

# 1 Here's the Idea

- ▶ A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. Every sentence can be divided into two parts—the subject and the predicate.

The Atacama Desert in Chile is one of the driest places on earth.

SUBJECT

PREDICATE

Some areas of the Atacama get rain only a few times a century.

SUBJECT

PREDICATE

## Simple Subjects and Simple Predicates

The most basic elements of a sentence are the simple subject and the simple predicate, or verb. Neither one includes modifiers but each may be made up of more than one word.

- ▶ The simple subject tells who or what performs the action in a sentence.

The slender Arctic tern migrates remarkable distances.

It may travel over 22,000 miles in the course of its yearly trek.

- ▶ The simple predicate tells what the subject did or what happened to the subject.

Many terns have flown from the Arctic Circle to the Antarctic Circle and back again.

They generally follow the same migratory route.

### Here's How Finding Simple Subjects and Simple Predicates

- To find the **simple subject**, ask “Who or what is or does the action?”
- To find the **simple predicate**, ask “What does the subject do?” or “What happens to it?”

**One three-month-old tern from Nova Scotia migrated as far as southern South Africa.**

What did the action? **tern**

What did the subject do? **migrated**

## Complete Subjects and Complete Predicates

- ▶ The complete subject includes the simple subject and all the words that modify it.

**More tornadoes** occur in the United States than anywhere else.

↑ SIMPLE SUBJECT

- ▶ The complete predicate includes all the words that tell what the subject did or what happened to the subject.

Some tornadoes **produce winds of over 250 miles per hour.**

↑ SIMPLE PREDICATE

- ▶ A sentence fragment is a group of words that is only part of a sentence. It may lack a subject, a predicate, or both.

### Sentence or Fragment?

Fragment	Problem	Sentence
A much lower average daily temperature than most deserts.	The fragment needs a subject and a predicate.	<b>The Atacama has</b> a much lower average daily temperature than most deserts.
Daytime temperatures in the 60s typical even in summer.	The fragment needs a predicate.	Daytime temperatures in the 60s <b>are</b> typical even in summer.

## Why It Matters in Writing

Both subject and predicate are needed to make the meaning of a sentence clear.