

## What is a noun?

The definition of a **noun** is a **person, place, thing, or idea**. The word "idea" refers to a quality or a state of being. Essentially, if something can be named, it is a noun.

Person	Place	Thing	Idea
teacher	garage	paw	democracy
uncle	city	giraffe	fame
niece	park	ice cream	love
John	Paris	doorknob	disappointment

Nouns are also singular or plural in form, and both singular and plural nouns may be possessive. The "job" of a noun is as the object or the subject of a sentence, clause, or phrase.

For right now, though, we will only be considering what a noun is and what kinds of nouns there are.

In the following excerpt the nouns have been marked. Notice how each of these words "names" something.

FROM *FRANKENSTEIN* BY MARY SHELLEY

"His **words** had a strange **effect** upon me. I compassionated him, and sometimes felt a **wish** to console him; but when I looked upon him, when I saw the filthy **mass** that moved and talked, my **heart** sickened, and my **feelings** were altered to those of **horror** and **hatred**. I tried to stifle these **sensations**; I thought that, as I could not sympathize with him, I had no **right** to withhold from him the small **portion** of **happiness** which was yet in my **power** to bestow."

The responses—emotion, opinion, judgment—that an image can evoke are nouns. After viewing this image, how many one word responses can you list? Can you divide them into the four noun categories—person, place, thing, idea?

