

Nouns

Nouns serve many functions in English grammar. They work as

Subjects

Direct objects

Indirect objects

Objects of the preposition

Predicate nominatives

Appositives

Subjects—The subject is the person or thing that performs the action of the verb. For example, in the sentence *Fatima walked to the store*, the subject is *Fatima* and the verb (action) is *walked*. *Fatima* is the person performing the action.

More examples—The subject is in *italics*.

Does *Francisco* like chocolate?

My *sister* is my best friend.

Cats make excellent pets.

The two little *boys* jumped into the pool.

Direct objects—The direct object is the person or thing that receives the action (verb) of the sentence. For example, in *Mohammed kicked the ball*, the direct object is *the ball* because it receives the action of being kicked (and *Mohammed* is the subject).

More examples—the direct object is in *italics*.

Does Francisco like *chocolate*?

He rode his *bike* on the sidewalk.

She pets her *cat*.

When will they clean their *pool*?

Indirect objects—An indirect object is the person or thing that indirectly receives the action of the verb. For example, in the sentence *Gabriel gave Sophie a present for her birthday*, the indirect object is *Sophie* because she indirectly receives the action of Gabriel (the subject) giving the present (*present* is the direct object that actually receives the action of giving).

More examples—The indirect object is in *italics*.

Lucas passed his *mother* the salt.

The professor teaches *students* Chinese.

Sam will bring *the teacher* his homework.

Don't tell *Sam* the secret.

Objects of the preposition—The object of the preposition is a noun, pronoun, noun phrase, or gerund that comes after a preposition in a sentence. For example, in the sentence *Gabriel gave Sophie a present for her birthday*, *birthday* is the object of the preposition *for*. *For her birthday* is a prepositional phrase.

More examples—The object of the preposition is in *italics*. The whole prepositional phrase is underlined.

The two little boys jumped into the pool.
The deer walked down the path in the woods.

He rode his bike on the sidewalk.
I studied for my test.

Predicate nominatives—A predicate nominative is simply a noun that restates the subject of the sentence by using a linking verb. The most common linking verb is *to be* (am, are, is, was, were). For example, in the sentence *Gabriel is my grandson*, the word *grandson* restates or renames the subject, *Gabriel*. In other words, Gabriel = grandson. Note the linking verb *is*. You won't have a predicate nominative without a linking verb.

More examples—The predicate nominative is in *italics*.

My sister is my best *friend*.
Cats are excellent *pets*.

She is the *president* of the club.
I am a *teacher*.

Appositives—An appositive is similar to a predicate nominative, but instead of renaming the subject at the end after a linking verb, the appositive immediately renames the noun using commas to show the function of renaming. For example, in the sentence *Gabriel, my grandson, gave Sophie a present for her birthday*, *grandson* is the appositive. Notice how it renames *Gabriel* immediately and has commas around it to show this grammatical function. If the appositive comes last in the sentence, then of course, the last comma is replaced by a period. See the last example below.

More examples—The predicate nominative is in *italics*.

My sisters, *Libby and Jessica*, live in Utah.

My cat, *Toto*, is a Japanese bobtail.

George Washington, the first *president* of the United States, lived in Virginia.

London, my favorite *place* to visit, has many historic sites.

We visited Istanbul, a beautiful and historic *city*.