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Introduction to Teachers

How Grammar Works is a guide for your students to become familiar with the basic units of grammar—the parts of speech! First, an introduction with a study list of the parts of speech is provided for the student. It includes the definitions, key words and examples. Then, each part of speech is defined, with tips for identification. Practice exercises are then provided for identifying that part of speech. Next, different usage rules and exercises are provided for practice with these concepts. A review of parts of speech identification and a review of usage are provided at the end of the book, along with a peer editing checklist for students to use with their own writing. You may also find this a useful resource for older students needing revision in understanding how grammar works.

You may wish to introduce each part of speech and usage concept in class, do the introductory exercises together, and have the students complete the remaining exercises from each section as homework; or all work could be done in class, depending on the level of your students and their previous exposure to grammar.

Naturally, the concepts taught here are more likely to become ingrained if the ideas are reinforced in the students' other writing assignments. Peer editing is a perfect opportunity to reinforce the students' learning. The peer editing checklist is provided for this reason.





Introduction to Nouns

NOUNS—Words that name people, places, things or ideas

The first part of speech is the noun. A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea: **girl, Cindy, town, Brisbane, building, Parliament House, peace, happiness.**

People, place and thing nouns are fairly easy; you can see and touch them. Anything or anyone you can point at is a noun: **desk, student, room,** etc.

Idea nouns are invisible. They are words like **freedom, hatred, intelligence.** They seem tricky at first, but actually they're easy, too. Here is a strategy to help you identify them. Look at these words:

happy

peace

stupid

Peace is the only noun. How do you know? There's an easy test which tells you. Ask yourself, "Can I have it?" Can you have **happy**? No you can't, but you can have **happiness** or **joy**. They're nouns. Can you have **stupid**? No, but **stupidity, ignorance, intolerance**—all these you can have. This test works because all these idea nouns are things, and you can have things. You can have a pencil, a book, some apples—all things. Idea nouns are really thing nouns. They are just invisible things.

Exercise 1

List 10 person nouns.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Exercise 2

List 10 place nouns.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |



Noun Practice

Exercise 3

List 10 thing nouns.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Exercise 4

List 10 idea nouns.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Exercise 5

Write **N** next to the words that can be used as nouns. They may be person, place, thing or idea nouns.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. desk _____ | 11. Ms. Garcia _____ |
| 2. friendship _____ | 12. Australia _____ |
| 3. dream _____ | 13. bookmark _____ |
| 4. quirky _____ | 14. <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> _____ |
| 5. ship _____ | 15. tears _____ |
| 6. police _____ | 16. fear _____ |
| 7. coward _____ | 17. afraid _____ |
| 8. purple _____ | 18. nice _____ |
| 9. church _____ | 19. cat _____ |
| 10. religion _____ | 20. hatred _____ |



Capitalisation Rules

Nouns which name specific persons, places or things are called **proper nouns**, and they must be capitalised. Here are the rules for capitalising these nouns:

Nationalities, Religions

1. Capitalise all nationalities and religions: Protestant, Italian, Jewish, Australian.

Dates

2. Capitalise dates, historical events, periods and special events: World War II, Renaissance, Chinese Revolution, Easter, Saturday, May.
3. Do not capitalise seasons of the year: winter, spring, autumn, summer.

Classes

4. Do not capitalise school classes unless a specific title is given, or the subject is a language: history, History 1A, English, French, maths.

Names

5. Capitalise names of people and place names: Ron, Atlanta, Darwin, Melbourne, Main Street, Ms. Rafferty.
Note: Do not capitalise directions (south, east, etc.) except when they refer to a specific region (the South): I live north of the capital. We moved to the East Coast.
6. Capitalise titles for people (mayor, doctor etc.) only when they are followed by a name (Doctor Stockton, the doctor).
7. Capitalise the first and last words and all important words in the titles of books, stories, poems, songs, etc.: *The Story of Karrawingi*, 'Once in a Lifetime.'
8. Capitalise family titles only when used as names: Ask Mum. Ask your mum. I like Uncle Bob. I like my uncle, Bob.
9. Capitalise the names of organisations, businesses, institutions, and government bodies: Central High School, Imation Enterprises Corporation, Food and Drug Administration, Royal Australian Navy.
10. Capitalise the brand names of products but not the words identifying the products: Dove soap, Nike shoes.
11. Capitalise the names of planets, ships, awards, monuments, and any other specific places, things, or events: *Titanic*, Venus, Mars, Uluru, Academy Awards.
12. Capitalise words referring to God: God loves His people.
Note: Do not capitalise the word *god* when referring to deities: The Greek gods lived on Mount Olympus.

The Obvious Ones

13. Capitalise the first word in every sentence.
14. Capitalise the pronoun *I*.