

Nouns

2a. A **noun** is a word or word group that is used to name a person, a place, a thing, or an idea.

PERSONS Maya Angelou, Mr. Johnson, firefighters, audience

PLACES hospital, library, classroom, New Zealand

THINGS dolphin, burritos, 1776, Big Dipper

IDEAS joy, faith, freedom, destiny

EXERCISE A Underline the nouns in each of the following sentences. Hint: The number in parentheses indicates the number of nouns in each sentence.

Example 1. (3) Thomas Hooker has been called the father of American democracy.

- (4) Thomas Hooker immigrated to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1633 to find religious freedom.
- (3) Disagreements with the religious leaders of the colony soon developed.
- (5) Hooker and several followers carved out a new, independent settlement nearby, which eventually became Hartford, Connecticut.
- (5) He supported the right of the people—not just the members of the church—to vote for their judges.
- (3) He explained his beliefs in a book published in 1648.

EXERCISE B Underline the nouns in the following sentences.

Example 1. This past summer, Joey and his sister Dawn took a photography class.

- On the first day, Mr. Armstrong went around and demonstrated how to use the various cameras.
- Each camera had at least one mysterious button that had to be explained.
- After this first lesson, the class learned about composition.
- Mr. Armstrong displayed his best photos, and Dawn was impressed and inspired.
- The next class was a field trip to the San Diego Zoo.
- Joey got a great shot of a howler monkey showing its teeth.
- Dawn, who adores koala bears, was determined to get a picture to put on her wall.
- Waiting patiently, Dawn finally caught a koala bear that was looking in her direction.
- Joey wanted to see the photos right away, so his dad dropped off the film at the drugstore.
- Dawn bought a shiny silver frame for the koala picture that now hangs over her desk.

Compound Nouns

2b. A **compound noun** is made up of two or more words used together as a single noun.

EXAMPLES backpack, Haleakala National Park, brother-in-law

EXERCISE Underline the compound nouns in the following sentences. There may be more than one compound noun in a sentence.

Example 1. The Marx Brothers were a family of comedians.

1. They were born in New York City and began working as children.
2. Originally, five of the brothers were in show business.
3. Their given names were Leonard, Adolph, Julius, Milton, and Herbert.
4. Thousands of theatergoers, however, knew them as Chico, Harpo, Groucho, Gummo, and Zeppo.
5. Their first successful play on Broadway was *I'll Say She Is* in 1924.
6. One of their films was a version of their stage play *The Cocoanuts*, which was written by George S. Kaufman.
7. This film was followed by *Animal Crackers*, *Monkey Business*, and *Duck Soup*.
8. Every film was a whirlwind of hilarity, with nonstop jokes and physical comedy.
9. The three best-known Marx Brothers were Groucho, Chico, and Harpo.
10. Groucho was known for his eyebrows, his moustache, and his constant wisecracks.
11. He often played characters with funny names, such as Rufus T. Firefly in *Duck Soup*.
12. Chico Marx spoke with an accent, mispronounced words, and excelled as a pianist.
13. Harpo never spoke, so he specialized in sight gags and slapstick.
14. His harp playing was a highlight of every film.
15. The actress Margaret Dumont was often the target of Groucho's jokes.
16. One of the brothers' later films was *A Night in Casablanca*.
17. Warner Brothers, a rival studio, threatened to sue the Marx Brothers because of the film.
18. They felt its name was too similar to another film starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.
19. Groucho Marx sent the studio a humorous letter.
20. "I'll sue you," wrote Groucho Marx, "for using the word 'Brothers.'"

Common and Proper Nouns

2c. A **common noun** names any one of a group of persons, places, things, or ideas.

2d. A **proper noun** names a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

COMMON NOUNS doctor, planet, contest, religion

PROPER NOUNS Dr. Hopkins, Neptune, Special Olympics, Shinto

EXERCISE Identify the nouns in the following sentences. Underline the common nouns once and the proper nouns twice.

Example 1. Mark Twain is my favorite author.

1. The fish in the tank are a variety of colors.
2. Mr. Townsend has the *Detroit Free Press* delivered daily to his house.
3. Of all the people in my class, Amy is probably the funniest person.
4. The calendar over my desk has a picture of a lighthouse in Maine.
5. The first day that the doctor is available is Thursday.
6. The two ships just docked at the port.
7. My brother showed me an article about archaeology in *The New Yorker*.
8. Two of the most memorable characters in the novel *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville are Ahab, a one-legged whaling captain, and the whale itself.
9. The facial expressions of the actor caused a great deal of laughter.
10. A picture of the actor Denzel Washington was pinned to the bulletin board by thumbtacks.
11. Can Uncle Tim take us to the beach?
12. Guadalupe Street runs along the west side of the University of Texas in Austin.
13. My father and my uncle grew up near the Muskegon River in Big Rapids, Michigan.
14. My grandfather taught for many years at Ferris State University.
15. There are several types of hammers, including the claw hammer, the ball-peen hammer, and the sledgehammer.
16. Please take this copy of the book back to the library.
17. In the backyard of our house, I can still find old arrowheads occasionally.
18. The photography in that film is superb.
19. Will Professor Ondaatje be lecturing later?
20. The Reverend Jane Wilcox will be coming to dinner soon.

Concrete, Abstract, and Collective Nouns

2e. A **concrete noun** names a person, place, or thing that can be perceived by one or more of the senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell).

2f. An **abstract noun** names an idea, a feeling, a quality, or a characteristic.

CONCRETE NOUNS friend, restaurant, garlic, *Star Trek*

ABSTRACT NOUNS friendship, danger, loyalty, Judaism

2g. A **collective noun** is a word that names a group.

EXAMPLES orchestra, herd, bunch, Ecology Club

EXERCISE A In the following sentences, underline the concrete nouns once and the abstract nouns twice.

Example 1. Victor is an expert on Zen Buddhism.

1. Christa read a book about increasing her self-confidence.
2. Please bring me a box of pencils from the closet.
3. Time moves slowly for people caught in a traffic jam.
4. An editorial is an essay, usually in a newspaper, in which the writer expresses his or her opinion.
5. Tito, do you believe his story is the truth?
6. Professor Said is writing a book about art history.
7. Jennifer learned to overcome her fear of dogs.
8. Dr. Melfi is a specialist in the treatment of certain illnesses.
9. My brother, the playwright, is working on a new play.
10. He likes to talk about what he calls the principles of comedy.

EXERCISE B Underline the collective nouns in the following sentences.

Example 1. We picked Sam from a litter of black and white kittens.

11. My sister Sandra received a set of drums and a collection of stamps for her tenth birthday.
12. The fleet left the harbor under full steam, followed by a flock of seagulls.
13. The faculty voted to change the requirements for graduation.
14. As the magazine photographer came over the ridge, he saw a herd of water buffalo that stretched to the horizon.
15. The audience applauded so fervently that the band and the chorus returned to the stage for an encore.

Kinds of Nouns

2c. A **common noun** names any one of a group of persons, places, things, or ideas.

2d. A **proper noun** names a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

COMMON books **PROPER** Library of Congress

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2f. An **abstract noun** names an idea, a feeling, a quality, or a characteristic.

CONCRETE money **ABSTRACT** generosity

2g. A **collective noun** is a word that names a group.

2b. A **compound noun** is made up of two or more words used together as a single noun.

COLLECTIVE flock, crew, Congress **COMPOUND** baseball, World Series

EXERCISE A Identify each of the following nouns. On the line provided, write *COM* for *common noun* or *PRO* for *proper noun*. Then, write *CON* for *concrete noun* or *ABS* for *abstract noun*.

Example COM, ABS 1 honesty

_____ 1. Philadelphia

_____ 6. Thomas Jefferson

_____ 2. wisdom

_____ 7. federalism

_____ 3. Potomac River

_____ 8. eagle

_____ 4. freedom

_____ 9. First Continental Congress

_____ 5. airport

_____ 10. independence

EXERCISE B Identify each of the following nouns. On the line provided, write *COLL* for *collective noun* or *COMP* for *compound noun*. Hint: One noun is both collective and compound.

Example COMP 1. space shuttle

_____ 11. sister-in-law

_____ 16. Super Bowl

_____ 12. family

_____ 17. Gulf of Mexico

_____ 13. Lake Ontario

_____ 18. self-respect

_____ 14. houseboat

_____ 19. audience

_____ 15. team

_____ 20. Boston Pops Orchestra