



TALENT POOL ACADEMY

Name:

Year Group:

VOCABULARY BUILDER

BOOK 1

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The English Language

English is an international language. It is written and spoken all over the world. It is spoken in a variety of accents – English, American, West Indian, Indian – but its grammar and most of its vocabulary remain the same no matter where it is used. The English used in a newspaper like Jamaica's *Daily Gleaner* is much the same as the English in *The New York Times*, *The Times of India* or *The Guardian*.

English has borrowed words from almost every other language. Look at these examples:

card (French)	piano (Italian)	fox (German)	bungalow (Hindi)
canoe (Carib)	dictator (Latin)	admiral (Arabic)	

English has its origins in northern Europe. Its grammar shows its roots in languages like German and Dutch. A typical English sentence has a Noun or Noun Phrase (Subject) followed by a Verb and another Noun or Noun Phrase (Object), e.g.

The fat man drove a big red car.
[Subject] [Verb] [Object]

Parts of Speech

English words can be classified into different parts of speech according to the part they play in making sentences in the language. Thus, all English words fall into eight main categories:

Nouns

A noun is the name of a person, animal, place or thing, e.g. John, tiger, school, kettle, honesty.

Verbs

A verb may be said to be a "doing" word, e.g. eat, think, write.

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word which takes the place of a noun, e.g. he, she, it.

Adjectives

An adjective describes a noun or a pronoun, e.g. good, fine, red.

Adverbs

An adverb generally modifies a verb, e.g. quietly, here, suddenly.

Prepositions

A preposition shows the relation between one thing and another, e.g. against, for, with.

Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word used for joining words and clauses, e.g. and, but.

Exclamations or Interjections

An exclamation or interjection expresses sudden emotion, e.g. Oh! Hello! Stop!

When we wish to express a thought we use words grouped together in a certain order so that we convey a sensible, definite meaning. This combination of words is termed a **sentence**. In conversation or writing, sentences should always be used in order that the hearer or reader may clearly understand the meaning.



Number

Most nouns have a **Singular** form used to denote **one** person or thing and a different **Plural** form denoting **more than one**. Pronouns and verbs also have different singular and plural forms.

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
box	boxes	child	children
brush	brushes	foot	feet
fox	foxes	goose	geese
gas	gases	man	men
glass	glasses	mouse	mice
watch	watches	ox	oxen
army	armies	tooth	teeth
city	cities	woman	women
fly	flies		
lady	ladies		
calf	calves		
half	halves		
knife	knives	brother	{ brothers brethren
leaf	leaves	person	{ people persons
life	lives		
loaf	loaves	fish	{ fishes fish
shelf	shelves		
thief	thieves	genius	{ geniuses genii
wolf	wolves		
chief	chiefs	halo	{ halos haloes
dwarf	dwarfs, dwarves		
hoof	hoofs, hooves	penny	{ pennies pence
reef	reefs		
roof	roofs		
cargo	cargoes		
echo	echoes		
hero	heroes		
wife	wives	cod	cod
potato	potatoes	deer	deer
banjo	banjos	dozen	dozen
day	days	grouse	grouse
sky	skies	salmon	salmon
piano	pianos	sheep	sheep
solo	solos	swine	swine
valley	valleys	trout	trout

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Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
brother-in-law	brothers-in-law	bye-law	bye-laws
by-way	by-ways	mouse-trap	mouse-traps
cupful	cupfuls	passer-by	passers-by
hanger-on	hangers-on	son-in-law	sons-in-law
man-of-war	men-of-war	spoonful	spoonfuls

The following words have no singular:

bellows, billiards, gallows, measles, pincers, pliers, scissors, shears, spectacles, thanks, tidings, tongs, trousers, tweezers, victuals.

Exercises on Number

1. State the plural of:

loaf, man-of-war, piano, sheep, foot, echo, penny, life, deer, ox.

2. Give the singular of:

ladies, thieves, geese, trout, passers-by, mice, knives, teeth, boxes.

3. Fill in the blank spaces – the singular or plural form – as required:


army	_____	son-in-law	_____
_____	roofs	cargo	_____
_____	women	_____	children
cupful	_____	_____	flies
swine	_____	halo	_____
dwarf	_____	_____	potatoes

4. Give the plural of:

police-constable, daughter-in-law, step-child, looker-on, housewife, fireman.

5. Give the singular of:

glasses, hoofs, heroes, feet, pence, fish, shelves, cities, men, leaves.

Exercises on Number continued **6. Change all Singulars into Plurals.**

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| a) I heard the echo in the cave. | l) The burglar tried to rob my shop. |
| b) The lady spoke to the child. | m) The prisoner says that he is innocent. |
| c) The boy went for a loaf. | n) The girl's hat was on the peg. |
| d) The man fed the calf. | o) The boy robbed a bird's nest. |
| e) The mouse ran into a hole. | p) His tooth hurt him badly. |
| f) The knife was lying on the table. | q) The farmer ploughs his field. |
| g) The fisherman caught a trout. | r) The horse is eating a raw carrot. |
| h) The dwarf gave him a stick. | s) The child cried because he was tired. |
| i) The ship struck the reef. | t) This is the house in which I stay. |
| j) My foot troubled me. | |
| k) It was a man's boot. | |

7. Change all Singulars into Plurals and Verbs into the Past Tense.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) The rabbit runs from the dog. | k) The child runs to the table. |
| b) The girl wears a blue dress. | l) He is a man of means. |
| c) The sailor swims to his ship. | m) I keep the bird in a cage. |
| d) The woman catches the goose. | n) He writes my name. |
| e) The man shoots the deer. | o) She tells me so. |
| f) The ox eats the potato. | p) He has a sharp knife. |
| g) The lady prefers the rose. | q) She takes his pencil. |
| h) The sheep runs in the valley. | r) The old woman sits on that seat. |
| i) Her foot is badly cut. | s) The man walks slowly to his job. |
| j) The thief steals the valuable bag. | t) The mouse scampers from the cat. |

Gender

Nouns and pronouns belong to one or another of four **genders** in grammar. These are:

1. **Masculine** – words denoting male creatures, e.g. boy, king.
2. **Feminine** – words denoting female creatures, e.g. girl, queen.
3. **Common** – words denoting creatures of either sex, e.g. child, owner.
4. **Neuter** – words denoting things of neither sex, e.g. house, box.

Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine
abbot	abbess	bachelor	spinster
actor	actress	beau	belle
baron	baroness	boy	girl
count	countess	bridegroom	bride
duke	duchess	brother	sister
emperor	empress	earl	countess
enchanter	enchantress	father	mother
god	goddess	fiancé	fiancée
heir	heiress	friar	nun
host	hostess	gentleman	lady
lion	lioness	he	she
marquis	marchioness	hero	heroine
master	mistress	him	her
mayor	mayoress	husband	wife
priest	priestess	king	queen
prince	princess	lad	lass
male	female	lord	lady
man	woman	masseur	masseuse
monk	nun	Mr	Mrs
nephew	niece		

Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine
shepherd	shepherdess	sir	madam
sorcerer	sorceress	son	daughter
steward	stewardess	Sultan	Sultana
tiger	tigress	tutor	governess
widower	widow	uncle	aunt
waiter	waitress	wizard	witch
boar	sow	billy-goat	nanny-goat
buck	doe	buck-rabbit	doe-rabbit
bull	cow	bull-calf	cow-calf
bullock	heifer	cock-sparrow	hen-sparrow
cock	hen	father-in-law	mother-in-law
colt	filly	grandfather	grandmother
dog	bitch	headmaster	headmistress
drake	duck	he-goat	she-goat
gander	goose	landlord	landlady
hart	hind	male-child	female-child
hound	brach	manservant	maidservant
ram	ewe	postman	postwoman
sire	dam	postmaster	postmistress
stag	hind	son-in-law	daughter-in-law
stallion	mare	stepfather	stepmother
steer	heifer	stepson	stepdaughter
Alexander	Alexandra	John	Joan
Cecil	Cecilia	Joseph	Josephine
Charles	Charlotte	Oliver	Olive
Christian	Christina	Patrick	Patricia
Clarence	Clara	Paul	Pauline
Francis	Frances	Robert	Roberta
George	Georgina	Victor	Victoria
Henry	Henrietta	William	Wilhelmina

Common gender words denote creatures of **either sex** and the same word may be used **both of male and of female**, e.g.

adult, animal, baby, bird, cat, cattle, child, companion, comrade, cousin, darling, dear, deer, fowl, friend, guardian, guest, infant, juvenile, orphan, owner, parent, passenger, pig, pupil, relation, relative, scholar, sheep, singer, student, swan, teacher, tourist, traveller, visitor.

Neuter gender words denote **things without life or sex**, e.g.

bag, boots, box, bread, butter, chair, chalk, chimney, church, cocoa, coffee, desk, dishes, door, floor, house, jacket, jotter, kettle, knife, mirror, pencil, pillow, ruler, school, seat, stairs, street, table.

Exceptions

We often speak of lifeless things as being male or female, e.g.

Sailors refer to their ships as **she**.

Motorists refer to their cars as **she**.

Pilots refer to their aeroplanes as **she**.

Names of things that suggest **power** or **dignity** are spoken of as if they were **masculine**, e.g.

Time, Winter, Mountains, Sun, Death.

Names of things that suggest **beauty** or **gentleness** are spoken of as if they were **feminine**, e.g.

Spring, Moon, Liberty, Peace, Nature.

On the other hand, we sometimes refer to a cat, dog, horse and other animals as **it**.

Exercises on Gender

1. Give the feminine of:

heir, monk, stallion, nephew, gander, waiter, sir, ram, hero, bachelor.

2. Give the masculine of:

witch, filly, cow, maidservant, wife, duck, bride, duchess, aunt.