Sentence Pattern One: Subject-Verb (S-V)

The most basic sentence pattern consists of a subject and a verb. The verb may be an action verb or a linking verb. Look at the following examples:

Example: James W. Walter builds.

Example: He began to build homes after World War II.

Example: Walter offered to build affordable housing.

Example: The chairman of Walter Industries looks to the future with the company’s expansion.

Adapted from: http://www.theledger.com/top50/pages/honor.html.

In each of these examples, the subject is in boldface, and the verb is underlined. Each of these verbs is an action verb. The next examples illustrate how to diagram these sentences. Only the subjects and the verbs will be diagrammed at this point.

Example: James W. Walter builds.

Diagram:

Walter builds

Example: He began to build homes after World War II.
Diagram:

He  began

In both diagrams, the subject is placed on a line and a line is drawn down through the line separating the subject and the verb. In the following exercise, you will practice diagramming subjects and verbs.