

Ten-Minute Grammar

DAY
One

Nouns and Verbs

Identify the NOUN in each of the following sentences (person, place, thing, or idea—and pronouns don't count):

1. I caught a wild monkey yesterday.
2. I think he came from Madagascar.
3. He bit my hand when I tried to feed him.
4. Then I tried to feed him some bananas.
5. It turns out he's allergic to fruit.

Identify the VERB in each of the following sentences (the action of the sentence):

6. I searched my house for something edible other than fruit.
7. Finally, I discovered some cold pizza in the fridge.
8. The monkey absolutely loved pizza—especially the pepperonis.
9. So the monkey and I became best friends.

Wordplay – Just for fun!

- **EIGHT LETTERS:** Create as many words as you can using three or more of the letters below (at least one eight-letter word is possible):

R N T O A E S C

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DAY
Two

Nouns and Verbs

Read the following sentences from The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman and change the underlined verbs into PAST TENSE (it happened in the past):

1. The man outside is hauling a heavy metal garbage can across the alley to the high brick wall that runs around that part of the graveyard.

Change the underlined verb into PRESENT TENSE (it's happening right now):

2. The man Jack thought.
3. The stranger unlocked the side gate.

Change the underlined verb into FUTURE TENSE (it will happen later):

4. They declared this place an official nature reserve.
5. The stranger reached them as silently as the fog itself, and he watched the proceedings unfold from the shadows.

Identify which of the underlined words in this excerpt from The Graveyard Book are VERBS (Remember: only verbs can change tense—use that to check your answers.)

6. Scarlett was carrying a large picture book; she sat next to her mother on the green bench near the gates, and she read her book while her mother inspected an educational supplement.

Wordplay – Just for fun!

- **DESCRAMBLER:** Try to sort out the five scrambled words below:

JZAZ SIDBR BORCNA EPANTUS OOCBKKOO

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DAY
Three

Nouns and Verbs

In your own words...

1. What is a noun?
2. What is a verb?

Nouns can be identified by asking the following questions—if the answer is YES to any of them, you’ve got a NOUN:

- Is it a person, place, thing, or idea?
- Does it make sense to say “The (word) ?”
- Can it belong to someone—could you own it?

Identify which of the underlined words in this excerpt from The Graveyard Book are NOUNS (use the questions above to check your answers).

3. There were bones on the ground, very old bones indeed, although below where the steps entered the room Bod could see a crumpled corpse, dressed in the remains of a long brown coat.

General Grammar Review—Choose the correct homophone in the following sentences:

4. I can’t figure out (where / wear / were) I left my shoes.
5. Don’t forget (your / you’re) pants—that would be embarrassing.

Wordplay – Just for fun!

- **FOUR-LETTER WORDS:** Take the four-letter word below and change one letter to make a new four-letter word (keep it clean!) Then take *that* word and change one letter to make a new word. Then take *that* word and... You get the picture.

BOTH

Ten-Minute Grammar

DAY
Four

Nouns and Verbs

Read the excerpt from The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman and then answer the following questions:

(a) Bod endured the lesson. (b) When Silas taught him things, it was interesting. (c) Much of the time, Bod didn’t realize he had been taught anything at all. (d) Miss Lupescu taught in lists, and Bod could not see the point to it.

1. In sentence (a), is the word “endured” a noun or a verb?
2. Sentence (b) has two verbs; what are they?
3. In sentence (c), is the word “time” a noun or a verb?
4. Sentence (d) has four nouns; what are they?

Using the proper proofreading marks, correct the six errors in this excerpt:

bod fell, tumbling threw the darkness like a lump of marble, two startled to be scared, wondering how deep the whole beneath that grave could possibly be when two strong hands caught beneath him the armpits.

Wordplay – Just for fun!

- **VOWEL COMBINATOR:** The vowel combination “ai” almost always sounds like the hard “A” in “play.” List as many words as you can that contain this vowel combo.