

Unit 61: EMPTY SUBJECTS

Every sentence must have a subject (Unit 1), but sometimes the subject does not mean anything.

1 *There*

We do not usually put new information at the beginning of a sentence.

So instead of:

we can write:

A man is at the door.

There is a man at the door.

Books were on the desk.

There were books on the desk.

An accident has happened.

There has been an accident.

A short break will now happen.

There will now be a short break.

Is a bank near here?

Is there a bank near here?

A lot of work is to be done.

There is a lot of work to do.

We were six there.

There were six of us there.

NOTICE: After **there**, the verb is **be**.

2 *It*

If we want to describe an activity or an event, we often use **it** as an empty subject.

So instead of:

we can write:

Leaning out of the window is dangerous.

It is dangerous to lean out of the window.

Meeting so many old friends was wonderful.

It was wonderful to meet so many old friends.

Seeing her so unhappy is terrible.

It is terrible to see her so unhappy.

Travelling to all those different places must be very interesting.

It must be very interesting to travel to all those different places.

Driving to work takes me twenty minutes.

It takes me twenty minutes to drive to work.