

## Handout 1 (Writing): Nouns, Verbs, and Adjectives

### Definitions

**Noun** A person, place, or thing. The kinds of words that refer to things, people, and other nameable or conceivable entities.

*Examples:* lily, hoax, telephone, bargain, idea, proof, theorem, terror, George Washington, consciousness.

**Verb** An action word. The kinds of words which are inflected for tense and which often refer to an action or a state.

*Examples:* He kicked the football. I thought I saw a pussycat. I am strong.

**Adjective** A descriptive word. Typically refers to a property or state. Often it is a word you can put “very” in front of (but not always; exceptions include “major”, “additional”, etc.)

*Examples:* big, round, red, afraid, gratuitous, hesitant, occupational.

**Nominalization** A noun derived from a verb or an adjective.

*Examples:* nominalize (verb) → nominalization

Verb → Nominalization:

discover → discovery

resist → resistance

react → reaction

Adjective → Nominalization:

careless → carelessness

different → difference

proficient → proficiency

### Exercises

#### Exercise 1: Underline the nouns.

- 1) I love watching my cat play with the pink yarn.
- 2) It is raining! Everyone, grab your umbrella and rain hat and watch out for the puddles!
- 2) Our lack of data prevented evaluation of UN actions in targeting funds to areas most in need of assistance.

**Exercise 2: Underline the verbs.**

- 1a) Once upon a time, as a walk through the woods was taking place on the part of Little Red Riding Hood, the Wolf's jump out from behind a tree occurred, causing her fright.
- 1b) Once upon a time, Little Red Riding Hood was walking through the woods, when the Wolf jumped out from behind a tree and frightened her.
- 2a) The Federalists' argument in regard to the destabilization of government by popular democracy was based on their belief in the tendency of factions to further their self-interest at the expense of the common good.
- 2b) The Federalists argued that popular democracy destabilized government, because they believed that factions tended to further their self-interest at the expense of the common good.

**Exercise 3: Underline the adjectives.**

- 1) The coal mines are dark and dank.
- 2) This house is bigger than that one.
- 3) Many stores have already begun to play irritating Christmas music.
- 4) I love that really big old green antique car.

**Exercise 4**

Turn verbs and adjectives into nominalizations, and nominalizations into adjectives and verbs.

analysis	believe	attempt	conclusion	evaluate
suggest	approach	comparison	define	discuss
expression	failure	intelligent	thorough	appearance
decrease	improve	increase	accuracy	careful
emphasize	explanation	description	clear	examine

**Exercise 4**

Now, choose a few verbs & adjectives from the table above, and create a sentence from them. Then, rewrite this sentence using the corresponding nominalizations. (Do this 3 different times.)

Example: for *suggest*, *discuss*, and *careful*, you could write:

I *suggest* that we *discuss* the issue *carefully*.

Then rewrite it using nominalizations as

My *suggestion* is that our *discussion* of the issue be done with *care*.