

The Harold Syntax Guide to Nouns

Pre-Test

Directions: In the blank space, write a "T" if the statement is true and an "F" if the statement is false.

- ___ 1. The part of speech early humans probably spoke first was the noun.
- ___ 2. Abstract nouns name persons, places, and things.
- ___ 3. Beauty, liberty, and love are examples of proper nouns.
- ___ 4. An example of a concrete noun is the word "village."
- ___ 5. Concrete nouns are always capitalized.
- ___ 6. Adding an "s" is one way to make a regular plural formation.
- ___ 7. When a noun in a sentence tells what the sentence is about, that noun is in the objective case.
- ___ 8. When a noun in a sentence has something done to it, it is in the nominative case.
- ___ 9. When a noun shows ownership, it is in the possessive case.
- ___ 10. When a noun is a person spoken to in the sentence, it is in the vocative case.
- ___ 11. Vocative case nouns normally are placed at the end of the sentence.
- ___ 12. Objective case nouns are normally found at the end of the sentence.
- ___ 13. Nominative case nouns normally have no specific placement in a sentence.
- ___ 14. Possessive case nouns are found in the front, middle, or end of a sentence.
- ___ 15. All language has patterns.

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Concrete and Abstract Nouns

❖ **Prof. Syntax reminder: Concrete nouns can be seen, touched, smelled, tasted, heard, or any combination of those. Abstract nouns name feelings, qualities, or ideas.**

Directions: Write an "A" next to each word if it is an abstract noun, a "C" if the noun is concrete, and an "N" if the word is not a noun.

___ 1. independence

___ 2. sandwich

___ 3. statue

___ 4. cranky

___ 5. Manuel

___ 6. folly

___ 7. soccer

___ 8. sadness

___ 9. jury

___ 10. socialism

___ 11. into

___ 12. Houston

___ 13. toaster

___ 14. truth

___ 15. fritters

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Common and Proper Nouns

❖ Prof. Syntax reminder: Common nouns name a general category of persons, places, things, or abstractions. Proper nouns name a specific person, place, thing, or abstraction, and are always capitalized.

Directions: In the paragraph below, circle all common nouns and underline all proper nouns.

Going to Ghana

Our plane landed in Accra, Ghana's capital city, on a sweltering day in mid-August. The first thing we noticed was the density of the air. It was so humid, it seemed as if we practically could cut it with a knife.

Kwame Owusu, our guide, met us at the gate. He held a small sign with our names on it and carefully scrutinized the line of passengers as we disembarked. When we caught his eye, his face broke into a huge smile.

We gathered our suitcases and Kwame swept them into the waiting SUV. "It will take us about two hours to get to Akropong," he said. "I'll take you directly to the hotel. You'll have time to freshen, and then we'll see the village chief. We need his permission before you can begin your studies of our village festivals and our traditional religious practices."

Our small hotel in Akropong had no air conditioning. Jeanne and I wondered if we would be able to sleep in the oppressive heat. Surprisingly, however, the weather turned pleasant as soon as the afternoon rains ended. We were in the uplands, well away from the coastal area, where the weather, we discovered, was quite tolerable - despite our being so close to the equator.

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Plural Formations

❖ Prof. Syntax reminder: Add an "s" to the end of the noun when the regular formation is required. When the noun ends in "ss," "sh," "ch," and "x," add an "es" to construct the plural. When the noun ends in a consonant and a "y," drop the "y" and add "ies" to form the plural. When the noun ends in "lf" or a long vowel, plus "fe," the plural is formed by dropping the "f" or "fe" and adding "ves." Irregular plural formations require memorization.

Directions: Write the plural form for the nouns listed below.

1. deer _____

2. child _____

3. woman _____

4. plastic _____

5. shelf _____

6. safe _____

7. conscience _____

8. city _____

9. professional _____

10. sport _____

11. tax _____

12. trout _____

13. cycle _____

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Noun Cases

❖ **Prof. Syntax reminder: Nominative case nouns, normally found near the front of the sentence, tell what the sentence is about. Objective case nouns, usually found near the back, have something done to them. Possessive case nouns, found in various places, show ownership. Vocative case nouns, often found at the front, are the person (or thing) spoken to.**

Directions: Circle the nouns in the sentences below. Above the noun, write its case.

1. Mark, please carry the suitcases.
2. Felicia and Ramon bought a new pet.
3. Leslie's car bumped Harry's tree.
4. The owl, swooping down, caught the field mouse.
5. Einstein's theory of relativity changed science forever.
6. Did the group go home, David?
7. He uses salt and pepper.
8. The medicine induced sleep.
9. Sports stars often sign autographs.
10. Both presidential candidates gave speeches tonight.
11. Judy's mother slowly ate the cake.
12. Lee caught seventeen trout.
13. Pamela bought the presents.
14. Duke, run to the store.

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Post-Test, Page 1

Part I

Directions: In the blank space, write a "T" if the statement is true and an "F" if the statement is false.

- ___ 1. Abstract nouns name persons, places, and things.
- ___ 2. Ugliness, servitude, and hatred are all examples of concrete nouns.
- ___ 3. Concrete nouns are always capitalized.
- ___ 4. One regular formation of plural nouns is made by adding an "s" to the singular form of the word.
- ___ 5. When a noun shows ownership it is in the vocative case.

Part II

Directions: Write the plural form for the nouns listed below.

1. beef _____
2. ox _____
3. woman _____
4. surgeon _____
5. cliff _____
6. safe _____
7. elf _____
8. spy _____
9. generation _____
10. teen _____

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Post-Test, Page 2

Part III

Directions: Circle the nouns in the sentences below. Above the noun, write its case.

1. Bill, take the papers.
2. Sammy walked his dog.
3. Denise's computer fell.
4. The exhibit moved to Detroit.
5. Abraham Lincoln lived in Springfield.

Part IV

Directions: In the paragraph below, circle all common nouns and underline all proper nouns.

Magarete and Jason planned the graduation party for several months. Jason was responsible for the food and drinks. He called Mr. Morrison at Central Food Market, told the grocer how many people were attending, and gave him an estimate of how much money the graduation party committee intended to spend. Mr. Morrison faxed over a 12-page list of possible selections, which the committee voted on at its May meeting.

Meanwhile Margarete visited the Big Show Talent Agency to find out about bands. Jackie Milton, who booked the bands, took out a collection of CDs and said Margarete could play them there, or listen to them elsewhere and call in a decision. "However," the agent cautioned, "you'll need to make a decision soon. The best bands, like the Twinkling Toesies, will be booked quickly. Margarete quickly called an entertainment committee meeting and the small group spent the evening listening to the CDs. They chose the Ian Tarter Band, which luckily was available for the big night.

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Discussion Questions

Part I: What Nouns Are

1. What are concrete nouns?
2. Give five examples of concrete nouns.
3. What are abstract nouns?
4. Name five examples of abstract nouns.
5. What was probably the first part of speech ever spoken?

Part II: Common and Proper Nouns

1. What is a common noun?
2. Give five examples of common nouns.
3. What is a proper noun?
4. Give five examples of proper nouns.
5. Give five examples of common nouns and then five corresponding examples of proper nouns.
An example would be "car" and "Rolls-Royce."

Part III: Plural Formations

1. What is the normal way to form a plural noun?
2. When should you add an "es" to the end of the word to form its plural?
3. How is the plural formed when the noun ends in a consonant and a "y"?
4. How is the plural formed when the noun ends in "lf," or a long vowel and "fe?"

Part IV: Noun Cases

1. Give an example of a sentence with a nominative case noun.
2. Give an example of a sentence with a objective case noun.
3. Give an example of a sentence with a possessive case noun.
4. Give an example of a sentence with a vocative case noun.