

MR Bruff's Guide To

Mr Bruff

ONLINE REVISION

Grammar 2nd Edition



GCSE
self-study
REVISION GUIDE

Suitable for
supplementing a
KS3 programme
of study

Sponsored by:



Owl Education
Traditional teaching at its best

COPYRIGHT 2018 ANDREW BRUFF

SAMPLE

NOTE:

The following text is a free sample from 'Mr Bruff's Guide to Grammar 2nd Edition'.

You can purchase the whole eBook at
<https://mrbruff.com/product/mr-bruffs-guide-to-grammar-ebook>

Chapter 3: Nouns

Teacher: Harry, give me a sentence that begins with 'I'.
Harry: I is—
Teacher: No, Harry! It's *I am*...
Harry: OK! *I am* the ninth letter of the alphabet.

Imagine that grammar is made of bricks. Each brick is a chunk of language that does something different. These bricks are called parts of speech, and there are nine of them. As you can see in the joke, they must fit together properly in order to make sense. In this chapter, we'll review and extend your knowledge of the part of speech called nouns.

WHAT'S A NOUN?

A noun is the name of a thing. When you have one thing (for example, *a pen*), it's a singular noun. When there are two or more, you make a plural by adding *-s* (for example, *pens*). Most plural nouns end with *-s*, but there are exceptions.

To understand the spelling rules, we need to remember that vowels are the letters A, E, I, O, U and consonants are all the other letters. (Interestingly, some people count the letter Y as a vowel.)

Test Yourself! Irregular Spelling of Plural Nouns

Can you work out the spelling rules for making words plural? Some of the nouns in the chart below follow the rule of adding *-s*, but others don't. **Read the words aloud and use your knowledge of vowels and consonants to work out the rules and complete the chart.** Answer the question for column two. Then study the example plural form and write the spelling rule in the last column. The first two have been done for you. Check your answers on the next page.

Example Singular Noun	What's special about the Singular Noun?	Example Plural Noun	Spelling Rule
story	consonant plus -y	stories	change -y to -ies
storey	vowel plus -y	storeys	add -s as normal
wolf		wolves	
life		lives	
cliff		cliffs	
witch, glass wish, fox		witches, glasses wishes, foxes	
quiz		quizzes	
fee		fees	
cactus		cacti	

Answers

Example Singular Noun	What's special about the Singular Noun?	Example Plural Noun	Spelling Rule
story	consonant plus <i>-y</i>	stories	change <i>-y</i> to <i>-ies</i>
storey	vowel plus <i>-y</i>	storeys	add <i>-s</i> as normal
wolf	ends in <i>-f</i>	wolves	change <i>-f</i> to <i>-ves</i>
life	ends in <i>-fe</i>	lives	change <i>-fe</i> to <i>-ves</i>
cliff	ends in <i>-ff</i>	cliffs	add <i>-s</i> as normal
witch, glass wish, fox	end in <i>-ch, -s, -sh, or -x</i>	witches, glasses wishes, foxes	add <i>-es</i>
quiz	ends in <i>-z</i>	quizzes	double the <i>-z</i> and add <i>-es</i>
fee	<i>ends in a double vowel</i>	fees	add <i>-s</i> as normal
cactus	ends in <i>-us</i>	cacti	<i>-us</i> changes to <i>-i</i> . NB: <i>cactuses</i> is becoming more acceptable.

Test Yourself! Nouns ending in *-o*

Many nouns end in *-o*. Unfortunately, there's no rule for which ones take *-s* or *-es* in their plural form. Use your dictionary to find the plural forms of the words below, and then write them in the correct column. Check your answers on the next page.

Singular noun:

Tomato zero biro hero toe studio potato volcano kilo piano

Plural of nouns ending in *-o*

-s	-es

Answers

-s	-es
Zeros	Tomatoes
Biros	Heroes
Toes	Potatoes
Studios	Volcanoes
Kilos	
Pianos	

Joke Break

Ken the cactus and Katie the cactus are arguing.

Ken: You need to think about both of us. Remember, it's cact-*us*!

Katie: Actually, the plural is cact-*i*.

IRREGULAR PLURAL WORDS

Some words are Anglo-Saxon in origin and don't follow any rules at all. These are called irregular plurals. Here are some examples:

man → men

child → children

mouse → mice

woman → women

foot → feet

person → people

Other nouns don't change at all when they become plural. For example: deer, fish, sheep, offspring, series and species.

Fascinating fact!

After the Vikings invaded, we began to add -s to make plurals.

Test Yourself!

Read the sentences below. Put the noun in brackets in its plural form. Some are irregular plurals, so be careful!

1. I have _____ (pencil) and two pencil _____ (sharpener) on my desk.
2. That man has had four _____ (wife)!
3. How many _____ (box) are in your car?
4. A shirt has a collar and two _____ (cuff).
5. My school has two art _____ (studio).
6. I like doing _____ (quiz).
7. Every Sunday, my friend and I go to different _____ (church).
8. I like autumn when _____ (leaf) fall from the _____ (tree).
9. I don't like _____ (kiss) very much.
10. We sold all the _____ (sheep)!

Answers

Now check your answers.

1. I have pencils and two pencil sharpeners on my desk.
2. That man has had four wives!
3. How many boxes are in your car?
4. A shirt has a collar and two cuffs.
5. My school has two art studios.
6. I like doing quizzes.
7. Every Sunday, my friend and I go to different churches.
8. I like autumn when leaves fall from the trees.
9. I don't like kisses very much.
10. We sold all the sheep!

Fascinating Fact!

Some words take two plural forms. For example, *hoof* can be *hoofs* and also *hooves*.

SPELLING TIP!

When a teacher—of any subject—returns your work to you, note any spelling mistakes. Then write the corrections in a spelling log. Learn at least one correction a day.

CONCRETE, ABSTRACT, PROPER AND COLLECTIVE NOUNS

There are four types of noun:

Type of Noun	Definition	Examples
Concrete Noun	Things that you can touch (like concrete), see, smell, hear or taste.	chair, keyboard, money, water
Abstract Noun	Things that you cannot touch, see, smell, hear or taste.	beauty, love, anger, freedom, bravery
Proper Nouns	The <u>name</u> of a specific person, place, organisation or thing. They always begin with a capital letter.	Jim Smith, Swansea, Buckingham Palace, the Statue of Liberty
Collective Noun	A group of things, people or animals.	an anthology of poems a choir of students a gaggle of geese

Fascinating Fact!

A baby's first words are nouns.

Fascinating Fact!

There's no collective noun for koala bears because they're solitary creatures and don't move around in groups.

COMPOUND NOUNS

Two or more nouns joined together make a compound noun. Some are joined with a hyphen and others are one word. For example: hosepipe, football, sister-in-law and stepfather.

A hyphen sometimes makes a compound noun easier to understand. For example, we need the hyphen with *ice-cream*. If it's not there, your reader might think that you are talking about *an ice cream* i.e. cream made of ice!

Fascinating Fact!

Many compound nouns have evolved over time. For example, a firefly used to be spelt as two words: *fire fly*. It then became *fire-fly* and finally *firefly*. You might notice more examples when you are reading 19th-century fiction and nonfiction.

WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NOUNS?

They show off your vocabulary

Collective nouns are great for showcasing your range of vocabulary. Let's see how much you know.

Test Yourself!

Match the collective nouns below. The first one has been done for you.

1. A class of	a. people
2. An eloquence of	b. musicians
3. A crowd of	c. students
4. A board of	d. lawyers
5. A murder of	e. lions
6. A coven of	f. elephants
7. A prickle of	g. sheep
8. An orchestra of	h. kittens
9. A colony of	i. crows
10. A flock of	j. witches
11. A herd of	k. bees
12. A school of	l. directors
13. A pride of	m. hedgehogs
14. A swarm of	n. fish
15. A kindle of	o. ants

Joke Break

A robin and a pigeon are admiring some flowers in a park. Suddenly, they see a large eagle with a sharp dagger slowly advancing towards two oblivious crows, which are busy eating worms.

The robin turns to his friend the pigeon and asks, "What's happening?"

"Oh, dear," the pigeon replies. "It looks like a murder of crows."

Answers

- | | | |
|------|-------|--------|
| 1. C | 6. j | 11. f |
| 2. d | 7. m | 12. n |
| 3. a | 8. b | 13. e. |
| 4. l | 9. o | 14. k. |
| 5. i | 10. g | 15. h |

They can help your analytical skills

When you're reading, look for interesting nouns to analyse. In this extract from *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins, the narrator asks Mr. Betteredge to write down the story of a stolen diamond:

"In this matter of the Diamond," he said, "the characters of innocent people have suffered under suspicion already—as you know. The memories of innocent people may suffer, hereafter, for want of a record of the facts to which those who come after us can appeal. There can be no doubt that this strange family story of ours ought to be told. And I think, Betteredge, Mr. Bruff and I together have hit on the right way of telling it."

The concrete noun 'Diamond' looks odd, as it has been capitalised to become a proper noun, emphasising its importance to the characters and story.

The abstract nouns 'characters' (meaning reputations) and 'suspicion' and 'memories' set the tone of an enquiry—*The Moonstone* is, after all, believed to be the first ever detective novel in English!

The proper noun 'Mr Bruff' adds weight to the speaker's request. The reader senses that the speaker has ganged up with Mr. Bruff behind the scenes to persuade Mr. Betteredge to write his version of the story.

Of course, you don't have to label the nouns: your analysis is far more important. But terminology can add weight to what you say.

NOUN PHRASES

A noun phrase is a word or a group of words that describes a noun to make it more interesting. It might be a short phrase of just two words: *my cat*. Or it might contain a little more description: *my oldest cat*. Or it might be longer: *my oldest cat with one eye*.

The descriptive words can come before (premodify) or after (postmodify) a noun or, as we saw with the most recent example, both. These examples are all noun phrases to describe the noun *cat*:

Premodified Noun Phrases	Postmodified Noun phrases
my cat	cat on the fence
my oldest cat	cat in the garden
both of my cats	cat hissing at me
my four cats	cat purring over there
all of my four cats	cat that ran away
my gorgeous cat	cat that bit me
my purring, fluffy, flea-bitten cat	cat with a red collar in the garden drinking milk.

EXAMPLE NOUN PHRASES IN LITERATURE

Bleak House

In this extract from *Bleak House*, Charles Dickens uses noun phrases to create a strong, visual and atmospheric picture of the setting.

Sometimes, there is more than one noun in a noun phrase, so always ask yourself which noun is the most important—this is the *main noun*. Don't attempt to find and analyse all of the noun phrases in an extract—just choose the most interesting ones.

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck. Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon and hanging in the misty clouds.

The noun phrases develop the idea of being invaded by fog, creating a cold, hostile atmosphere. The repetition of the main noun 'fog' emphasises the extent of the fog, which cannot be stopped.

A Christmas Carol

Now read this extract from *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. Scrooge has been disconcerted by the face of his dead business partner appearing on his door knocker. He now decides to check his house:

Sitting-room, bedroom, lumber-room. All as they should be. Nobody under the table, nobody under the sofa; a small fire in the grate; spoon and basin ready; and the little saucepan of gruel (Scrooge had a cold in his head) upon the hob. Nobody under the bed; nobody in the closet; nobody in his dressing gown, which was hanging up in a suspicious attitude against the wall. Lumber-room as usual. Old fire-guard, old shoes, two fish baskets, washing-stand on three legs, and a poker.

The underlined noun phrases build momentum as he checks his house for anything out of the ordinary. We can almost hear Scrooge saying these words out loud, perhaps reassuring himself as he methodically checks everything. Then Dickens deliberately positions the final noun phrase 'and a poker' at the end of the paragraph. By drawing the reader's attention to this, we have a hint that Scrooge is worried and perhaps reassured to have a potential weapon for protection.

WHAT NEXT?

You've revised the spelling of irregular plural nouns, reviewed the categories of nouns and examined noun phrases. Before we review the next part of speech, let's finish this chapter with a...

Joke Break

It's only a murder of crows if there's probable caws.

If you've found this eBook useful, please head over to mrbruff.com and look at the other titles available:

