

10.1

Nouns

- A **noun** is a word that names a person, a place, a thing, or an idea.

PERSON	aunt, astronaut, Ramón, daughter-in-law, child
PLACE	universe, village, bedroom, North Carolina
THING	shark, eagle, oak, foot
IDEA	pride, honor, dignity, hope, 1992

- A **concrete noun** names an object that occupies space or that can be recognized by any of the senses.

stone lightning shout air salt

- An **abstract noun** names an idea, a quality, or a characteristic.

sadness hope anger clarity dissonance

Nouns are singular or plural. A singular noun names one person, place, thing, or idea. A plural noun names more than one.

SINGULAR	mask, briefcase, fly, loaf, woman
PLURAL	masks, briefcases, flies, loaves, women

Nouns have a possessive form, which is used to show possession, ownership, or the relationship between two nouns.

SINGULAR POSSESSIVE	PLURAL POSSESSIVE
a boy's hat	the boys' hats
the country's laws	those countries' laws
a woman's smile	women's smiles
a mouse's whiskers	mice's whiskers

Exercise 1 Identifying Nouns

On your paper, write the nouns in each sentence. Identify each noun as a person, place, thing, or idea.

SAMPLE Inventions are the products of creativity and determination.

ANSWER Inventions—thing creativity—idea
products—thing determination—idea

1. Alfred Nobel experimented with explosives in a laboratory in Sweden.
2. In his research, Nobel worked with an explosive compound called nitroglycerin.
3. He mixed nitroglycerin with other chemicals to create dynamite.
4. At his death, Nobel left most of his fortune in a trust for international awards called Nobel Prizes.
5. The first Nobel Prizes were for outstanding work in science, literature, and peace.



Exercise 2 Identifying Nouns

On your paper, write each of the twenty nouns that appear in the following paragraph.

Lucy Terry, Poet

The American poet Lucy Terry was born in Africa about 1730. Terry was brought to America at a very young age as an enslaved worker. When she married, she was given her freedom. After her marriage, the poet and her husband settled in Vermont. Terry was known as a storyteller, activist, and orator. However, only one of her poems survived. It is the earliest existing poem by an African American.

Exercise 3 Supplying Abstract and Concrete Nouns

For each concrete noun in items 1–10, write an abstract noun that names an idea with which the concrete noun can be associated. For each abstract noun in items 11–20, write a concrete noun that has the quality of the abstract noun.

SAMPLE ANSWERS astronaut—fearlessness
darkness—cave

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. athlete | 11. authority |
| 2. thunder | 12. truth |
| 3. roses | 13. tranquillity |
| 4. honey | 14. respect |
| 5. toothache | 15. guilt |
| 6. storm | 16. concentration |
| 7. criminal | 17. ability |
| 8. mountain | 18. kindness |
| 9. lion | 19. cooperation |
| 10. explosion | 20. gentleness |

Exercise 4 Completing Sentences with Nouns

On your paper, complete each sentence by filling in the blanks with nouns. Be sure that your completed sentences make sense.

- We discovered four _____ in the dusty _____.
- Ramón's _____ to help others wins my _____.
- A(n) _____ destroyed the _____.
- The _____ soared high over the _____.
- The _____ reminded us of _____.
- We didn't find any _____ in the _____.
- The _____ at the _____ didn't look fresh.
- When I go to the _____, I usually take _____ along.
- The _____ looked different after the _____.
- _____ came into the _____ and asked for a _____.



Exercise 5 Identifying Singular, Plural, and Possessive Nouns

Identify the underlined nouns in each sentence as *singular*, *plural*, *singular possessive*, or *plural possessive*.

Angelina Grimké

1. Angelina Grimké was born in 1805 in the South.
2. Although she was born into a life of privilege, by 1835 she had moved north to join the abolitionists.
3. Ironically, she was a prominent slaveholder's daughter.
4. In 1836 she wrote an appeal to white southern women supporting the abolition of slavery.
5. One year later, Grimké's abolitionist appeal to northerners was published.
6. The abolitionist's writings appeared in pamphlets and journals.
7. This woman's suggestions were not well received in the South.
8. Grimké urged all women to work together as sisters to fight for social justice.
9. When Grimké gave speeches, huge audiences came to listen.
10. The abolitionists' views were effectively disseminated by a woman who could have benefited from slavery but chose to reject it.

Exercise 6 Correcting Singular and Plural Possessive Nouns

Decide whether each underlined possessive noun is written correctly. If it is correct, write *correct* on your paper. If it is incorrect, write the correct form.

SAMPLE Before storing information on a computer, always learn about the systems' backup program.

ANSWER system's

1. Information is stored in a computers' hard drive.
2. A floppy disk's memory is considered external, or secondary.
3. Four worker's computers went down this morning.
4. One of the worker's disks contained records that cannot be duplicated.
5. A technicians' warning about backing up information went unheeded.

Exercise 7 Using Possessive Nouns in Sentences

Write a sentence for each noun, using the form indicated in parentheses.

1. man (plural possessive)
2. writer (singular possessive)
3. teacher (plural possessive)
4. child (plural possessive)
5. student (singular possessive)



Proper and Common Nouns

- A **proper noun** is the name of a particular person, place, thing, or idea.
- A **common noun** is the general—not the particular—name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Proper nouns are capitalized; common nouns are generally not.

PROPER NOUNS	
PERSON	Richard Wright, Connie Chung, Dr. Jonas Salk, Eric the Red
PLACE	Pasadena, Bering Sea, Nicaragua, White House, Saturn
THING	Society of Friends, Titanic, Native Son, Memorial Day, Ford Motor Company
IDEA	Augustan Age, Islam, Romanticism, Jazz Age

Exercise 8 Matching Proper Nouns with Common Nouns

On your paper, match the proper nouns on the left with the common nouns on the right.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. San Antonio | a. month |
| 2. Iroquois | b. president |
| 3. Mark McGwire | c. people |
| 4. Clara Barton | d. landmark |
| 5. December | e. athlete |
| 6. <i>Time</i> | f. author |
| 7. Hawaii | g. state |
| 8. <i>Star Wars</i> | h. city |
| 9. George Washington | i. movie |
| 10. Statue of Liberty | j. magazine |

Exercise 9 Identifying Proper and Common Nouns

On your paper, write each of the twenty-five nouns that appear in the following passage. Identify each noun as proper or common.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights leader and president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, led a demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama, in protest of segregationist practices in the city. The response of the local government was the arrest of many nonviolent marchers. King, who was also arrested, believed in the power of nonviolent resistance. While in jail, he wrote a letter explaining his views on nonviolence. King's direct-action efforts eventually resulted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



Collective Nouns

■ A **collective noun** names a group.

class	(the) faculty
crew	(the) cast
team	(a) herd (of cows)
congregation	(a) swarm (of bees)

A collective noun may be considered either singular or plural. When a collective noun refers to a group as a whole, it is regarded as singular. When a collective noun refers to the individual members of a group, it is regarded as plural.

SINGULAR	The jury has reached a verdict. The cast includes a small chorus.
PLURAL	The jury were unable to agree. The cast are staying at different hotels.

Exercise 10 Identifying Collective Nouns

On your paper, list the five collective nouns in the following paragraph.

A Nature Study

¹Unloading their gear, the band of naturalists set up their tents along the river by the entrance to the cave. ²Nearby a flock of mallards rests quietly in the shallows while a swarm of gnats reels overhead. ³The party are eager to conduct their separate studies of different aspects of this cave, which is noted for its numerous bats. ⁴As they begin their exploration, the naturalists are not disappointed to discover a thriving colony of insect-eating mammals.

Exercise 11 Distinguishing Between Singular and Plural Collective Nouns

On your paper, write the collective noun in each sentence, and label it as *singular* or *plural*.

1. The cast begins rehearsal next week.
2. The Wilson family were discontented with their seating arrangements.
3. After the play, the audience always calls for an encore.
4. A group of people are waiting in line for tickets.
5. After school the faculty plans to hold a meeting about the school play.
6. Since tomorrow is a half-day of school, the stage crew have agreed to go out for lunch somewhere.
7. The audience was disappointed at the replacement of the star by his understudy.
8. In the school yard, the class talk among themselves about the upcoming play.
9. An unruly group of children were running in all directions.
10. A crowd often gathers outside the theater for autographs.



Exercise 12**Review: Distinguishing Nouns from Other Parts of Speech**

On your paper, identify the underlined word in each sentence as *noun* or *not a noun*.

- There is a vast amount of work required in running a restaurant.
- Waiters and waitresses depend on tips as a major part of their salaries.
- Deciding on the tip for a waiter or waitress can be a complicated process.
- Usually, the tip should be between 15 percent and 20 percent of the bill before taxes.
- The success of any restaurant depends a great deal on the talents of the cook.
- Customers who patronize restaurants are often fussy about the way the chef cooks.
- Some diners prefer that the cook roast their meat.
- In addition to a talented chef, a successful restaurant will usually have a unique yet comfortable atmosphere.
- Most people prefer to dine in quiet surroundings.
- Many restaurants will specialize in a particular meal on which they can build their reputation.
- It is not unusual for an eating establishment to be open only for dinner.
- Other restaurants prefer to serve breakfast and lunch and then to close for dinner.
- The number of specialty restaurants continues to grow.
- Fast-food establishments top the list of popular places for the teenage crowd to eat.
- Restaurants that serve fast foods usually have a light and airy atmosphere.
- For formal dinners, the waiter will light a candle on the table.
- Usually restaurants that serve ethnic foods can be found in cities throughout the country.
- Going to Illio's Italian Restaurant is like taking a step into Italy.
- When seated by a window, I always ask for a table in the shade.
- Because of the sunlight, the customer seated next to me asked for the shade to be drawn.

Exercise 13**Review: Proper and Common Nouns**

For each common noun, write an example of a proper noun. For each proper noun, write an example of a common noun.

**SAMPLE
ANSWERS**

city	Hawaii
San Francisco	island

Common nouns

- mountain
- president
- organization
- country
- actor
- friend
- ocean
- teacher
- planet
- holiday

Proper nouns

- Central High School
- Empire State Building
- California
- Elvis Presley
- John P. Gordon, M.D.
- Christine
- Professor Washington
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Titanic*
- Barracudas Swim Team



Exercise 14 Review: Creating Sentences with Nouns

Write five sentences about a close friend. Rely especially on concrete nouns to convey a vivid picture of the person.

Exercise 15 Review: Nouns

On your paper, complete the sentences by filling in the blanks with the kinds of nouns specified in italics. Be sure that your completed sentences make sense.

1. *proper* saw a *common* near the *concrete*.
2. The *abstract* of *common* has always intrigued the *collective*.
3. The *collective* left their *concrete* at *proper*.
4. Two *concrete* stalked a *collective* of *common*.
5. The young *collective* spent a long, lazy *common* on their *concrete*.
6. *proper* was the best *common* of his *collective*.
7. *abstract* is a(n) *abstract*.
8. *plural possessive* thoughts sometimes wander.
9. *proper* brought *singular possessive* books into the house.
10. The *collective* decided to go to the *common* after all.
11. We saw the *plural* on our *concrete*.
12. Have you seen *singular possessive plural*?
13. *Proper* wants to become a(n) *common* in the *abstract*.
14. A(n) *singular* flew over the *concrete*.
15. *Proper* was a(n) *common* of the *collective* in *proper*.
16. *Plural* and *plural* make good *common*.
17. The last *singular* in the *concrete* is a(n) *common*.
18. Do you ever dream of *abstract*?
19. The *plural possessive* new *concrete* is the talk of the *common*.
20. *Abstract* is the *abstract* of the *abstract*.
21. Did the *collective* of the *proper* win the *common*?
22. The *singular* was broken for three *plural*.
23. The *concrete* talked to the *plural possessive* club about *abstract*.
24. *Proper* found *singular possessive singular* in the *concrete*.
25. The *collective* spent their *common* in *proper*.
26. The *proper* is famous for its *concrete*.
27. The *plural* of two famous *concrete* are celebrated in February.
28. Many *plural* are fascinated by the *concrete* in the *proper*.
29. The *abstract* of a hurricane can damage *concrete*, *concrete*, and *concrete*.
30. The *collective* that plays in *proper* is called the *proper*.
31. A *common* is a *common* that names a *concrete*, *concrete*, *concrete*, or *abstract*.
32. What is your favorite musical *collective*?
33. Did *singular possessive concrete* ask you to give the *concrete* a *common*?
34. Our *abstract* is important to me.
35. I tried to help the *proper* with their *plural*.

