



Week One: Vocabulary

Lesson & Assignments: Introduce New List

Assignment 1: Read the list of vocabulary words below. Then, using a dictionary as needed, match the vocabulary words with their definitions listed in the definition bank on the next page. Write each vocabulary word, follow it with a punctuation mark such as a hyphen or colon, and then write the definition.

e.g.

1. *to eat* – to put (food) into the mouth and chew and swallow it

Vocabulary Words –

1. belittle
2. bellow
3. chuckle
4. engrave
5. intention
6. linger
7. modest
8. ominous
9. solemn
10. unsuitable

Definition Bank	
to laugh softly or in a half-suppressed manner	to cut a design or lettering into (a hard, flat surface)
not appropriate or fitting; unbecoming	to shout loudly and with a deep tone
to remain, or to be slow to leave	serious or grave in appearance, sound, or mood
indicating or threatening future evil or unpleasantness	not boastful or outgoing; somewhat shy or reserved
to make (someone or something) seem less in size, value, or importance; depreciate	a decided course of action; plan



Week One: Grammar

Lesson & Assignments: Nouns

The English language has eight parts of speech. We will begin with the **noun**. What is a noun? ***A noun names a person, place, thing, or idea.***

ABSTRACT & CONCRETE NOUNS –

We can separate nouns into two main groups: **concrete nouns** and **abstract nouns**.

Concrete nouns are nouns that we can touch with our hands, see with our eyes, smell with our nose, hear with our ears, or taste with our tongue. In other words, we use one or more of our five senses to experience the concrete noun.

Think about a cake. You can see the cake with your eyes, smell it with your nose, taste it with your tongue, and touch it with your hands. The cake may be chocolate with green frosting that smells like peppermint. When you touch it, the frosting is sticky and the cake is soft. If you put a bite of cake in your mouth, you can taste the chocolate and peppermint flavors mixed together. *Cake* is a concrete noun.

How about a drum? You can see the drum with your eyes, hear it with your ears, and touch it with your hands. The drum may be big and painted red. If you hit it with a stick, it will make a loud noise. When you touch it, you realize it is very heavy because it is so big. *Drum* is a concrete noun.

The other type of noun is an abstract noun. This is a noun that we cannot see, hear, feel, touch, or taste.

Happiness is an example of this. We cannot see, hear, smell, touch, or taste happiness. It is an idea or a concept. You cannot say what color happiness is or what it tastes like. If you tried to touch happiness, you would have a very hard time doing that because there is nothing to touch. Does happiness have a smell? No. *Happiness* is an abstract noun. *Freedom* and *liberty* are two other examples of abstract nouns. Abstract nouns do not have color, sound, taste, etc.

Assignment 1A: Write whether each noun below is a concrete noun or an abstract noun. Write C for concrete nouns and A for abstract nouns.

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. ice cream | 6. peace | 11. bed |
| 2. excitement | 7. socks | 12. bravery |
| 3. tractor | 8. fear | 13. pencil |
| 4. flower | 9. cat | 14. book |
| 5. computer | 10. friendship | 15. faith |

Assignment 1B: Write down five concrete nouns and five abstract nouns. Remember to ask yourself if you use one or more of your five senses (sight, smell, sound, taste, or touch) to experience the noun.

CONCRETE NOUNS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

ABSTRACT NOUNS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

COMMON NOUNS –

You can categorize nouns by abstract and concrete. But, there is also another way to categorize nouns: **common nouns** and **proper nouns**. We will start by naming some nouns:

mother	mailman	summer	playground	toy
bicycle	dog	uncle	fireman	kitchen
zoo	car	paper	tree	pumpkin

Notice that these nouns do not start with a capital letter. ***That is because they are not naming a specific person, place, thing, or idea.*** We call these types of nouns **common nouns** or **improper nouns**. ***We use common nouns when we are not referring to something by a specific name.***

For example, all of the underlined words in these sentences are common nouns:

A mother takes care of her children.
A playground can be very big.
A car has four tires.

The toy is old.
The kitchen needs to be cleaned.
The tree will be cut down.

A fireman puts out fires.

The summer is hot.

A dog barks.

The mailman brings letters.

In these sentences, none of the nouns listed have a specific name. They are **common nouns**.

Assignment 1C: Underline the common nouns in the following sentences. Some sentences contain only one common noun, while other sentences contain two common nouns.

1. The child played in the rain.
2. They had a box of candy.
3. The bed was soft.
4. He wears a red shirt.
5. The tree is tall.
6. A cat hunts mice.
7. The road was long.
8. The shoes were small.
9. The table was set for dinner.
10. She wanted a doll.
11. The cup fell from the counter.
12. The family moved into their home.
13. The computer ran slowly.
14. The bookshelf is full of books.
15. My mother is beautiful.
16. The clock is brown.

PROPER NOUNS –

In the previous section, we talked about common or improper nouns. These were nouns that did not have a specific name.

But, what if we decided to talk about a specific person, place, or thing? What kind of noun would that be? That would be a **proper noun**. *A proper noun is a noun with a specific name.* It is important to know that *a proper noun always begins with a capital letter.*

Here are some examples of proper nouns:

Saturday	Mr. Watson	Zach	Amy	Highland Park
Texas	Nile River	Fido	France	Monday
Mary	Bell Theater	Boston	Australia	June

The following categories are always proper nouns.

1. Names of people and pets:

Mrs. Edwards David Snoopy Garfield

2. Names of places and buildings:

Madrid, Spain	Main Street	Washington Monument
Lake Ontario	Alaska	Pacific Ocean

3. Names of books, movies, newspapers, and magazines:

Charlotte's Web	Toy Story	The Orlando Times
Highlights	Monsters, Inc.	

4. Names of holidays, days of the week, and months:

Christmas	Sunday	April
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving	Friday

5. Names of languages:

Spanish	English	French	Italian
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6. Names of companies and brand names:

Google	Pepsi	Nike	Apple
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7. Titles of people when used in front of their names:

President Lincoln	King George	Captain Hook
Judge Peterson	Prince William	Doctor McNeish

But do not capitalize these titles when used alone. For example:

- “My uncle is a judge for the county.”
- “The doctor returned my phone call.”

8. Names of religions:

Baptist	Protestant	Jewish	Catholic
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SOME CONFUSING NOUNS –

Two groups of nouns that can be confusing when it comes to capitalizing them are the seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter) and directions (north, south, east, west).

- The general rule for seasons is that you do not capitalize them unless they start a sentence or are part of the name of an event such as the "Winter Olympics."
- The rule for directions is also easy. If you are referring to a specific part or location of the country (such as *the South*, *the Northwest*, *the East*), then you should capitalize the noun. But, if you are just referring to a general direction, then do not capitalize the noun (such as *north of town*, *southeast of my house*, *go west on Woolridge Rd.*).

Assignment 1D: Write whether the following nouns are common (C) or proper (P). Correct the capitalization of the proper nouns.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. mississippi river | 11. the road |
| 2. the cat | 12. lake erie |
| 3. the house | 13. pepsi |
| 4. chinese | 14. king edwards |
| 5. the kitchen | 15. north |
| 6. susan | 16. the summer olympics |
| 7. winter | 17. the phone |
| 8. monday | 18. taylor |
| 9. protestant | 19. australia |
| 10. the south | 20. doctor |

Assignment 1E: Write five common nouns and five proper nouns of your own.

COMMON NOUNS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

PROPER NOUNS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Week One: Writing

Lesson & Assignments: Review of the Paragraph

This year in writing, we will focus on the concept of summary and narrative writing, in addition to composition writing. However, to begin any of these types of writing, you must first be able to write a paragraph. Therefore, on this first week, we are going to review the paragraph.

Remember, paragraphs are groups of sentences that express one main idea. They help us to be able to describe or explain more detail and eventually write compositions like essays, research papers, book reports, and stories.

A paragraph should always contain a clear topic sentence. This first sentence tells the reader exactly what the paragraph will be about. After this first sentence, you should write approximately two to four detail sentences that provide more information about the topic. Finally, you should write a concluding sentence that restates the topic or something interesting or important about the topic.

For your current skill level, your paragraphs should be approximately three to five sentences in length. But remember, the most important component of your paragraphs is unity. That is, every sentence must work together to express the main idea in the topic sentence. Your paragraphs should contain no unnecessary details.

Let us look at two examples:

- **GOOD PARAGRAPH:** Baseball is a great sport. Two teams of nine players compete against each other. The pitcher on one team throws the ball to a batter on the other team. The batter tries to hit the ball. If the batter hits the ball, he tries to run around three bases back to home plate while players on the other team try to catch the ball and tag the batter. Although there are a lot of rules and the games can be long, baseball is a great sport.
- **POOR PARAGRAPH:** Baseball is a great sport. Figure skating is also a really cool sport. Two teams of nine players compete against each other. The pitcher on one team throws the ball to a

batter on the other team. The batter tries to hit the ball. If the batter hits the ball, he tries to run around three bases back to home plate while players on the other team try to catch the ball and tag the batter. Although there are a lot of rules and the games can be long, baseball is a great sport, although I really like figure skating much better.

The first paragraph is good because it has a clear topic sentence, and every detail sentence goes on to explain more information about the sport of baseball. The concluding sentence states something interesting/important about baseball, but also restates the idea that baseball is a great sport.

The second paragraph is nearly identical, but it is poorly constructed because the writer adds two sentences about figure skating. These sentences have nothing to do with explaining information about baseball. These distract the reader from the main idea of the paragraph. These are unnecessary details and should be eliminated.

FORMATTING 101 –

1. Write one sentence after another without adding spaces or starting over on a new line.

Look at the examples below:

Incorrect:

Last weekend, we went to a baseball game.

The game was between the Rochester Red Wings and the Norfolk Tides.

The Red Wings played very well, and we really enjoyed watching the game.

During the seventh inning stretch, we got ice cream like we always do.

The Red Wings won the game easily, but it was late so we did not stay for the fireworks.

Baseball games are one of our favorite parts of summer.

Correct:

Last weekend, we went to a baseball game. The game was between the Rochester Red Wings and the Norfolk Tides. The Red Wings played very well, and we really enjoyed watching the game.

During the seventh inning stretch, we got ice cream like we always do. The Red Wings won the game easily, but it was late so we did not stay for the fireworks. Baseball games are one of our favorite parts of summer.

2. Indent the first line of the paragraph or put a complete space in between each paragraph to make it clear to the reader that you are beginning a new paragraph. See the examples below:

Incorrect:

Pocahontas led an active life with her tribe. She was born around 1595, a Powhatan Native American. This tribe had a population of about 15,000. She had approximately forty siblings, but she was her father's favorite daughter. Most of Pocahontas' time was spent doing active things, like running, doing cartwheels, and playing games. She also had many chores that only women and girls did, like making baskets, taking care of the babies, and building huts. During her childhood settlers came to the Chesapeake and built Jamestown.

Pocahontas' teen years were filled with ups and downs. Pocahontas' best-known story is when she saved Captain John Smith's life in 1607. After this John Smith and she became friends. With this new friendship Pocahontas brought food to the starving colony many times throughout her preteen and early teen years.

Correct:

Pocahontas led an active life with her tribe. She was born around 1595, a Powhatan Native American. This tribe had a population of about 15,000. She had approximately forty siblings, but she was her father's favorite daughter. Most of Pocahontas' time was spent doing active things, like running, doing cartwheels, and playing games. She also had many chores that only women and girls did, like making baskets, taking care of the babies, and building huts. During her childhood settlers came to the Chesapeake and built Jamestown.

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OR:

Pocahontas led an active life with her tribe. She was born around 1595, a Powhatan Native American. This tribe had a population of about 15,000. She had approximately forty siblings, but she was her father's favorite daughter. Most of Pocahontas' time was spent doing active things, like running, doing cartwheels, and playing games. She also had many chores that only women and girls did, like making baskets, taking care of the babies, and building huts. During her childhood settlers

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NOTE: *Indenting* your paragraphs when you are handwriting is easy. You should just start writing a little bit further in on the first sentence. If you are typing your paragraphs, the easiest way to indent your paragraph is to press the “tab” button. It should look something like this on your keyboard:



There is one additional formatting rule you should know about: justifying text. This means to make the right side of the text even to create a straight line. Please note that using justified text is common only in newspaper or magazine writing. Justified text can be used per preference (as you may see in our lesson material), but it is not commonly accepted in academic writing (paper writing for school or college) nor commonly used for web writing. See the examples below:

Not Justified Text:

To make an apple pie, you will first need to peel and slice four to six large apples. Then, you should mix the apples with some sugar, flour, and cinnamon. Pour the apples into an unbaked pie crust. Dot the top with butter. Cut a design into the top pie crust, lay it on top of the pie, and pinch and trim the edges to make a tight seal. Place the pie on a baking sheet to avoid spills. Bake the pie in a 350 degree oven for about an hour.

Justified Text:

To make an apple pie, you will first need to peel and slice four to six large apples. Then, you should mix the apples with some sugar, flour, and cinnamon. Pour the apples into an unbaked pie crust. Dot the top with butter. Cut a design into the top pie crust, lay it on top of the pie, and pinch and trim the edges to make a tight seal. Place the pie on a baking sheet to avoid spills. Bake the pie in a 350 degree oven for about an hour.

NOTE: To straight align your text in a word processor, choose the justify icon. You should see these four options somewhere at the top of your word processing program.



align left



center



align right



justify

Above all, remember that your paragraphs must contain the following:

- Correct formatting, including connected sentences and an indented first line
- A topic sentence and a clear main idea
- Good supporting details that describe or explain the topic sentence
- A concluding sentence that restates the topic clearly and (1) expresses an emotion, thought, or opinion about the topic sentence; or (2) says something interesting or important about the topic.

Assignment 1: Write **four** paragraphs of your own, each on a different topic. You may choose any paragraph types you wish (descriptive, how-to, explanatory, narrative). Each paragraph should be four to six sentences long.

Ensure that you use appropriate formatting. In each paragraph, write one sentence after the other, indent the first line, and left-align the text. Justified text is optional but not required.



Week One: Literature

Lesson & Assignments: Elements of Literature

Reading and writing go hand in hand. Reading can both entertain and educate us. In addition, reading can make us stronger writers, by showing us how other writers choose words, construct their sentences, and express their ideas. Writing allows us to demonstrate that we understand what we have read, and in addition, can help us to understand what we have read even better.

Although written responses can be created for both fiction and non-fiction works, this class focuses entirely on fiction works. Fiction works are those that are written from one's imagination and not necessarily from fact.

To understand fiction and how to respond to it, you should first become familiar with story elements – these are the components that you will find in all fiction works you read.

- The **title** is the name of the story – a simple but important element!
- The **author** is the person who wrote the story.
- The **plot** is what happens in the story-the beginning, middle, and end.
- The **characters** are the people in the story, who the story is about.
- The **setting** of the story is the location and time in which it takes place.
- The **theme** is the main idea of the story.
- The **conflict** is the major problem or issue in the story.
- The **resolution** is how that problem or issue is solved.

Remember, every story will contain these elements. Sometimes, the elements are easy to find and sometimes, you really have to look hard. However, when we take the time to look at each element in a story, we can better understand and appreciate what we are reading.

Assignment 1: Choose three fiction books that you have already read and are familiar with. Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge for each book.

1. What is the title of the book?
2. Who is the author of the book?
3. What is the plot? What happens in the story?
4. Who are the characters?
5. What is the setting?
6. What is the theme?
7. What is the conflict?
8. What is the resolution?