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:

A man is at the door.
Books were on the desk.
An accident has happened.
A short break will now happen.
Is a bank near here?
A lot of work is to be done.
We were six there.

we can write:

There is a man at the door.
There were books on the desk.
There has been an accident.
There will now be a short break.
Is there a bank near here?
There is a lot of work to do.
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:

Leaning out of the window is dangerous.
Meeting so many old friends was wonderful.
Seeing her so unhappy is terrible.
Travelling to all those different places must be very interesting.
Driving to work takes me twenty minutes.

we can write:

It is dangerous to lean out of the window.
It was wonderful to meet so many old friends.
It is terrible to see her so unhappy.
It must be very interesting to travel to all those different places.
It takes me twenty minutes to drive to work.