall.
- The tree [grow/grows] by the lake.
- It [grow/grows] new leaves each spring.
- Trees and brush [grow/grows] in the woods.

## GRAMMAR

### Subject-Verb Agreement: Simple Present

In the **simple present**, the subject and the verb must agree in number (singular or plural).

Add **-s** or **-es** to verbs with a subject that is a singular noun or with the subject pronouns *he, she, and it*.

The owl **hunts** for food at night.  
It **catches** bats, insects, and mice to eat.  
He **likes** a boggy acre.  
She **writes** poetry.

Do not add **-s** or **-es** to verbs with a subject that is a plural noun or with the subject pronouns *I, we, you, and they*.

Plants  
I  
We  
You  
They } **need** water to live.

### Practice

Copy this paragraph into your notebook. Use the correct simple present form of the verbs in parentheses.

My brothers (1. spend / spends) a lot of time at the pond near our house. They (2. watch / watches) the animals in and near the pond. My sister (3. feed / feeds) the ducks. She (4. chase / chases) frogs. I (5. love / loves) to watch the frogs hop from plant to plant. We (6. think / thinks) the pond is very peaceful. You (7. come / comes) to the pond, too, don't you?



▲ Pond

## SKILLS FOR WRITING

### Writing an Expository Paragraph

Expository writing explains something. "Ecosystems: The Systems of Nature" is an example of expository writing. It gives factual information about the natural world.

Here are some rules for writing an expository paragraph.

- Make sure that your paragraph has one main idea about the topic. The main idea should be stated in the topic sentence.
- Use facts to support your main idea.
- Make your explanations simple and clear.

Read the paragraph. Then discuss the questions.



*Drew Newgent*

*The Chipmunk in Its Food Chain*

*The chipmunk is an important consumer in the middle of the food chain. The chipmunk is an omnivore. It eats parts of plants, such as nuts, grains, seeds, and berries. It also eats small animals, such as insects. Many larger carnivores eat chipmunks. When the larger carnivores die, decomposers return the nutrients to the soil. Plants use the nutrients in the soil to grow. Therefore, the chipmunk plays an important part in the food chain.*

← Topic sentence

1. What kind of paragraph is it?
2. What is the topic? What is the main idea about the topic?
3. What facts support the main idea?
4. Find the simple present verbs. What is the subject of each verb? Is there subject-verb agreement?

## SKILLS FOR WRITING

Have volunteers take turns reading the introductory paragraph, the list of rules, and the expository writing paragraph. Then have students discuss each question after a volunteer reads it aloud.

## SCAFFOLDING

Have students read the rules at the top of the page and then copy them into their notebooks. Explain that they can refer to these rules and use the sample paragraph as a model when they do their own writing. For practice, have them reread paragraphs from the main selection and tell how the rules apply to these paragraphs.

## REACHING ALL STUDENTS

### LANGUAGE LEVELS

**Beginning:** Ask students to tell you in a few words what the sample paragraph is about. Have them point to the title and the main idea or topic sentence. Then have them count the sentences. Have them explain what signals the end of a sentence.

**Advanced:** Have pairs of students work together to list the main idea and three supporting details for the sample paragraph. Have students write their own paragraph and underline the main idea and three supporting sentences with colored markers or pens. Have them use one color for the main idea and another color for the details.