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# *Dedication*

This book is fondly dedicated to the Claritas Classical Academy family: to the board and all the founding families, to my dear friends and partners in this shockingly demanding but incredibly fulfilling task of educating our children--thank you for the many hours of merriment and laughter as we conspired together. I look forward to many more. And to our children--may this book about English grammar be for you a tool in your pursuit of wisdom and virtue. As you walk the road to Biblical wisdom, may your study of language help make you lifelong lovers of learning, free and imaginative thinkers for God's glory, and well-spoken prophets for His Kingdom; may it in some small way help you bring blessing to others.

– *Shannon Bucko*

# Acknowledgments

You know you've joined the ranks of "grammar geek" when you spend hours analyzing a certain phrase in a sentence, emailing and texting with like-minded nerds about what the particular words are doing in that phrase, thinking about it as you sweep the kitchen floor, perusing grammar websites to find your answer... and you actually enjoy it. If you find it fun and exciting to sit in a grammar class with your kids and take apart sentences, parsing them and diagramming them for an hour and a half, you know you have joined that club. When the curriculum committee for Claritas Classical Academy struggled to find just the right English grammar program for our students--one that is scalable for multiple age groups, comprehensive, systematic, challenging, interesting, and even integrated with our history cycle--as a member of that committee, I began to wonder if I might be able to come up with one myself. After spending a few days looking at different resources and praying about it, and after sharing some of my ideas with Holly, our executive director, we decided I should at least make an attempt. I humbly set myself toward the task, knowing that I very well might fail, since I only recently entered this grammar-loving-and-studying stage of my life. But as my wise husband likes to remind me and our five children, "Good things don't happen unless you try." Such a simple proverb, but so true! I do not know yet if this will be a "good thing," but I do know that I have learned a ton. I am also fully aware of how much more I have to learn. G.K. Chesterton once said, "If something is really worth doing, it's worth doing badly!" That explains my reason for attempting this daunting endeavor. It also gives me encouragement as I take the risk of doing something so far above my own abilities. The project should have been done over the course of a year, if not more; I did it in three months. It will therefore most likely need a year's worth (if not more) of editing. We should probably offer a reward at the end of the year to the person who finds the most mistakes!

This venture is really a compilation. I acknowledge the assistance of several resources to produce this work. *Our Mother Tongue* by Nancy Wilson was a huge asset; *A Practical Grammar of the English Language* by Thos. W. Harvey, A.M. definitely came in handy at times; and *The Shurley Method: English Made Easy* were both used extensively for Unit III; Rod and Staff's *Building Securely: English 7* was indispensable for certain sections and for ideas for practice exercises, and *Grammar and Diagramming Sentences* by Gianni DeVincentis-Hayes, Ph.D was invaluable for diagramming help. I also used the websites "English Grammar Revolution: Grammar Made Easy" and "Grammar Girl: Quick and Dirty Tips For Better Writing" every now and then. "The Reed-Kellogg Diagrammer" site was extremely useful for the diagramming as well.

Thanks goes first to Holly Schrock. Thank you, Holly, for your dogged determination in getting Claritas off the ground, for believing in my ability to write this guide, for your constant encouragement, and for your ability to bring about what seemed unattainable. Thank you for everything.

Many thanks to Julie Dreher for infecting me with the grammar bug in the first place. As a “student” in her Essentials class for a year and half, her amazing teaching abilities, her love for language, and her infectious humor helped reel me in. She is truly a lifelong learner who ignites the love of learning in others. Julie also helped edit the book, provided us with the answers to the units 1 and 2 oral practice questions, and made herself instantly available to me to answer questions day after day as I worked through this material.

Abundant appreciation goes to Bekah Palmer as well for her tireless editing of text and format.

And thank you to our soaring aviator Marine Colonel, Jay Oberdorf, for his many hours of work checking the Unit III Supplement. He has proven himself yet again.

Special thanks also to Liz Nickish, my husband’s cousin, for being available at a moment’s notice by phone call or text, to help me think through the examination of a sentence or phrase for Unit III. Nice to have a grammarian in the family!

And of course I must shower gratitude upon my saintly husband and my long-suffering children. They did without me for huge chunks of this summer so that I could put in the hours needed to pull off this (mostly) self-imposed assignment. Scott’s loving leadership of our family and his constant sacrifice of time and labor made this task possible. Thank you to my best friend, for all your care and for sounding the rally cry when needed.

My oldest children, Mary Katherine and Jacob, babysat for countless hours, took over laundry and dishes, and perpetually tidied, swept, and made snacks, all summer long. They, with Maggie, unceasingly cheered me on and supported me. I even got a few much-needed and timely massages. Esther and Susie, confused as to exactly why mom had to work all summer, patiently endured my absences, to the best of their little ability. Thank you to my sweet children for all you do and are to me. Thank you for being my biggest fans. You are my inspiration and the ultimate motivation for this work. Thank you all.

This second edition merits some new appreciation. Joslyn Serfass worked copious hours to help scale the Guide and the Supplements for levels 1 and 2. We hope that this will be a more user-friendly version for the beginner and that it will help the parent to better know where to stop with a younger student (or older who is just starting out). She created less difficult exercises in the supplements for these students as well. Thank you Jos! Ali Valentine and Amy Spaulding worked on the Unit 3 oral practice and review answers, and Ali spent countless hours pouring over all the material--again--reviewing and editing, fixing all my mistakes! Amy entertained and fed my children every now and then, to give the older ones a break. Bekah, you continue to amaze. Again, my husband and my children endured the long hours. A sincere thank you to all of you; it really was a group effort!

# *Forward*

BY JULIE DREHER

We overuse the phrase "a labor of love," but when a group of parents get together to create a better education for their children, there really is no better description for their endeavor. I had the privilege of being part of the Claritas family in its infancy, so I consider myself qualified to say that this document represents countless hours of study, sacrifice, and devoted work by a group of the finest people I know.

I once heard Andrew Kern, a wise voice in classical Christian education, say that the facility of using language sets us apart from the animals -- it is evidence that we are indeed made in God's image. To take his point further, the act of teaching our children to use language well is an act of discipleship. Of course we see through a glass darkly, and our ability to use -- and teach -- language can never be perfect this side of heaven. But what a noble undertaking!

With this book, Shannon Bucko and the Claritas Classical Academy staff have contributed mightily to the cause. May their efforts, and the labors of all parents seeking to teach for wisdom and virtue, be blessed.

Julie Dreher

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# *Instructions for using this guide*

## WITH STUDENTS AT VARYING LEVELS:

1. Some sections and exercises are designated as either Level 1 or Level 2.
2. Level 1 is for the beginner (meant for about third grade and up)--the student just starting out with this program, or for the student who has had a year or two but is still not ready for Level 2.
3. Every student should begin with Level 1, and if that material is difficult or just enough, stop there.
4. If the Level 1 material is easy, if they move through with absolutely no trouble, they should try Level 2.
5. Where there is no designation of level, the material is for everyone, but even then, the child will understand what they are ready to understand. Do not worry if they don't comprehend everything!
6. As the parent-teacher, please use your discretion about where your student is or should be. If you know your student is ready to be challenged with more, even if he is in the fourth grade, certainly let him move forward.
7. It is important to note that this program is meant to be studied for multiple years, so if a child does not grasp a concept the first time through, shelve it because we will definitely revisit it again over and over during the year as well as the following year; when they are ready, they will understand.

# Unit I

## *Lesson 1* Parts of Speech

### WHAT ARE THE EIGHT PARTS OF SPEECH?

The English language is made up of many words -- we put those words together to form sentences. But what do we mean when we talk about “parts of speech?” Traditional grammar places words into eight different categories (or classes) according to what they do in a sentence. Each part of speech explains not what the word is, but how it is being used in a particular sentence. Each part of speech does a specific job in a sentence. In fact, a word might act as a noun in one sentence and a verb or an adjective in another.

**For example:**

We walk on the sidewalk.

**In this sentence, the word *walk* is what we do; it is the action word so it is a verb (one of our “parts of speech”).**

**However:**

After dinner, our family likes to go for a walk.

**Now, the function of walk has changed from something we do, to something we like. It is a thing that is named so it is a noun (a noun is another “part of speech”).**

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Extra, Extra! Above, the noun *walk* is the object of the preposition *for* and part of the prepositional phrase *for a walk*. For a what? A walk. Later you will learn that nouns can have nine different jobs! The object of the preposition is just one of the nine jobs.

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**Let’s break down the phrase “parts of speech”: “Parts” means *divisions* and “speech” means *language*, so “parts of speech” just means *divisions of language*, and knowing the *parts of speech* helps us understand how different words are used.**

*Parts of speech simply means  
“divisions of language.”* <sup>1</sup>

What exactly are the eight parts of speech? They are:

1. Nouns
2. Pronouns
3. Verbs
4. Adverbs
5. Conjunctions
6. Interjections
7. Prepositions
8. Adjectives



English was first spoken in England. But why is England called *England* and why is our language called *English*? The earliest inhabitants of England were called the *Britons*. They were a Celtic people who lived in southern England. The old Latin name for Britain is *Britannia*. In 55 B.C. the Roman general Julius Caesar invaded *Britannia*. Though it took almost 100 years to complete the conquest, for the next 400 years, Britain was a Roman province. Many Latin words were introduced to the British tongue during this time period, such as *wall* (from the Latin *vallum*), *street* (from the Latin *strata via* meaning paved way), and *mile* (from *milia passuum*, which means a thousand paces). When Rome began to fall to invading barbarians, the Roman soldiers were called home from Britain to help defend their own country. The Romans had abandoned Britain by A.D. 410; and in the middle of the 400's, warring Germanic peoples (the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons) invaded the defenseless country. The Britons were pushed into the northern and western parts of Britain. The Angles then settled in the central part of the country, and the land became known as *Angle-Land*. Later this became *England*, and the language spoken became *English*, which is the language we speak today. Did you know that about 60% of the English language comes from Latin? <sup>1</sup>

## Definitions of Parts of Speech

**The parts of speech and their definitions should be memorized.**

1. Noun: A NOUN is a word that names a person, place, thing, activity, or idea.
2. Pronoun: A PRONOUN is a word that replaces a noun in order to avoid repetition.
3. Verb: A VERB is a word that does an action, shows a state of being, links two words together, or helps another verb.
4. Adverb: An ADVERB modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb and tells HOW, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW OFTEN, TO WHAT EXTENT, and UNDER WHAT CONDITION.
5. Conjunction: CONJUNCTIONS are words used to connect words, phrases, or clauses together.
6. Interjection: An INTERJECTION is a word or phrase used to express sudden emotion or command. Ugh! Stop! Hallelujah!
7. Preposition: A PREPOSITION is a word used to show the relationship of a noun or pronoun to another word in the sentence. A preposition always has an object of the preposition. THE RABBIT GOES \_\_\_\_\_ THE FENCE.
8. Adjective: An ADJECTIVE describes or modifies nouns and pronouns.

---

It is important to remember that the different parts of speech can be used in different ways in different sentences. We will learn them separately, but in reality, they are never isolated. Their roles change depending on the job they do in a particular sentence.

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## Lesson 2 Nouns And Pronouns

Nouns and pronouns are the “who” and the “what” of a sentence. These two parts of speech play major roles in our language, so we need to understand more than just their definitions. This lesson will give a basic framework for understanding nouns and pronouns and will help you understand important elements of sentence classification later in your study.

Nouns are the naming words. The word noun comes from the Latin word *nomen*, which means “name.”

A NOUN names a person, place, thing, activity, or idea.

*Note to parents: These definitions will be learned in the next six weeks. They are presented now for your reference.*

### Examples:

1. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness.

The word *Jesus* is the name of our Lord. The word *wilderness* names a place, the place where Jesus was tempted. These words name something, so they are classified as nouns.

2. God controls the history of the world.

The word *God* is the name of GOD (the One True God), the word *history* is the name of a thing (a field of study), and the word *world* is the name of a place (the planet on which we live).

3. Perfect love casts out all fear.

*Love* and *fear* are both names of *ideas*.

These words are also nouns.

### Here are two more:

Jacob plays baseball.

Maggie loves swimming.

*A noun is always the **name** of something. Noun means “name” in Latin.<sup>1</sup>*

In the sentences above, *Jacob* and *Maggie* are the names of *people*, so they are easily identified as **nouns**. *Baseball* and *swimming* are also nouns because they name *activities*. *Swimming* may sound like an action word (or a *verb*); however, because it is naming a *thing*, in this case an activity that Maggie loves, it is a noun.

## Oral Practice I

List two nouns for each category below.

1. Places you have visited or would like to visit.
2. Persons you have studied in history.
3. Things you use on a daily basis.
4. Your favorite subjects in school.
5. Some things you could sell at a yard sale.
6. Physical feelings (such as relaxation or pain).
7. Your favorite mode of transportation.
8. Mental feelings (such as sympathy).
9. Qualities you admire in a friend.
10. A job you might like to have when you grow up.



## Attributes of Nouns: Common Nouns and Proper Nouns

Words used to name a general, everyday (or nonspecific) class of things, persons, places, activities, or ideas are called *common nouns*. The word *common* means *general*. A common noun is not capitalized.

**Examples:** boy, street, artist, city

Words used to name specific, special (or particular) things, persons, places, activities, or ideas, distinguishing them from all others in the same class, are called *proper nouns*. *Proper* comes from the Latin word *proprius* which means *one's own*. A proper noun always begins with a capital letter.

**Examples:** Max, Baker Street, Rembrandt, Washington, D.C.

### **More examples:**

#### Common Nouns

Persons: teacher, woman, inventor

Places: city, school, park

Things: bridge, day, clock

#### Proper Nouns

Mr. Morse, Mother Goose, Thomas Edison

Philadelphia, Cave Spring High,  
Winston Park

The Brooklyn Bridge, Sunday, Big Ben

“Common” means *general* and “Proper” comes from the Latin *one's own*. 1

## Oral Practice II:

For each common noun below, think of a proper noun. Remember to capitalize!

1. ocean
2. restaurant
3. book
4. road
5. team
6. country
7. store
8. state
9. author
10. doctor





## (Level 2)

### Other Attributes of Nouns

**Concrete:** A concrete noun names a physical object that can be experienced with the five senses. It names anything in the physical world.

**Examples:** dog, tree, man

**Abstract:** An abstract noun names *concepts, qualities, or conditions*. They name any nonphysical thing. If it cannot be touched, felt, seen or tasted, it is probably an abstract noun.

**Examples:** love, freedom, fear

**Collective:** A collective noun names a group of things. They name collections of objects, animals, or people.

**Examples:** flock, family, audience

**Compound:** A compound noun is comprised of two or more words joined together.

**Examples:** homework, doghouse, doorknob

### **Oral Practice III**

**(Level 1)** Find the nouns in the sentences below and classify them as common or proper.

**(Level 2)** Find the nouns in the sentences below and classify them as common or proper, concrete or abstract, collective or compound.

1. The poet is Robert Louis Stevenson.
2. The disciples were discussing the concept of sacrifice.
3. The stray goose joined the gaggle.
4. Mimi needs a bookmark when she reads *The Hobbit*.
5. Benjamin's favorite beverage is chocolate milk.



R.L. Stevenson age 7

## Pronoun Properties

The properties of a pronoun are: *gender, person, number, and case*. The gender (male, female, or neuter), person (first, second, or third), and number (singular or plural) of a pronoun are *always* the same as those of its antecedent, but its case is determined by its place in the sentence or clause, or by the form of the word.<sup>2</sup>

### **There are three cases:**

1. Nominative or Subjective Case: When the pronoun is used as a subject or predicate nominative, it is in the *nominative* or *subjective* case.

**Example:** *She* read the book. (*She* is a subject pronoun.)

This is *she*. (*She* is the predicate nominative.)

2. Objective Case: When the pronoun is used as an object, indirect object, object of the preposition, or object complement noun, it is in the *objective* case.

**Example:** Eve read *it* too. (*It* is a direct object.)

3. Possessive Case: When the pronoun is used as a possessive pronoun adjective, a possessive pronoun, or a predicate adjective, it is in the *possessive* case.

**Example:** The book was *mine*.

*A pronoun never needs an apostrophe but has its own form to show possession.<sup>2</sup>*

(Level 2)

**Extra! Extra! Using pronouns in elliptical clauses:** An elliptical clause is a clause that is implied but left out or not fully stated. When an elliptical clause begins with *than* or *as*, we must use the pronoun we would use if we were to finish the clause. *Examples:* Ben is taller *than I*. Ben is taller *than I (am)*. Maeve studies harder *than she*. Maeve studies harder *than she (does)*. Micah received a higher grade *than they*. Micah received a higher grade *than they (did)*.

**Oral Practice V (Level 1)** In the following passage from *Amelia Bedelia and the Surprise Shower* by Peggy Parish, find all the pronouns.

“There was a knock on the back door.

‘Coming, coming,’ called Amelia Bedelia. She opened the door.

‘Oh, it’s you, Cousin Alcolu,’ she said. ‘Do come in.’

‘Mrs. Rogers asked me to help out today,’ said Alcolu. ‘Is she having a party or something?’

‘Every Tuesday,’ said Amelia Bedelia, ‘some ladies get together. They just sew and talk. But today Miss Alma is in for a real surprise. Those other ladies are giving Miss Alma a shower!’

‘Now why would they do that to her?’ asked Alcolu. ‘Miss Alma is nice.’

‘I don’t know,’ said Amelia Bedelia. ‘She is about to get married. They should do something nice for her. She can give herself a shower.’

‘Your folks do have funny ways,’ said Alcolu.’’

**Oral Practice V (Level 2)** In the following passage from *The Princess and the Goblin* by George McDonald, find all the pronouns and name their antecedents. More advanced students can determine which type of pronoun each one is, as well as its case, gender, and number.

“There was once a little princess whose father was king over a great country full of mountains and valleys. His palace was built upon one of the mountains, and was very grand and beautiful. The princess, whose name was Irene, was born there, but she was sent soon after her birth, because her mother was not very strong, to be brought up by country people in a large house, half castle, half farmhouse, on the side of another mountain, about half-way between its base and its peak.



The princess was a sweet little creature, and at the time my story begins was about eight years old, I think, but she got older very fast. Her face was fair and pretty with eyes like two bits of night sky, each with a star dissolved in the blue. Those eyes you would have thought must have known they came from there, so often were they turned up in that direction. The ceiling of her nursery was blue, with stars in it, as like the sky as they could make it. But I doubt if ever she saw the real sky with the stars in it, for a reason which I had better mention at once.”

# Unit I: Rules of Composition

## CAPITALIZATION, PART 1

Note to parents: Go over one or two of these rules each week during the first six weeks, and have your student do the exercises in the Grammar Supplement.

1. Every sentence, line of poetry, and direct quotation begins with a capital letter:

### Examples:

Jesus said, "Be not afraid."

"We will pray," explained Father; "and then we will have dinner."

"Let us pray," proclaimed Father. "We are ready to eat dinner."

Cities and Thrones and Powers  
Stand in Time's eye,  
Almost as long as flowers,  
Which daily die." (Rudyard Kipling)

2. Remember to capitalize all proper nouns. If a proper noun contains more than one word, capitalize each important word.
  - a. We capitalize the names of specific persons, including initials and titles.

### 1) A title of respect (president, king, doctor)

**Examples:** President Obama, King Agrippa, Dr. White

Becca went to see Dr. White for her broken arm.

Becca went to see the doctor for her broken arm.

**2) A word that shows relationship (*mother, grandfather, aunt, brother*) when used as part of a name. It is also proper when it is used instead of an actual name, but not when it comes after a possessive pronoun like *my, our, or her*.**

### Examples:

Did Mother say that we are going to see Grandpa and Uncle Pat?

Did my mother say that we are going to see our grandpa and uncle?

b. We capitalize names of God and words referring to the Bible or to parts of the Bible.

**Examples:** the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the Scriptures, Jehovah, the New Testament, the Almighty, the Lord

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When words like *god* or *lord* are used and they refer to idols or people they are not capitalized. For instance, the gods of the Greeks or the lords of the Philistines.

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c. We capitalize titles of books, newspapers, magazines, stories, poems, and songs. Capitalize the first word, last word, and every important word in the title. Do not capitalize articles, conjunctions, or prepositions of fewer than four letters unless it is the first or last word.

**Examples:** *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Princess and the Goblin*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *Christianity Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, "Pied Beauty," "America the Beautiful"

d. Names of geographical features or locations such as countries, states, cities, mountains, rivers, deserts, oceans, continents, lakes, and regions.

**Examples:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Europe, England, Nile River, Pacific Ocean, Lake Champlain, Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Syria, Lake Victoria, Vancouver Island, India, South America, Mount Sinai, Middle Atlantic States

**\*When words like *south* or *northwest* are used, they are not proper nouns when they name directions; when they refer to a geographical region or are part of the name, they are capitalized. The word "the" precedes the directional name when used as a proper noun and is not capitalized.**

**Examples:**

Wise men came from the East.

Scott's cousins live in the Pacific Northwest.

We travel south on Interstate 95 to get to Hilton Head.

The Mississippi River is west of Kentucky.

e. Names of parks, historic sites, and historic events, eras, and documents.

**Examples:** the Exodus, Ancient Times, Middle Ages, Civil War, Glacier National Park, Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence

f. Names of groups, nationalities, organizations, churches, schools, stores, and branches of civil government. Articles, conjunctions, and prepositions are treated the same as in titles of books, poems, etc.

**Examples:** American Red Cross, Department of Education, Proclamation Presbyterian Church, Claritas Classical Academy, Anderson's Country Store

g. Names of specific ships, airplanes, trains, buildings, and monuments.

**Examples:** the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, the Intrepid, the Mayflower, the Voyager, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Colosseum, Flying Scotsman

h. Brand names. Remember to capitalize only the specific brand name and not any common noun that may follow it.

**Examples:** Apple products, Bic pens, Kitchen Aid appliances, John Deere tractors

i. Names of school subjects derived from proper nouns. Most school subjects are common nouns and are not capitalized. If a subject name includes a word derived from a proper noun along with a common noun, do not capitalize the common noun.

**Examples:** English, American history, Bible

**Not capitalized:** math, spelling, reading

j. Calendar items such as months, days of the week, and holidays. The names of the four seasons are not capitalized.

**Examples:** January, Sunday, Christmas, Easter

**Not capitalized:** spring, summer, fall, winter