

Nominalisation



What is nominalisation?

Nominalisation means changing other types of words into **nouns**.

Usually means changing **verbs** into nouns, but can also be done on adverbs or adjectives.

To do this, you usually need to add a suffix like **-ness**, **-tion**, or **-ment**.

React (verb) → reaction (noun)

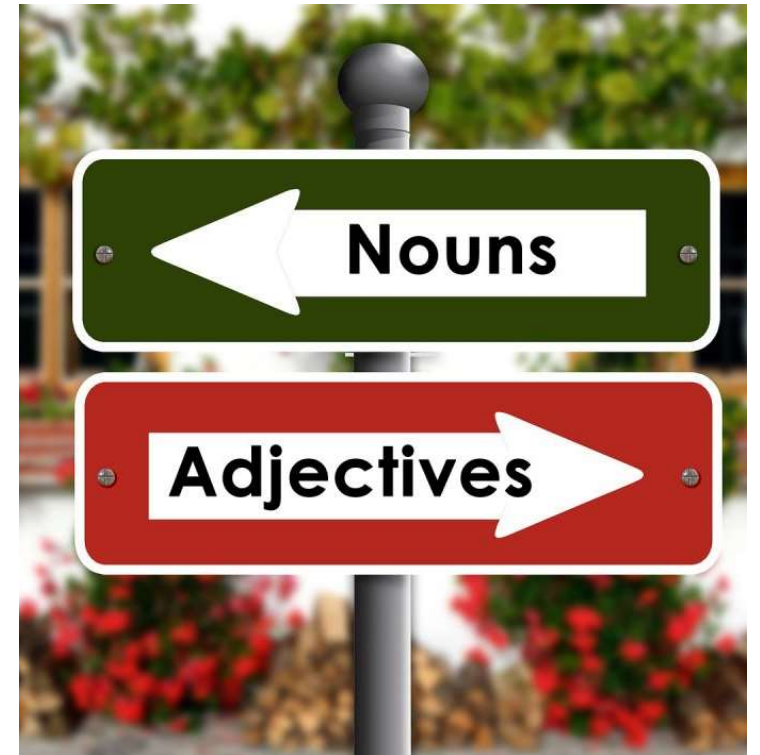
Create (verb) → creation (noun)

Eager (adjective) → eagerness (noun)

Happily (adverb) → happiness (noun)

Many words in English can be morphed into ALL the different parts of speech:

Obey (**verb**), obedience (**noun**), obediently (**adverb**), obedient (**adjective**)



Why nominalise?

Nominalising the verbs makes writing sound...

- More formal and professional
- Detached – less personal, less dramatic
 - Focus is on the **action**, not who did the action
- Clearer and more precise
 - Shows the **relationship** between pieces of information
- Forces you to explain more, dig deeper, and explain the cause and effect





Example

Normal: Lady Macbeth was **ambitious**.

Nominalised: Lady Macbeth's **ambition**....

- The un-nominalised sentence is complete, but doesn't give you as much information.
- The nominalised sentence is unfinished. To finish it, you need to add more information about Lady Macbeth's ambition:
 - What it was like
 - What it caused or led to
- Lady Macbeth's ambition **was all-consuming**.
- Lady Macbeth's ambition **led to her decision to plot the king's murder**.

More Examples

We **analysed** the data. → The **analysis** of the data showed...

The children **reacted**. → The children's **reaction** was...

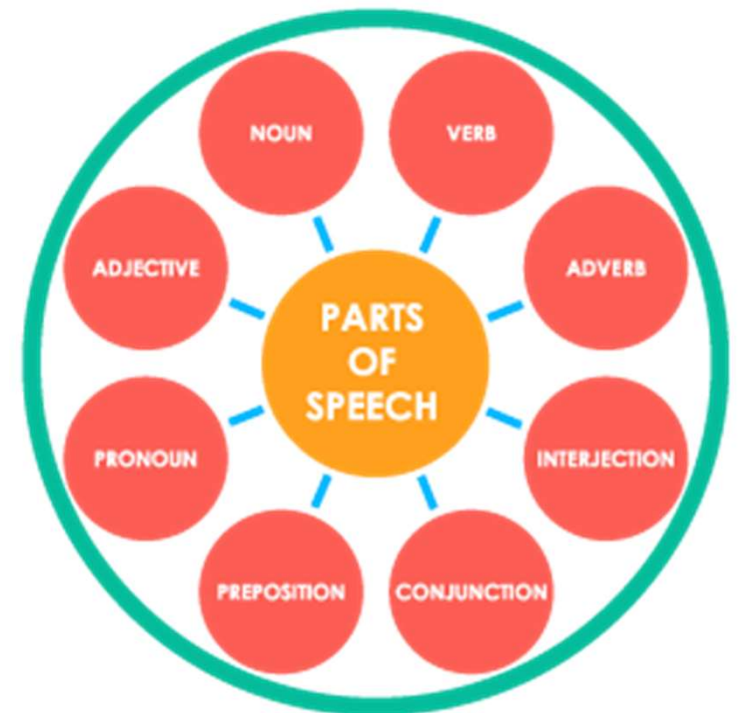
The team **departed**. → The team's **departure** caused...

We have **contaminated** the earth. → Our **contamination** of the earth has led to...

Parts of Speech

- In order to nominalise, you have to know your parts of speech well
- Need to be able to see where the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are in a sentence
- If you can't tell:
 - You won't know which words to change
 - You can't check to see whether you've changed it into the right thing

Helpful to know some rules or tests you can apply to figure out the part of speech



Test for a Verb

If it's a verb, you should be able to put **'to...'** in front of it to make a complete phrase.

You could also use **'we need to...'** or **'I want to..'**

- **To** *run*
- **To** *think*
- **To** *feel*
- **To** *be*
- **To** *have*



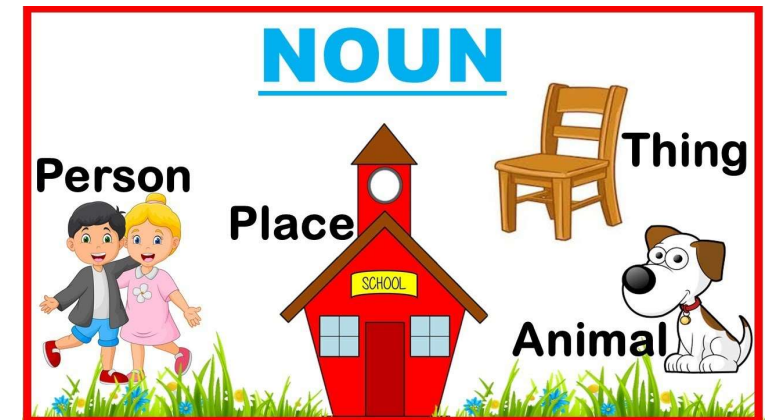
Won't work for nouns,
adverbs or adjectives!

- To *cat*
- To *happiness*
- To *yellow*
- To *angrily*

Test for a Noun

If it's a noun, you should be able to put 'a...', 'an...' or 'the...' in front of it to make a complete phrase.

- **A** house
- **The** dog
- **A** feeling
- **An** emotion
- **The** idea



Won't work for verbs, adverbs or adjectives!

- The give
- An exist
- A beautiful... (unfinished)
- An almost... (unfinished)

Test for an Adjective

If it's an adjective, you should be able to put 'he is...', 'she is...' or 'it is...' in front of it to make a complete phrase.

- *He is* fun
- *She is* sporty
- *It is* hot
- *He is* loud
- *It is* funny



Won't work for adverbs, verbs or nouns!

- It is book
- He is computer
- She is explain
- It is bitterly... (unfinished)

Test for an Adverb

If it's an adverb, you should be able to put **'he did it...'** or **'she did it...'** in front of it to make a complete phrase.

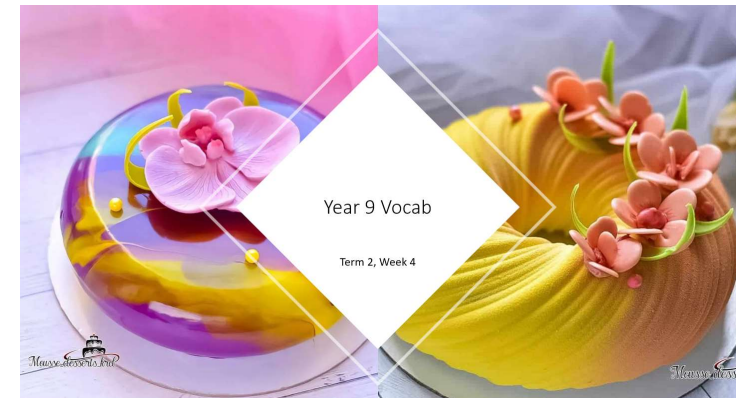
- *He did it* quickly
- *She did it* angrily
- *He did it* outside
- *She did it* rarely
- *It did it* slowly



Won't work for nouns, verbs, or adjectives!

- He did it computer
- He did it attractive
- She did it explain

This can also help you with vocab quizzes



- The beginning of a definition can be a CLUE about the part of speech

Repartee means “a quick and witty reply” → starts with ‘a’ → noun

Vitiate means “to destroy or damage” → starts with ‘to’ → verb

If it doesn’t start with either of those → probably adjective or adverb



How to nominalise

- Find the key verbs in your sentence. If there are no verbs that will work, try adjectives or adverbs.
- Change them into nouns by changing their form. Try these suffixes:
 - -ness
 - -tion or -sion
 - -ment
 - -ty
 - -ance or -ence
 - -ism
 - -ury
- Rearrange the sentence so that it still makes sense.

Practice

“Wealth is distributed around the world very unfairly, and many people starve.”

- Verbs
 - Distributed, starve
- Nominalised
 - Distribution, starvation
- Rephrase sentence
 - The unfair **distribution** of wealth around the world leads to **starvation**.



Practice

“When cars **emit** toxic gasses into the atmosphere, they **pollute** the air.”

- Verbs
 - Emit, pollute
- Nominalised
 - Emission, pollution
- Rephrase sentence
 - The **emission** of toxic gasses into the atmosphere causes air **pollution**.

