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PART A:
LANGUAGE
STRUCTURES AND
CONVENTIONS

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Section 1: Sentence structures and conventions

Parts of speech

The English language has eight parts of speech.

A summary of the eight parts of speech in English	
Part of speech	What the part of speech looks like and its function
Nouns	words for people, places, things and ideas, such as 'Xolani', 'Polokwane', 'Kirstenbosch', 'parties' and 'love'
Pronouns	little words, such as 'he', 'she' or 'it', that stand in the place of the full names of people, places and things
Determiners	little words, such as 'a', 'the', 'some', 'many', 'much' and 'few', that come in front of some nouns
Adjectives	words that describe nouns, such as 'big', 'round' and 'new'
Verbs	words that describe actions, such as 'sing', 'laugh' and 'learn', or show that something exists, such as 'is' and 'was'
Adverbs	words that give more information about a verb – how it happened, when it happened or where it happened – such as 'carefully', 'yesterday' and 'there'
Prepositions	little words that show where things are in relation to each other, such as 'on', 'under' and 'from'
Conjunctions	words that join different ideas in a sentence, such as 'and', 'but' and 'therefore'

- 1 Divide the sentences into their parts of speech. The first four words of sentence (a) have been done as an example for you.
- I like gospel music, although my father prefers jazz, especially by musicians from South Africa.
 - The Olympic Games are held regularly, every four years, and feature many sports including athletics.
 - A paperback book is usually cheaper than a hardcover book, because it costs less to produce.
 - The devastating fire, which started when a paraffin stove overturned, burnt down five houses.

Parts of speech	Sentence a	Sentence b	Sentence c	Sentence d
Nouns	music			
Pronouns	I			
Determiners				
Adjectives	gospel			
Verbs	like			
Adverbs				
Prepositions				
Conjunctions				

- 2 Use some of the words from the table you have filled in to write two sentences of your own. Circle each word and label it according to what part of speech it is.

Nouns

Nouns identify and name people, places, things and ideas. There are three main groups of nouns:

- Countable (or concrete) nouns
- Uncountable nouns
- Abstract nouns.

Countable (or concrete) nouns

Countable or concrete nouns identify and name whatever we can see, touch, smell, weigh or measure. Look at the examples.

child bicycle newspaper Donovan Tshwane teacher apple

Countable or concrete nouns are divided into two groups.

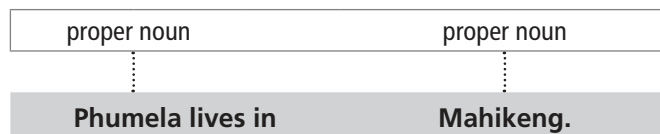
Common nouns

Common nouns identify people, places or things. Look at the example.



Proper nouns

Proper nouns name people, places or things. Look at the example.



Uncountable nouns

Uncountable nouns identify and name whatever we can see, touch, weigh and measure, but not count. Look at the examples.

food grass sugar water

Abstract nouns

Abstract nouns identify and name what we know exists, but cannot touch, smell, weigh or measure. Look at the examples.

justice love wisdom sadness hatred

1 Use the table below to group the nouns.

people	love	concert	freedom
Sibongile	Limpopo River	kindness	traffic
rice	music	car	Soweto
album	bravery	Mthatha	Islam
Hot Water	guitar	Afrikaner	
pride	friend	Italy	

Concrete nouns		Abstract nouns
Proper nouns	Common nouns	

2 Study the sentences about the *Thinker*.

- Rewrite the sentences, inserting capital letters where appropriate to show proper nouns.
- List the abstract nouns in the sentences.

Some words, such as 'china', can be used as both a proper and a common noun.



A map of China



Tea in a china cup

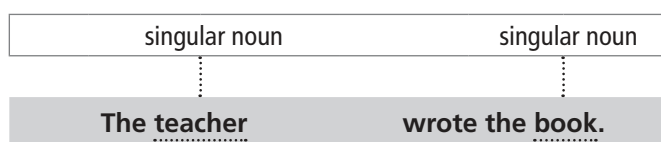
The thinker is a bronze sculpture by Auguste Rodin. It shows a male figure sitting on a rock with his chin resting on one hand as though deep in thought, and is often used as an image to represent wisdom and philosophy. The sculpture is kept in the Rodin Museum.

Nouns and number

Most nouns are used with a word expressing number, because they can be singular or they can be plural.

Singular nouns

Singular nouns refer to one person, place, thing or idea. Look at the example.



Uncountable and abstract nouns are always singular.

Uncountable nouns and abstract nouns are used in the singular form. Study the examples.

Examples of uncountable nouns		Examples of abstract nouns	
air	milk	anger	hope
cheese	music	beauty	knowledge
equipment	news	bravery	love
evidence	paper	courage	loyalty
food	rice	curiosity	peace
furniture	sand	democracy	pride
garbage	soap	faith	success
grass	software	fear	sympathy
homework	sugar	freedom	trust
luggage	traffic	friendship	truth
meat	water	generosity	wisdom

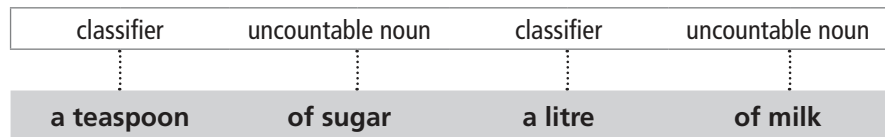
- 3 Complete the sentences with uncountable nouns or abstract nouns from the table.
- I poured out the _____ from both buckets.
 - The police used the _____ to arrest the suspects.
 - I cannot measure the _____ I feel for you.
 - I could hear _____ coming from the house on the opposite side of the road.
 - Our _____ has lasted since we first became friends ten years ago.
 - How much _____ do you take in your tea?
 - In a _____ all citizens are allowed to vote in the elections.
 - Her _____ made her donate a lot of money to the orphanage.
- 4 Complete each sentence with one countable noun and one uncountable noun from the box. You may use each noun once only.

bacon	crimes	software	books	fuel	eggs	literature
computer	car	corruption				

- We should record how much _____ the _____ uses on each trip.
- I had to read many, many _____ while I was studying _____.
- I'm making breakfast, so how many _____ do you want, and how much _____?
- Petty _____ are solved by the police, while massive _____ is ignored.
- Have you installed much _____ on your _____ yet?

Uncountable nouns and classifiers

Classifiers are used with uncountable nouns to show quantity. Study the examples.

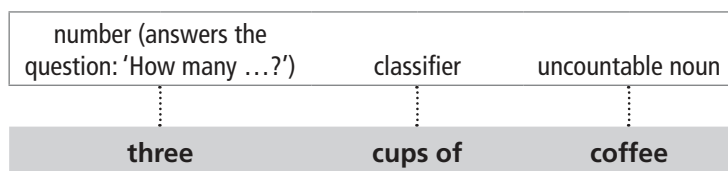
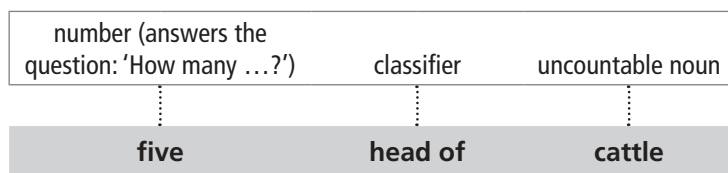


Some common uncountable nouns and their classifiers:

- a ball of wool
- a bar of soap
- a drop of rain
- a loaf of bread
- a pinch of salt
- a slice of bread
- a bar of chocolate
- a clove of garlic
- a glass of water
- a piece of paper
- a roll of toilet paper
- a tube of toothpaste

We can add count words to phrases with a classifier and an uncountable noun to show the quantity of the uncountable noun. For example: one tube of toothpaste; three bars of soap.

Classifiers can also show the quantity (how many) of an uncountable noun. Study the examples.



- 5 Complete the sentences with suitable classifiers and uncountable nouns from the above list.
- During the drought, we did not have a single _____.
 - Please could you give me a _____ because I am very thirsty.
 - The recipe says you must add a _____ and a _____.
 - Do you have a _____ for me? I want to brush my teeth.

Plural nouns

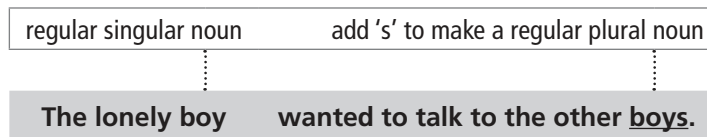
Plural nouns refer to more than one person, place, thing or idea. Look at the example.



Making regular plural nouns

Adding 's'

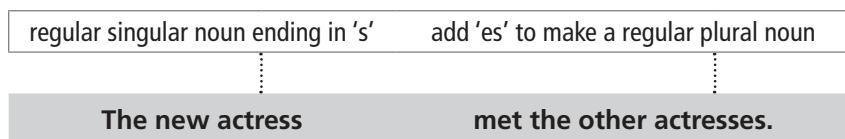
Add an 's' to the end of a regular singular noun to make it plural. Use this pattern, unless the regular singular noun is an exception (e.g. nouns ending in 'o'). Look at the example.



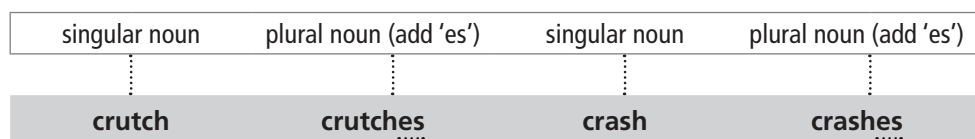
- 6 Add 's' to the end of the regular singular nouns to change them into regular plural nouns.
- | | |
|----------|---------|
| a) car | d) star |
| b) hand | e) shoe |
| c) award | |

Adding 'es'

Add 'es' to the end of a regular singular noun that ends in 's' to make it plural. Look at the example.



Add 'es' to the end of regular singular nouns that end in '-ch' or '-sh' to make them plural. Study the examples.

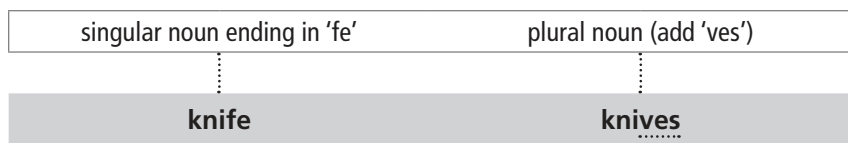


Adding ‘ves’

Remove the ‘f’ at the end of a regular singular noun and add ‘ves’ to make it plural. Study the example.



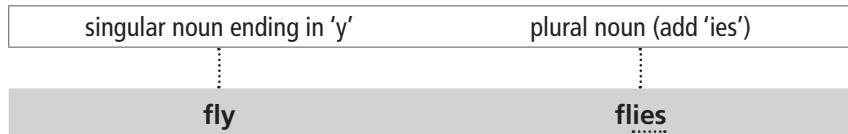
Change the ‘fe’ at the end of a regular singular noun into ‘ves’ to make it plural. Study the example.



- 7 Change the regular singular nouns into regular plural nouns.
- a) beach
 - b) wife
 - c) manageress
 - d) splash
 - e) loaf

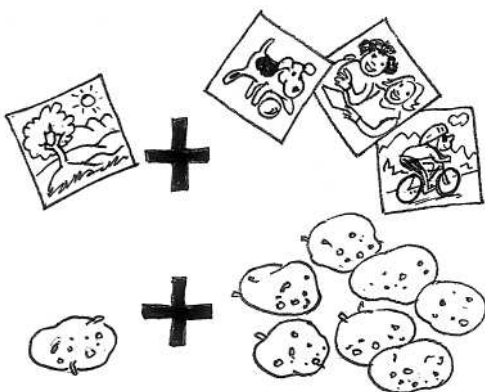
Adding ‘ies’

Remove the ‘y’ at the end of a regular singular noun and add ‘ies’ to make it plural. Study the example.



Nouns ending in ‘o’

Add ‘s’ or ‘es’ to the end of singular nouns that end in ‘o’. Study the examples in the table.



Singular nouns ending in ‘o’			
Add only an ‘s’ to change to plural		Add ‘es’ to change to plural	
photo	photos	hero	heroes
piano	pianos	echo	echoes
cello	cellos	potato	potatoes
studio	studios	tomato	tomatoes
logo	logos	avocado	avocadoes

Be careful when changing singular nouns that end in ‘o’ into plurals.

Irregular plural nouns

Some nouns in English are irregular. These nouns have irregular plural forms.

Irregular nouns	
Irregular singular nouns	Irregular plural nouns
child	children
criterion	criteria
die	dice
foot	feet
goose	geese
louse	lice
man	men
medium	media
memorandum	memoranda
mouse	mice
ox	oxen
person	people
tooth	teeth
woman	women

Irregular nouns that are the same in their singular and plural forms

Some irregular nouns stay the same in their singular and plural forms.

Irregular nouns that have the same singular and plural form	
Irregular singular nouns	Irregular plural nouns
fish	fish
sheep	sheep
deer	deer
offspring	offspring

Irregular nouns that have only a plural form

Some irregular nouns have only a plural form, which is used for the singular form as well.



If your eyesight is not good, you should wear glasses.

Irregular nouns that only have a plural form	
Irregular singular nouns	Irregular plural nouns
binoculars	binoculars
clothes	clothes
glasses	glasses
jeans	jeans
pliers	pliers
pyjamas	pyjamas
scissors	scissors
shorts	shorts

Some irregular nouns that have only a plural form are often used with the expression ‘a pair of’ because they refer to things that are made up of two parts. Look at the examples.

a pair of glasses a pair of goggles a pair of jeans
 a pair of scissors a pair of trousers

- 8 Change the singular nouns in brackets into plural nouns. Change other parts of speech if required so that the sentences are grammatically correct.
- The (learner) looked at the (star) through a (telescope).
 - The hall where the meeting took place was filled with (man), (woman) and (child).
 - While I was looking after the (goose) last week, I saw the (mouse) that our cat has been unable to catch.
 - We put the (yoke) over the (neck) of the (ox) before we took them to plough the (field).
 - If you want to catch some big (fish) you will need a big hook.
 - We planted (tomato) and (pumpkin) in our school garden.
 - The (student) took (photo) of the (hero).
 - How many (sheep) does the farmer graze on her (field)?

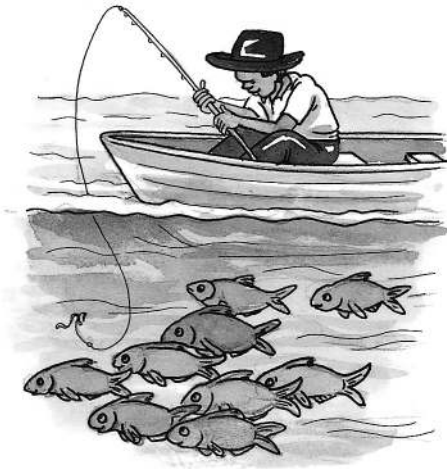
Collective nouns

Collective nouns define a group or collection of people, animals or things. Collective nouns can be singular or plural. Look at the examples.



Here are some common collective nouns.

Some common collective nouns			
Collective noun	Phrase	Collective noun	Phrase
a herd	a herd of elephants	a bunch	a bunch of bananas
	a herd of deer		a bunch of grapes
	a herd of cattle		a bunch of flowers
a pack	a pack of wolves		a bunch of keys
	a pack of dogs	a gaggle	a gaggle of geese
a flock	a flock of birds	a litter	a litter of kittens
	a flock of sheep		a litter of puppies
a swarm	a swarm of bees	a crowd/a group	a crowd/a group of people
	a swarm of flies	a gang	a gang of thieves
a pride	a pride of lions	a pile	a pile of rubbish



A school (or shoal) of fish

9 Complete the following phrases by using the collective nouns in the box.

gaggle school flock litter bunch

- a) a _____ of flowers
- b) a _____ of sheep
- c) a _____ of geese
- d) a _____ of fish
- e) a _____ of puppies

Nouns showing gender

Some nouns in English show gender. These are called masculine and feminine nouns.

Masculine	Feminine
actor	actress
author	authoress
bachelor	spinster
boy	girl
groom	bride
brother	sister
conductor	conductress
count	countess
dad	mum
daddy	mummy
duke	duchess
emperor	empress
father	mother
god	goddess
grandfather	grandmother
heir	heiress
hero	heroine
host	hostess
husband	wife
king	queen
man	woman
master	mistress
murderer	murderess
nephew	niece
poet	poetess
policeman	policewoman
prince	princess
sir	madam
son	daughter
uncle	aunt
waiter	waitress
wizard	witch