

## SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS

Subject Complements are exactly what they sound like... complements. However, complements (in a grammatical sense) can be good or bad.

### ACTION (with OBJECTS)

In a sentence with an action verb,

EX:

Mary ran home.

Mary is the SUBJECT. RAN is the action verb. And, HOME is the object.

### NON-ACTION (with COMPLEMENTS)

In a sentence with a non-action verb (typically, a linking verb or a sensory verb),

EX:

Mary is kind.

Mary is the SUBJECT. IS is the linking verb. And, KIND is the complement (more specifically, the subject complement).

Just think: When you are complementing a subject, you have to have a subject complement.

Subject Complements may be:

*Nouns (also called, Predicate Nouns)*

EX:

Jim is a teacher

*Numerals*

EX:

Jim is first.

*Noun Phrases*

EX:

Jim is a wonderful teacher.

*Adjectives (also called, Predicate Adjectives)*

EX:

Jim is awesome.

*Adjective Phrases*

EX:

Jim is really very awesome.

### LINKING VERBS & SENSORY VERBS

Subject Complements are preceded by linking verbs or sensory verbs. That is, after a linking or sensory verb, one should expect to find a complement.

Linking verbs include the following:

Am  
Is  
Are  
Was  
Were  
Be  
Been  
Will

EX:

Jennifer is famous.

Sensory Verbs are verbs which lead to a sense; they may include:

Seems  
Appears  
Smells  
Tastes  
Feels  
Sounds

EX:

The apartment smells foul.

### COMPLEMENTS AND STATE OF BEING

Now, subject complements do not have to be “nice” or “kind” things. Complements may convey a range of “states of being.”

EX:

Mary is nice.  
Mary is happy.  
Mary is foolish.  
Mary is a loser.  
Mary is a selfish wench.

All of the endings following the IS are complements.

### LINKS, SENSES, AND THE EQUAL SIGN

Complements are normally preceded by a linking verb or a sensory verb.

The linking verb or sensory verb may act like an equal sign.

EX:

Mary is kind.  
Mary = kind.

The apartment smells foul.

The apartment = foul.

You do not see this type of relationship with action verbs (this provides a clue that you are dealing with a complement and not an object).