

# The Noun

## 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** Robert Frost, sister, governor, Dr. Muñoz

**PLACES** classroom, Seattle, Carlsbad Caverns, store

**THINGS** tree, desk, Statue of Liberty

**IDEAS** honesty, envy, self-esteem, freedom

Did you notice that some nouns are made up of more than one word? A **compound noun** is a single noun made up of two or more words. The compound noun may be written as one word, as a hyphenated word, or as two or more words.

**ONE WORD** bookcase, basketball, hourglass

**HYPHENATED WORD** brother-in-law, great-uncle, warm-up

**TWO WORDS** lieutenant governor, Miami Beach, parking lot

**TIP** To decide whether a word is a noun, try placing the word in the blank in one of the following sentences. If the word makes sense in the sentence, then the word is probably a noun.

**EXAMPLES** I got a new \_\_\_\_\_. or I like \_\_\_\_\_.  
I got a new computer. I like honesty.

**EXERCISE A** Underline each noun in the sentences below. Hint: Remember to underline all parts of a compound noun.

**Examples** 1. Brandon and his stepfather live in Colorado Springs. [*Brandon and stepfather name people. Colorado Springs names a place.*]

2. This city in Colorado is near Pike National Forest. [*City names a thing. Colorado and Pike National Forest name places.*]

1. Pikes Peak is a high mountaintop in the Rocky Mountains. [Which words name places or things?]
2. This range of mountains lies to the west of Colorado Springs. [Which words name places or things?]
3. Many people enjoy the view from Pikes Peak, which is 14,110 feet in height.
4. Brandon and his great-grandfather often drive through the countryside.
5. These trips give the two men great happiness.
6. Wild animals such as elk and marmots live in the mountains.
7. Marmots are small, furry animals that have small ears, a short tail, and strong claws.
8. Many small rodents, such as chipmunks, can be very cute.

GO ON 

9. However, forest rangers warn hikers that wild animals can carry diseases.
10. Visitors must not give food to the wildlife or touch the animals.

### Common Nouns and Proper Nouns

You may have noticed that some nouns are capitalized and others are not. A **common noun** names any one of a group of persons, places, things, or ideas. A common noun is generally not capitalized. A **proper noun** names a particular person, place, thing, or idea. A proper noun begins with a capital letter. Proper nouns are often made up of more than one word.

**COMMON NOUNS** poet, state, book, religion

**PROPER NOUNS** Emily Dickinson, North Carolina, *Number the Stars*, Islam

**TIP** To identify a proper noun, try placing *a* or *an* in front of the noun. If *a* or *an* does not make sense in front of the noun, the noun is probably a proper noun. For example, *a Mount Rushmore* doesn't make sense. Therefore, *Mount Rushmore* is a proper noun.

**EXERCISE B** Identify each of the following nouns as a common noun or a proper noun. On the line provided, write *C* for *common noun* or *P* for *proper noun*.

**Examples**   C   1. guitar [*Guitar* names a general thing and is not capitalized.]

  P   2. Central Park [*Central Park* names a specific place and is capitalized.]

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. *Summer of the Monkeys* [specific thing or not a specific thing?]

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. friend [specific person or not a specific person?]

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. Coretta Scott King

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. ex-president

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. notebook

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. Civil War

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. high school

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. Canada

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. Golden Gate Bridge

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. song

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. swarm

\_\_\_\_\_ 22. wasp

\_\_\_\_\_ 23. "John Henry"

\_\_\_\_\_ 24. Emily Dickinson

\_\_\_\_\_ 25. Ms. Valdez

\_\_\_\_\_ 26. dentist

\_\_\_\_\_ 27. "The Stone"

\_\_\_\_\_ 28. kitten

\_\_\_\_\_ 29. cow

\_\_\_\_\_ 30. Smokey