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Nouns: Gender, Number and Collective



Critical Thinking

THINK

Look at the pictures. Write their names in the correct rows.



male	King	Peacock	cock	boy
female	girl	queen	Peahen	hen

You will notice that the words you have written refer to the gender of the nouns.

Male nouns are also called **masculine** nouns.

Female nouns are also called **feminine** nouns.

PRACTISE

A. Rewrite this passage by changing the masculine gender nouns into feminine gender nouns. Take help from the words given in the box. Make other necessary changes.

hen

duck

peahen

goose

mare

cow

A peacock and a drake are playing near a lake. A rooster, a bull, a stallion and a gander join them. Together, they decide to play football. The drake is happy to score the first goal. They have a lot of fun playing.



A peacock and a duck are playing near a lake. A hen, a bull, a mare and a goose join them. Together, they decide to play football. The duck is happy to score the first goal. They have a lot of fun in playing.

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Common and Neuter Genders

Read these sentences.

- My **cousin** has a beautiful **scrapbook**.
- The **doctor** checked the **reports** thoroughly.

What can you say about the gender of the words in colour?

A noun that refers to both males and females is said to be of the **common gender**. Some examples of common gender are **doctor**, **police officer**, **firefighter**, **teacher**, **cousin** and **neighbour**.

A noun that refers to a non-living thing is said to be of the **neuter gender**. Some examples of the neuter gender are **magazine**, **store**, **reports**, **scrapbook**, **chair** and **table**.

PRACTISE

B. Underline the nouns in the given sentences. Each sentence has more than one noun.



1. Father bought a new umbrella for Mother.
2. The dog chased the cat around the house.
3. The children are playing in the garden.
4. The princess rode a horse towards the palace.
5. Rhea's cousins have become her new neighbours.
6. My sister has decided to adopt and raise a duck.
7. Can you pass me the magazine kept on the table?
8. Sam's elder brother is a teacher and his elder sister is a doctor.

Now, put the underlined words in the correct columns.

masculine	feminine	common gender	neuter gender
Father	Mother	cat	umbrella
Dog	princess	children	house
horse	Rhea's	cousins	garden
Sam's	sister	neighbours	palace
brother	duck	teacher	magazine
	sister	doctor	table

C. Complete this passage with appropriate neuter and common gender nouns.

teacher desks classes chairs principal students

The teacher (common gender) wants to take a few extra classes for the students (common gender) of Grade 4. The classes (neuter gender) will be conducted from 1.30 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. Extra desks (neuter gender) and chairs (neuter gender) have been arranged for the students. The principal (common gender) has already approved of this arrangement.

Now, circle the singular nouns and underline the plural nouns.

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Formation of Plural Nouns

Let us recall some common ways of forming plural nouns.

plural nouns

addition of **-s/-es**

house—houses
dish—dishes
hero—heroes

replacing **-y** with **-ies**

country—countries
diary—diaries
fairy—fairies

replacing **-f/-fe** with **-ves**

wolf—wolves
life—lives
loaf—loaves

consonant + y: 'y' changes to 'ies'
country—countries; story—stories

vowel + y: 's' is added after 'y'
toy—toys; monkey—monkeys

PRACTISE

D. Fill in the blanks with the plural forms of the nouns.



1. piano pianos
3. church churches
5. story stories
7. knife knives
9. dress dresses
11. tomato tomatoes

2. sleeve sleeves
4. dairy dairies
6. shelf shelves
8. brush brushes
10. fox foxes
12. potato potatoes

E. Complete this conversation with the plural forms of the words in brackets.



Rekha: Neha, I need to buy two bookshel^{ves}-(bookshelf) and a few cushion^s-(cushion). Do you want to buy anything?

Neha: Do you think daisies (daisy) will look good in my garden? I plan to buy them as the leaves (leaf) of my old plants are turning yellow.

Rekha: They will look good. I love gardening. Once, I had a mango tree, which was covered with ripe mangoes (mango).

Neha: I am not too fond of them. I prefer cranberries (cranberry). I regularly drink cranberry milkshake.

Rekha: However it is better to eat different kinds of fruits (fruit) and vegetables than to drink flavoured milkshakes (milkshake).

F. Rajiv did not revise the formation of plurals and made many errors.



Rewrite these sentences with the correct plural forms.

1. The babys cried loudly as their toyes were broken.

The babies cried loudly as their toys were broken.

2. She loves storys about fairys.

She loves stories about fairies.

3. He cut the tomatos in halfs.

He cut the tomatoes in halves.



4. The monkeies, wolfs and buffalos lived in the forest.

The monkeys, wolves and buffaloes lived in the forest.

5. The heros were admired by their admireres.

The heroes were admired by their admirers.

6. The roseis bloomed beautifully.

The roses bloomed beautifully.

7. The childs dreamed about dinoaures.

The children dreamed about dinosaurs.

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Irregular Plurals

Now, read these **irregular plurals**.

• man—men	• tooth—teeth	• ox—oxen
• mouse—mice	• person—people	• child—children

These plurals do not follow any rule.

• deer	• sheep	• moose
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Some nouns do not change their forms at all in their plural form.

PRACTISE

G. Complete the passage using the plural forms of the words in the brackets.

Last summer, I visited my grandparents' village. We booked two taxies (taxi) to travel. It was a long journey. We travelled through many cities (city) and villages (village). As soon as we entered our village, I saw a group of child (child) playing on an open playground. It was blazing hot. I wondered how they were playing outside in the blazing heat. Grandpa and Grandma were waiting for us at the gate of their house. I jumped out of the car and hugged them. Grandpa offered us glasses (glass) of lemonade to drink. As I was drinking the lemonade I looked around the house. I saw many family picture (picture) hanging on the wall. There was also a jar filled with toffees (toffee) kept on

a table. I opened the jar and took out a toffee. Although some of my teeth (tooth) hurt when I ate it, it was delicious. In the evening, we went out and met many people (person) who lived nearby.

H. Circle the correct spelling of the plural form of the words given below.

1. buffalo

buffaloes

2. glass

glasses

3. day

dayes

4. goose

gooses

5. deer

deer

6. child

childe

7. brush

brushes

8. kitten

kittens

buffalows

glases

days

goosies

deers

children

brushies

kittenes

buffalos

glassez

daies

geese

deeres

childes

bruses

kittennes

1. buffaloes

2. glasses

3. days

4. geese

5. deer

6. children

7. brushes

8. kittens

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Collective Nouns

Look at these sentences.

- The **team** of players played well.
- There is a **school** of fish in the aquarium.

The words **team** and **school** here talk about groups of players and fish, respectively. These nouns are **collective nouns**. Collective nouns are names of persons, animals or things taken as a group, a unit or as one. For example: a **litter** of puppies, a **band** of musicians, a **colony** of ants

Here is a list of collective nouns:

collective nouns	nouns
gang	thieves
bouquet	flowers
fleet	ships
team	players
litter	puppies/kittens
orchestra/band	musicians
troop	monkeys

collective nouns	nouns
bunch	grapes/keys
swarm	bees
flock	sheep/birds
parliament	owls
gaggle	geese
pride	lions
pack	dogs