

FOUNDATIONAL GRAMMAR

LESSON ONE: NOUNS and PRONOUNS

Nouns

The first part of speech we will look at is the noun. A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

Person: sister, brother, friends, relatives, teachers, etc.

Place: kitchen, bedroom, province, country, Mexico, etc.

Thing: book, bag, apple, etc.

Idea: love, peace, happiness, charity, etc.

* Many times, the words a, an, the, my, your, our, their give you a signal that a noun is coming in a sentence. *

Nouns can be classified in two ways: *proper* vs. *common* AND *abstract* vs. *concrete*.

Proper vs. Common Nouns

A *proper noun* always begins with a capital letter, and names a special person, place, or thing.

Eg: Bob, Alberta, United States.

A *common noun* does not begin with a capital, and names a person, place, thing or idea, does not say which particular one.

Eg: “boy” would be a common noun; Bob would be a proper noun.

Abstract vs. Concrete Nouns

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

Eg: peace, pride, civilization, honor, beauty, justice, imagination, loneliness, etc.

Abstract nouns can name emotion/feelings, states/attributes, ideas/concepts/ideals, and movements/events.

Can you think of examples of each category listed above?

A *concrete noun* names an object that can be perceived by the senses.

Eg: star, whisper, rocks, cinnamon, air, rain, car, etc.

Sometimes it can be difficult to recognize when the noun is abstract because there are a number of words that can function in different ways. For example, some words might function as verbs in some cases and abstract nouns in other cases. *Love* and *taste* are two examples.

Eg.

I *love* my husband. [In this sentence, the word “love” expresses an action and is therefore acting as a verb.]

Send them my *love*. [In this sentence, the word “love” functions as an abstract noun because it is a thing that exists beyond the five senses.]

Sarah could *taste* cilantro in the salsa. [In this sentence, the helping verb “could” functions with “taste” to illustrate action. She can physically taste the salsa.]

Sarah has great *taste* in clothes. [In this sentence, taste functions in an abstract manner. Taste refers to her preferences.]

Collective Nouns

Collective nouns name a group.

Eg: Jury, band, family, church

What are some other examples?

Also note: sometimes nouns can be composed of more than one word: roller coaster, attorney general, Dollar Tree, New Hampshire

Simple Subjects

In every sentence, there is something called the simple subject, and that is the main word that tells who or what a sentence is about. The simple subject is always a noun or pronoun.

If you read a sentence and ask yourself “Who or what is this sentence about? or “Who or what is doing something?” this will help you find the simple subject.

Eg:

Mary went to the zoo.

Who is that sentence about? Who is doing something? The simple subject must answer both of these.

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun.

Some pronouns are:

I, she, he, we, they, me, him, her, us, them, you, it.

Eg:

- Molly is very nice. She gave me some candy. ["She" is a pronoun that takes the place of "Molly"]

- Travis got his Birthday Wish. ["His" is a pronoun that takes the place of "Travis"]

An **antecedent** is the noun for which the pronoun stands. Look at the sentences above.

- "She" stands in for "Molly." So "Molly" is the antecedent of "she."

- "His" stands in for "Travis." So "Travis" is the antecedent of "his."

The pronouns *I, he, she, we, they* are used as subjects of sentences. They take the place of nouns which might have been the subjects.

These five pronouns also change forms when they perform different jobs in the sentence. For example: You would not say: "Dad drove I to school." You would say "Dad drove me to school." *Me* is taking the place of a noun which would have been a direct object. (We will learn more about noun jobs in future lessons.)

I = me

he = him

she = her

we = us

they = them

You should also be aware of the *possessive* form of pronouns. Possession shows ownership over something. Eg: Her bike; Their family

I = my/mine

you = your/yours

he = his

she = her/hers

it = its
we = our/ours
they = their/theirs

Interrogative Pronouns are used in questions. They are:

Who
Whom
Which
Whose
What

Eg.

Who borrowed by pen?

Which do you prefer?

They can also be used in non-question form **along with other words (that, this, these, those)** that point to something else they stand in for:

Eg.

The man, **who** had gone to the store, went home again.

The stone **which** the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

These are the ones I want.

The dog **that** I like is over there.

The girl, **whose** candy I had stolen, began to cry.

The classes I want to take are **those**.

This is the best day ever.

There is also a special kind of pronoun that doesn't ever have an antecedent that is called an *indefinite pronoun*. Most indefinite pronouns express the idea of quantity: *all, few, none*.

Examples of commonly used indefinite pronouns:

All	everybody	no one	another	everyone	one	anyone
Any	few	other	anybody	many	several	someone
Most	some	both	neither	somebody	each	nobody
Either	none	such				

Eg.

Most of the people talk in class.

Everyone favors a weekly tutorial.

Singular vs. Plural Nouns and Pronouns

A word that refers to one person or thing is *singular* in number. A word that refers to more than one is *plural* in number.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Car	Cars
Ox	Oxen
This	These
Either	Both
He, she, it	They

Some nouns change from singular to plural simply by adds –s or –es [such as Cars, above], while others change form entirely when they become plural [He becomes They]. Still others are the same both in singular and plural [Moose, You, Pajamas, Scissors, Salmon, etc.]