

Common, Proper, Concrete, and Abstract Nouns

14a. A **noun** names a person, a place, a thing, or an idea.

A **common noun** names any one of a group of persons, places, things, or ideas. A **proper noun** names a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

COMMON NOUNS actor, language, attorney general

PROPER NOUNS Audrey Hepburn, English, Janet Reno

A **concrete noun** names an object that can be perceived by one or more of the senses. An **abstract noun** names an idea, a feeling, a quality, or a characteristic.

CONCRETE NOUNS petunia, computer, artichoke, cloud, Joe Schilling

ABSTRACT NOUNS enthusiasm, health, spirituality, tolerance

EXERCISE A In the sentences below, underline the common nouns once and the proper nouns twice.

Example 1. The new course he is taking will be taught by Juanita Martinez.

1. Have you ever read *The Crucible* or any other plays by Arthur Miller?
2. Call Miss Sacks if you are on her committee.
3. The Louvre, a famous museum in Paris, was once a palace.
4. Dr. Athelstein will visit Civics I tomorrow to discuss the history behind Memorial Day.
5. The beach was littered with driftwood that had been blown there by Hurricane Hugo.
6. Al's Garage and Towing Service employs the best team of mechanics in town.
7. Address all suggestions to the Human Resources Department in Building Two.
8. How much of these vitamins does a person need every day?
9. We enjoyed our vacation at the coast but want to see the Smoky Mountains this year.
10. Are you going to the classes at Glenwood Hospital?

EXERCISE B In the sentences below, classify the underlined noun as concrete or abstract. Above the noun, write *C* for *concrete* or *A* for *abstract*.

Example 1. August Wilson won a Pulitzer Prize for the ^Cplay *The Piano Lesson*.

11. In this play, a brother and sister engage in a conflict over a piano.
12. The piano becomes a symbol for ambivalence toward African American history.
13. Wilson's discouragement with the treatment of African Americans has spurred him to use theater to raise consciousness.
14. Wilson has written a series of plays, each set in a different decade.
15. One of Wilson's influences was the blues, especially the blues singer Bessie Smith.