

2. NOUNS

A **noun** is the name of a person, a place, a thing, or an idea. A **common noun** is the name for a general member of a group. A **proper noun** is the name of a particular member of a group, and it is always capitalized.

COMMON NOUNS

person	<i>child</i>	<i>uncle</i>	<i>friend</i>	<i>astronaut</i>
place	<i>city</i>	<i>yard</i>	<i>sky</i>	<i>diner</i>
thing	<i>desk</i>	<i>grass</i>	<i>horse</i>	<i>television</i>
idea	<i>truth</i>	<i>courage</i>	<i>wonder</i>	<i>imagination</i>

PROPER NOUNS

person	<i>Dr. Ann Bain</i>	<i>Mr. Holt</i>	<i>Betty</i>	<i>Captain Kirk</i>
place	<i>Saturn</i>	<i>Boston</i>	<i>Fiji</i>	<i>North America</i>
thing	<i>Nintendo</i>	<i>Eiffel Tower</i>	<i>Miata</i>	<i>Club Med</i>
idea	<i>Darwinism</i>	<i>Judaism</i>	<i>God</i>	<i>Romanticism</i>

THE INFINITIVE PHRASE

The next type of noun is the **infinitive phrase**. You will recall from the chapter on verbs that the infinitive helps us create the present tense, the present participle, and the imperative and the subjunctive moods. But as a verb it never appeared with the word *to*.

As a noun, however, it usually does. Whether as a simple infinitive or as an infinitive phrase, we can use it in many of the same ways that a noun can be used.

(subject)	<i>To ski</i> is her favorite sport.
(subject)	<i>To start from the beginning</i> was necessary.
(direct object)	Neither of us wanted <i>to participate</i> .
(direct object)	I tried <i>to convince him to reconsider</i> .
(object of preposition)	The army would seek peace in any way except <i>to surrender</i> .
(object of preposition)	We had no choice but <i>to pack up and leave</i> .
(subject complement)	The worst thing he could do would be <i>to resign</i> .
(subject complement)	Her goal was <i>to get to the finish line alive</i> .
(appositive)	Their greatest desire, <i>to mountain climb</i> , finally came true.
(appositive)	Our decision, <i>to sell our house and go live in the woods</i> , brought us the peace we desired.

INFINITIVE PHRASE ISSUES

1. There are three interesting things to know about the infinitive phrase. First, the *to* may sometimes be omitted.

We all saw you [*to*] *take* the answer sheet.
I'll do anything but [*to*] *sing*.

2. Also, the infinitive may have its own subject, and if it is a pronoun, it is in the objective case.

I invited *him* *to visit* us.
My father helped *me* [*to*] *start* the car.
We considered *her* *to be* the best candidate.

See Chapter 7, "Pronouns," for a complete discussion of pronoun case.

3. And finally, as may be seen from three of the above examples, the infinitive may have its own direct object.

I tried *to find my shoes* under the bed.

THE INFINITIVE PHRASE: SAMPLES

They began *to stir* though still the world outside the shelter was impossibly dangerous.
—William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*

Her habit was *to imagine the whole route before she actually moved herself to run*.
—Virginia Hamilton, *A White Romance*

Their business was *to toil, and to toil mightily, in the traces*.
—Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*

The trouble was, Colin didn't know whether he wanted *to join such an establishment*.
—J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground*

When she got Kicker, people told her the only way to get the wildness out of an ostrich was *to put him in an enclosure as near the house as possible while still young so that he could see people every day*.
—Dalene Matthee, *Fiela's Child*

I don't suppose it will knock any of you people off your perch *to read a contribution from an animal*.
—O. Henry, "Memoirs of a Yellow Dog"

She offered *to send someone over to pick up the check within the hour*, but I thought it was easier *to go ahead and put it on my card*.
—Sue Grafton, "J" *Is for Judgment*

GERUNDS

In the same way that we took the infinitive form of the verb and used it as a noun, we can also take the present participle form and use it as a noun. Such a construction is called a **gerund phrase**.

Here are two examples of how the transformation from a verb phrase to a gerund phrase occurs.

Example 1:	The runner was <i>sliding into home plate</i> .	(present participle verb form)
	<i>sliding into home plate</i>	(remove the phrase)
	<i>Sliding into home plate</i> proved to be a big mistake.	(subject)
	We practiced <i>sliding into home plate</i> for half an hour.	(direct object)
	Her specialty is <i>sliding into home plate</i> .	(subject complement)
	She won the game by <i>sliding into home plate</i> .	(object of the preposition)
	His trademark, <i>sliding into home plate</i> ,	(appositive)
	made him the terror of the league.	

Example 2:	Mother was <i>stir-frying the chicken</i> .	(present participle verb form)
	<i>stir-frying the chicken</i>	(remove the phrase)
	<i>Stir-frying the chicken</i> was the fastest way to cook it.	(subject)
	My big sister loved <i>stir-frying the chicken</i> .	(direct object)
	His contribution to dinner was <i>stir-frying the chicken</i> .	(subject complement)
	After <i>stir-frying the chicken</i> , the chef piled it	(object of the preposition)
	on top of the rice.	
	He delighted in his assignment, <i>stir-frying the chicken</i> .	(appositive)

A gerund may appear by itself or as part of a phrase, with a direct object, prepositional phrases, and other modifiers.

(subject)	<i>Writing</i> is a skill that needs constant practice.
(subject)	<i>Writing a journal during the summer</i> made Carolyn more observant.
(direct object)	I have not finished <i>eating</i> .
(direct object)	I have not finished <i>eating the cookies you baked for me last week</i> .
(indirect object)	His exam gave <i>cheating</i> a whole new meaning.
(indirect object)	She gave <i>staying on the balance beam</i> every ounce of her strength.
(object of preposition)	You must warm up before <i>playing</i> .
(object of preposition)	The rain did not interfere with <i>our having a good time</i> .
(subject complement)	Your first Trivia category is " <i>Gardening</i> ."
(subject complement)	My greatest thrill was <i>being chosen for the all-star team</i> .
(appositive)	I'm very proud of my hobby, <i>woodcarving</i> .
(appositive)	We had two choices, <i>warming the leftover hash or sending out for pizza</i> .

GERUND ISSUES

1. The possessive form of the noun or pronoun should be used before the gerund phrase to show to whom the action "belongs."

Did you enjoy *my singing* in the play? (whose singing?)
Bill's arriving early upset his girlfriend. (whose arriving?)
The teacher was distracted by the *boys' chattering* in the back row. (whose chattering?)

2. Also, grammatical items in a series should all be of the same construction. Do not mix gerund phrases with other kinds of phrases or clauses.

Incorrect: I loved your *dancing and how you juggled* four bananas at once.
Correct: I loved your *dancing and juggling* four bananas at once.
or
Correct: I loved *how you danced and juggled* four bananas at once.

THE GERUND PHRASE: SAMPLES

In the act of *sounding the charge*, the captain found himself confronted by a wall of snapping flame.

—Janny Wurtz, *Master of White Storm*

When he had seen to the weather, Billy cleared each nostril by *holding its mate closed with his forefinger and blowing fiercely*.

—John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony*

Watching girls and devouring them with your eyes was something you did automatically.

—Robert Cormier, *The Chocolate War*

The night porter remembered *ringing up Miss Keene's room just after midnight and getting no reply*.

—Agatha Christie, *The Body in the Library*

The Colonel had spent most of his life in the Army, and so was very good at *telling everybody what that feller Hitler was going to do next, and putting his own interpretation on snippets of news that appeared in the daily papers relating to secret weapons and the movement of warships*.

—Rosamunde Pilcher, *The Shell Seekers*

Mother's swims consisted of *testing the water with the tip of a black bathing shoe, wading cautiously out to her knees, making some tentative dabs in the water with her hands, splashing a few drops on her shoulders, and finally, in a moment of supreme courage, pinching her nose and squatting down until the water reached her chest*.

—Frank B. Gilbreth, Jr., and Ernestine Gilbreth Carey,
Cheaper by the Dozen

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EXERCISE A: infinitive phrases

Accuracy _____ Creativity _____

Directions: In the spaces below, write infinitive phrases of your own creation. The function of the infinitive phrase is indicated beneath the line. Notice that you will be graded on both accuracy and creativity.

1. No one wanted _____ .
(direct object)
2. _____ was the last thing
(subject)
we wanted to do.
3. The one project remaining is _____ .
(subject complement)
4. _____ requires a full-time
(subject)
commitment.
5. When you buy this new car, there is no service required for the first 10,000 miles
but _____ .
(object of the preposition but)
6. Most of the seniors tried _____ .
(direct object)
7. I know the first thing to do when fixing a leaky faucet— _____ .
(appositive, without to)
8. As a doctor his highest priority would be _____ .
(subject complement)
9. _____ is _____ .
(subject) (subject complement)
10. We had three things to do before midnight: _____ .
(appositive)
_____, _____ ,
(appositive)
and _____ .
(appositive)

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EXERCISE B: gerund phrases

Accuracy _____ Creativity _____

Directions: Fill in the spaces below with gerund phrases of your own creation. The function of the gerund phrase in the sentence is indicated beneath the line. Again, you will be graded on accuracy as well as creativity.

1. _____ proved to be our downfall.
(subject)
2. _____ and _____
(subject) (subject)
_____ is the only way to succeed.
3. We all tried _____
(direct object)
4. _____ is not like
(subject)

(object of the preposition like)
5. The mountain climber's main concern soon became _____
(subject complement)
6. My summer activities, _____ and
(appositive)
_____, were fun but didn't earn me any money.
(appositive)
7. We can achieve our goal only by _____,
(three objects of the preposition by)
_____, and _____.
8. At night school you have an opportunity to learn _____
(three objects of the infinitive to learn)
_____, _____, and _____.
9. Both _____ and
(subject)
_____ were charged against the criminal.
(subject)
10. After I finished building the bookcase, I had the choice of either _____

(object of the preposition of) or _____
(object of the preposition of)

NOUN CLAUSES

Another kind of noun is called the **noun clause**. A clause is a group of words which contains a verb and a subject to go with it, and in later chapters you will learn about the adjective clause and the adverb clause.

A noun clause is most often used as the subject, the direct object, the subject complement, or the object of a preposition. There are three ways by which a sentence may become a noun clause.

1. You may add a **subordinating conjunction** to the beginning of a sentence. The most common subordinating conjunctions which introduce noun clauses are *that*, *the fact that*, *if*, and *whether*:

(original sentence)	We couldn't get the door closed.
(add subordinator)	<i>(the fact) that we couldn't get the door closed</i>
(subject)	<i>The fact that we couldn't get the door closed</i> made us nervous.
(direct object)	We suddenly realized <i>that we couldn't get the door closed</i> .
(subject complement)	Our biggest fear was <i>that we couldn't get the door closed</i> .
(object of preposition)	Nothing was wrong except <i>that we couldn't get the door closed</i> .

More examples:

The union leader declared *that the farm workers should be paid weekly rather than monthly*.

The fact that your mother didn't remind you is no excuse.

Your fascinating sister has nothing to do with *whether I'll come over for dinner*.

2. You may replace a noun or pronoun in a sentence with a **relative pronoun**. The relative pronouns to use are *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *which*, and *what*, and their *-ever* forms. Then move the relative pronoun to the beginning of the sentence, if necessary, and you may use the new construction as part of another sentence. Watch how the transformation occurs in the first example, then analyze how it happened in the others.

The singer was <i>Ella Fitzgerald</i> .	I finally remembered <i>who the singer was</i> .
The singer was <i>who</i> .	
... <i>who the singer was</i>	
These woods are <i>Mr. Appleseed's</i> .	I think I know <i>whose woods these are</i> .
I should invite <i>him</i> .	I asked my mother <i>whom I should invite</i> .
<i>This month's magazine</i> is missing.	Do you know <i>which is missing</i> ?
We know <i>nothing</i> .	We are known by <i>what we know</i> .
Do you want <i>waffles or pancakes</i> ?	You may have <i>whatever you want</i> .
<i>Bill or Dave</i> can start the job tomorrow.	<i>Whoever can start the job tomorrow</i> should be hired.

3. You may also replace an adverb in the original sentence with a **relative adverb**, *why*, *where*, *when*, and *how*. Then move the relative adverb to the beginning of the sentence, if necessary, and you have created a noun clause which can become part of another sentence. Watch how the transformation occurs in the first example, then analyze how it happened in the others.

They had left their bicycles <i>in the street</i> .	They remembered <i>where they had left their bicycles</i> .
They had left their bicycles <i>where</i> .	
... <i>where they had left their bicycles</i>	

Yesterday she finished the report.

You answered it *nervously*.

I wanted to go *because my cousin would be there*.

When she finished the report was not the issue.

I knew you were lying by *how you answered it*.

I finally told them *why I wanted to go*.

THE NOUN CLAUSE: SAMPLES

The boy knew *that his father was joking, that he would never take his friends away*.

—Robert Cormier, *I Am the Cheese*

What hit you first was the noise and the sweat.

—Virginia Hamilton, *A White Romance*

She did not know *what other money there was to be gained, or how, or on whom he spent it*.

—Nadine Gordimer, *July's People*

The trouble was, Colin didn't know *whether he wanted to join such an establishment*.

—J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground*

Once I asked Granny *what Uncle Buson did that was so bad*, but she wouldn't tell me.

—Olive Ann Burns, *Cold Sassy Tree*

What is equally maddening about the visit of your child to some distant home is the call you get from the mother or father there telling you *how lovely and helpful your child has been*.

—Bill Cosby, *Fatherhood*

After two days it became clear *that Tashi was deliberately hiding*.

—Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*

He knew *which doors stayed open, and which walls were thin, and which air vents carried sound*.

—John Grisham, *The Pelican Brief*

Whatever he had to do must be done today; tomorrow he would be incapable.

—Nevil Shute, *On the Beach*

It had never occurred to him *that one man could get the best of another by the simple expedient of telling him the truth*.

—Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, *The Yearling*

Before noon the landlady put her head in and told Janice *that there was something for which she had to come downstairs*.

—Joanne Greenberg, *In This Sign*

From the way people treated her, it was clear *that they did not expect a great deal from Elizabeth*.

—Nancy Bond, *Another Shore*

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Name: _____

EXERCISE C: noun clauses

Accuracy _____ Creativity _____

Directions: Fill in the blanks with noun clauses of your own creation. The function of the noun clause in the sentence is written beneath the line.

1. Mother finally discovered _____
(direct object)
2. The fact that _____
(subject)
_____ made no difference to the security guard.
3. We knew nothing except _____
(object of the preposition except)
4. Our first decision will be _____
(subject complement)
5. _____
(subject)
_____ will decide the ultimate success of your endeavor.
6. Today or tomorrow, _____
(appositive)
_____ will be fine with me.
7. Did you ever find out _____?
(direct object)
8. _____ and _____
(subject)
_____ were still unclear.
(subject)
9. The whole school will be affected by _____
(object of the preposition)

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10. There were still three questions to be answered: _____
_____, _____
and _____
(*appositive*)

EXERCISE D: reading for nouns

Accuracy _____

Directions: Now read in a good book and try to find a sentence which contains an infinitive phrase used as a noun, a sentence which contains a gerund phrase, and one which contains a noun clause. Write the complete sentences below, and put the phrase or clause in parentheses. Then tell how each is being used in the sentence. Also tell the title of the book and its author.

Infinitive phrase as noun: _____

Gerund phrase: _____

Noun clause: _____

Book title and author: _____

APPOSITIVES

An **appositive** is a noun or pronoun that restates another noun or pronoun (its *antecedent*) in the sentence.

My favorite ice cream flavor, *chocolate*,...

Our English teacher, *Mrs. Cheever*,...

Her college major, *philosophy*,...

Several times in this chapter you have been asked to write appositives, and you probably have done so with little difficulty. You saw that appositives don't have to be just single words. Any grammatical construction which acts as a noun may also be used as an appositive.

(date)	The year <i>1968</i> is often considered a turning point in American history.
(pronoun)	That's my friend's car, <i>the one spewing out black smoke</i> .
(pronoun)	We need a new chairman, <i>someone who is not afraid to make a decision</i> .
(common nouns)	Piles of trash were all over the back yard— <i>empty soda cans, paper plates, plastic cups, and even a few chicken bones</i> .
(proper noun)	Steinbeck's novel <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> is on the summer reading list.
(gerund phrase)	The children looked forward to their Saturday ritual, <i>visiting their grandfather in the nursing home</i> .
(gerund phrases)	We have big plans for this weekend— <i>deep sea fishing on Saturday, camping overnight on Snake Island, and snorkeling on the reef on Sunday</i> .
(infinitive phrase)	Her one desire, <i>to swim in the Olympics</i> , finally came true.
(noun clause)	Any donation will be accepted, <i>whatever you can afford</i> .
(noun clause)	His excuse, <i>that the traffic was heavy and his car overheated</i> , sounded plausible.

Sometimes an appositive will appear elsewhere in the sentence. It may precede the noun or pronoun it refers to, or it may follow at some distance, as long as there is no other intervening word which might cause confusion.

A millionaire by the age of thirty, Tom retired to a farm in Vermont.

She quickly captured the imagination of the whole country, *a talented gymnast with a world-class smile*.

APPOSITIVE ISSUES

1. Be careful how you punctuate appositives. An appositive is set off from the rest of the sentence by commas if it is not absolutely necessary to make its antecedent clear. In the examples earlier, there is *one* favorite ice cream flavor, *one* English teacher, *one* college major, *one* desire, *one* ritual, *one* excuse. But if the appositive is "one of many," then it must not be set off by commas.

Poe's story "The Tell-Tale Heart" kept me awake last night. (Poe wrote many stories.)

My brother, Sergio, is seven years old. (I have only the one brother.)

My brother Sergio is seven years old. (I have more than one brother.)

2. If the appositive is a pronoun, it is in the same case as its antecedent.

Two people, *Jean and she*, were selected. (nominative case, antecedent is subject)

The director selected two people, *Jean and her*. (objective case, antecedent is object)

See Chapter 7, "Pronouns," for a complete discussion of pronoun case.

3. Sometimes an appositive is not exactly the same as its antecedent, but is a "subset" of it, just one of many items possible.

I took one look at his face—the blood-shot *eyes*, the filthy *beard*, the toothless *grin*—and let out a scream.

There is more to the face than just the eyes, the beard, and the grin, but these are the "subsets" the author wants you to notice. These are sometimes called noun phrases, but they behave the same way as appositives.

THE APPOSITIVE: SAMPLES

A cautious child, he would dip his toes in the swirling waters of life before taking a plunge.

—J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground*

On April 9, *the day King was buried in Atlanta*, White issued a statement.

—J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground*

Bonny had been Janine's best friend, *a friend so close* that even when the Darts moved to Colville, *an inner-city suburb*, they insisted on remaining friends, visiting each other after school, and spending weekends at one another's houses.

—Margaret Mahy, *Memory*

On the birth of a second son, *my junior by seven years*, my parents gave up entirely their wandering life and fixed themselves in their native country.

—Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

They walked on up the hill, and now a panorama started to unfold behind them, *a wide view over the flat plain to the sea at Port Phillip Bay ten miles away*.

—Nevil Shute, *On the Beach*

I looked out my window and after a moment spotted him, *a noble, silent dog lying on a ledge above the entrance to a brownstone house in lower Fifth Avenue*.

—James Thurber, "The Admiral on the Wheel"

He always worked to music, *often Baroque and sometimes a string quartet, Mozart, Vivaldi, Haydn*.

—P. D. James, *A Taste for Death*

Mrs. Latournelle, *the original founder, a motherly talkative lady with a cork leg and a past somehow relating to the theater*, had retired in 1805, ten years previously, to drink port and rest her cork leg on a sofa; but her place had been taken by her niece, Mrs. Camperdowne, of equally amiable and indulgent temperament.

—Joan Aiken, *If I Were You*

NOUNS

Name: _____

EXERCISE E: appositives

Accuracy _____ Creativity _____

Directions: Fill in the blanks with appositives of your own creation. The antecedent is in **bold** type. Some blanks require specific grammatical constructions.

1. The **boy** who just moved in next door, _____ ,
has a pet iguana.
2. The two **cars**, _____ ,
collided at the rotary.
3. I finally had saved enough money to buy the one **thing** I had always wanted,
_____ .
4. I can never spell the word _____ correctly.
5. My favorite summer **activity**, _____ ,
(gerund phrase)costs nothing and gives me hours of enjoyment.
6. There was only one way to convince him— _____
(infinitive phrase without to)_____ .
7. She left a **message** on the answering machine, _____
(noun clause)_____ .
8. _____ , David would
always win the sprinting events at the track meets.
9. Diane bought two new **books** at the sale, _____
(pronoun)_____ and _____
(pronoun)_____ .
10. We enjoyed the New Hampshire **scenery**: _____ ,
_____ , and _____ .

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EXERCISE F: reading for appositives

Accuracy _____

Directions: Now, read in a good book and find two sentences containing appositives. Write out the sentences below. Also tell the title of the book and its author.

Book title and author: _____

FUNCTION OF THE NOUN IN THE SENTENCE

Now that we have studied all the grammatical constructions which may be used as nouns, let's arrange them according to their functions in the sentence.

Subject

(common noun)	<i>My sister</i> will travel to South America next month.
(proper noun)	<i>The Toronto Blue Jays</i> won the World Series in 1992.
(infinitive phrase)	<i>To set goals</i> is the first step toward success.
(gerund phrase)	<i>Playing the bagpipes well</i> takes years of practice.
(noun clause)	<i>Which band we should hire</i> was the first decision for our committee.

Direct object

(common noun)	We built <i>our tree house</i> in the tallest oak.
(proper noun)	Timmy found <i>Lassie</i> after a long search.
(infinitive phrase)	I tried <i>to remember the combination to my locker</i> .
(gerund phrase)	She enjoyed <i>looking at the old photographs in the family album</i> .
(noun clause)	The teacher suggested <i>that we review our notes</i> .

Indirect object

(common noun)	He bought <i>his little brother</i> an ice cream cone.
(proper noun)	We gave <i>the old Cadillac</i> a thorough waxing.
(gerund phrase)	I gave <i>running for class president</i> a lot of thought.

Object of the preposition

(common noun)	The smoke billowed from <i>the windows</i> .
(proper noun)	I bought a ticket to <i>Seattle</i> .
(infinitive phrase)	There was nothing left to do except <i>surrender to the advancing army</i> .
(gerund phrase)	They claim they won by <i>tracking the winning numbers for two years</i> .
(noun clause)	That had nothing to do with <i>why she received the promotion</i> .

Subject complement

(common noun)	My roommate in college became <i>an acrobat in the circus</i> .
(proper noun)	Their dream car was <i>a 1937 Packard</i> .
(infinitive phrase)	My dream is <i>to play hockey in the Stanley Cup finals and win</i> .
(gerund phrase)	My dream is <i>playing hockey in the Stanley Cup finals and winning</i> .
(noun clause)	The interviewer's first question was <i>why I wanted to work for her company</i> .

Appositive

(common noun)	My favorite dish, <i>fried clams</i> , was not on the menu.
(proper noun)	Your sister <i>Linda</i> has a crush on me.
(infinitive phrase)	His promise <i>to get home before midnight</i> became impossible to keep.
(gerund phrase)	My hobby, <i>fly tying</i> , keeps me dreaming of the "big one."
(noun clause)	Who asked the question <i>"How do I love thee?"</i>

There are other ways that a noun can function in a sentence. It may be an **object complement**, a **noun of direct address**, or a **modifier**. The difference between these functions and the functions on the previous page, however, is that these will almost always be common or proper nouns, not phrases or clauses. For a full understanding of nouns, and for application to foreign languages, you should be familiar with these functions.

1. **Object complement:** Sometimes the meaning of a direct object is incomplete without an additional noun after it. Verbs such as *appoint*, *believe*, *build*, *call*, *choose*, *consider*, *designate*, *elect*, *make*, *name*, *paint*, and *think* often require an object complement.

I considered him *my best friend*.

The committee named Cynthia *a representative to the delegation*.

While we are discussing object complements, we should mention that adjectives may also be object complements.

I decided to paint the shutters *green*.

The clatter of the roller coaster made me *nervous*.

2. **Noun of direct address:** When you speak to someone directly, usually in conversation, you are using what is called a noun of direct address. On rare, very informal occasions, it might be a pronoun. Nouns of direct address should be set off from the rest of the sentence by commas.

"*Mr. Chairman*, I move that the motion be accepted."

"Listen, *you*, keep your hands off my calculator!"

"I love you, *Mom*."

3. **Noun as modifier:** It is not unusual for a noun to become a modifier of another noun in a sentence, taking on the function of an adjective. Often the two nouns go so naturally together that we consider them a single noun unit.

How do you like my new *leather* jacket?

He is studying to become a *computer* programmer.

I canceled my *magazine* subscription.

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Name: _____

EXERCISE G: nouns in the sentence

Accuracy _____

Directions: In the sentences below, put parentheses around the complete noun unit that is serving the function indicated by the heading. Then in the space tell what that noun unit is, using the appropriate letter:

A=common noun B=proper noun C=infinitive phrase D=gerund phrase E=noun clause

SUBJECT

1. _____ To tell a real dollar bill from a counterfeit one takes a keen eye.
2. _____ Every apple in the barrel had to be thrown away.
3. _____ Larry Bird might have been the best Boston Celtics player ever.
4. _____ Counting your chickens before they are hatched can lead to disappointment.
5. _____ Wherever you want to plant the tree will be fine with me.

DIRECT OBJECT

6. _____ No one wants to pay too much for a car.
7. _____ I just bought a new watch from a nice old man on the street corner.
8. _____ I have always enjoyed writing with a fountain pen.
9. _____ All of us wondered why the child was standing alone in the corner of the room.
10. _____ She announced at the party that she would be moving to Atlanta.

INDIRECT OBJECT

11. _____ I showed my nephew how to balance a broomstick on his chin.
12. _____ She gave what she should do next a lot of thought.
13. _____ The coach bought every player on the team an ice cream cone.
14. _____ My grandfather wrote President Kennedy a recommendation to Harvard.
15. _____ You should have given learning the multiplication tables a little more attention.

NOUNS

OBJECT OF THE PREPOSITION

16. _____ The radio announcer said she had two tickets for whoever was caller number five.
17. _____ From public speaking we gain confidence and poise.
18. _____ In spite of having an all-American center forward, we still lost.
19. _____ They did everything but score.
20. _____ There was great speculation about how the magician did such amazing tricks.

SUBJECT COMPLEMENT

21. _____ My first question was what we should do about the missing hamster.
22. _____ Our focus became simply to stay alive in the desert.
23. _____ That noise could have been a bear.
24. _____ With my pants ripped and my shoes muddy, I looked a mess.
25. _____ Our first clue should have been the fact that she had grease on her jacket.

APPOSITIVE

26. _____ Melville's famous novel *Moby Dick* was little known while he was alive.
27. _____ Mom's question, where I had been until midnight, seemed reasonable.
28. _____ We fixated on one idea, to get to camp by sundown.
29. _____ The tiny porcelain figurine, a seal balancing a ball, fell and broke.
30. _____ There was a simple explanation, that he just never heard the bell.

NOUNS

Name: _____

EXERCISE H: writing noun units

Accuracy _____ Creativity _____

Directions: Use the following complete noun units in sentences that you create, as directed. Make sure that you are using them as nouns, not as verbs or adjectives. Notice that you will be graded on both accuracy and creativity.

Incorrect: We were *watching the beautiful sunset*. (main verb)

Incorrect: *Watching the beautiful sunset*, we fell asleep. (participial phrase modifying we)

Correct: *Watching the beautiful sunset* made us fall asleep. (subject of *made*)

WATCHING THE BEAUTIFUL SUNSET

1. (subject) _____

2. (direct object) _____

3. (object of preposition) _____

MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS

4. (direct object) _____

5. (object of preposition) _____

6. (appositive) _____

TO FIND AN AFFORDABLE HOTEL

7. (subject) _____

8. (direct object) _____

9. (subject complement) _____

NOUNS

THAT EVERYONE WAS ALREADY ON THE FIELD

10. (subject) _____

_____ .

11. (direct object) _____

_____ .

HOW WE COULD GET IT DONE MORE QUICKLY

12. (direct object) _____

_____ .

13. (appositive) _____

_____ .

THE FACT THAT IT WAS ACCIDENTAL

14. (subject) _____

_____ .

15. (object of the preposition) _____

_____ .

WHERE TO BUILD THE SNOW FORT

16. (subject) _____

_____ .

17. (direct object) _____

_____ .

18. (appositive) _____

_____ .

WHERE THE FARMER PLANTED THE SEEDS

19. (subject) _____

_____ .

20. (object of the preposition) _____

_____ .

NOUNS

Name: _____

EXERCISE I: all kinds of nouns

Accuracy _____ Creativity _____

Directions: Fill in the blanks below with nouns of the given construction and function in the sentence. You may include additional modifiers that are useful and appropriate in order to make a complete noun unit. Notice that you will be graded on both accuracy and creativity.

1. _____ carved his initials on a branch of the apple tree.
(common noun, subject)
2. _____ is my favorite movie of all time.
(proper noun, subject)
3. When you are hungry, _____
(gerund phrase, subject)
can seem to take forever.
4. _____
(noun clause, subject)
was a mystery to me.
5. After much deliberation I finally bought _____.
(proper noun, direct object)
6. At the last minute we decided _____.
(infinitive phrase, direct object)
7. Last summer I learned _____.
(infinitive phrase, direct object)
8. None of them knew _____.
(noun clause, direct object)
9. The vet gave _____ a rabies shot.
(common noun, indirect object)
10. She gave _____
(gerund phrase, indirect object)
her best effort.
11. You had better give _____
(noun clause, indirect object)
a little more thought.
12. After the accident I remembered nothing except _____
(gerund phrase, object of the preposition)
_____.

NOUNS

13. We discovered the thief by _____
(noun clause, object of the preposition)
_____.
14. My role model has always been _____
(common or proper noun, subject complement)
_____.
15. Their feeble excuse was _____
(noun clause, subject complement)
_____.
16. After that his goal in life became _____
(infinitive phrase, subject complement)
_____.
17. She thought up the perfect name for her science project: _____
(proper noun, appositive)
_____.
18. My favorite winter activity, _____,
(gerund phrase, appositive)
costs very little.
19. The topic for her history paper, " _____,"
(noun clause, appositive)
proved to be a difficult one.
20. His explanation, _____,
(noun clause, appositive)
seemed believable.