

Extension exercises

Chapter 1: Nouns

Exploring English

To do this exercise you need to know a language other than English reasonably well or to be able to discuss the questions with someone who does (perhaps a student?). If you don't know the language well, you may also find it helpful to refer to a 'self study' course for learning that learner's language.

Choose a short text written in a language other than English. Also, if you have access to one, consult a grammar of that language.

- 1 What is it about words or the contexts in which they are used which help you to identify them as nouns?
- 2 Are there singular and plural forms of nouns? How are these distinguished?
- 3 Are nouns classified as being either countable or uncountable? What effects does this have on other aspects of grammar? For example, do you have to choose between different determiners such as *much* and *many* or between different forms of verbs such as *has* or *have*?
- 4 Are translation equivalents of the following countable or uncountable? *grapes; information; money; time*.
- 5 Are collective nouns followed by singular or plural verb forms and pronouns?
- 6 Generalise about the differences between nouns in English and the language you have chosen. In what ways (if any) does this influence the kinds of materials that suit your learners?

Exploring how learners use English

Look at something that a learner or learners of English have written, or listen to a recording of them speaking. Analyse their use of nouns.

- 1 What do they find easy?
- 2 What difficulties do they have?

Course materials

Look carefully at course materials that you are familiar with.

- 1 What (if any) explicit attention is paid to features of nouns? For example, are there sections devoted to countability and uncountability?
- 2 When vocabulary is introduced to learners in the materials, how systematically is attention paid to whether the nouns are countable or uncountable, or to their plural form?