

## Noun — Parts of Speech

### COMPLETE CONCEPT EXPLANATION

#### 1. Definition of a Noun

A noun is a word that names a person, place, thing, animal, idea, quality, state, or action. It functions as the subject of a verb, the object of a verb or preposition, a complement, or an appositive. Nouns form the backbone of every sentence and are the most numerous class of words in English.

Nouns carry properties of number (singular / plural), gender (masculine, feminine, common, neuter), case (nominative, objective, possessive), and countability (countable / uncountable). Understanding each property is essential for grammatical accuracy.

#### 2. Types and Classification of Nouns

##### Primary Classification

Type of Noun	Definition	Key Feature	Examples
Proper Noun	Names a specific, unique person, place, or thing	Always capitalised	Delhi, Mahatma Gandhi, Amazon, Monday
Common Noun	Names any member of a class of persons, places, or things	Not capitalised (unless sentence-initial)	city, river, teacher, book

Type of Noun	Definition	Key Feature	Examples
Collective Noun	Names a group of persons or things regarded as one unit	Singular in form but may take singular or plural verb	jury, team, flock, committee, fleet
Abstract Noun	Names an idea, quality, feeling, or state that cannot be perceived by the senses	Intangible; usually uncountable	justice, courage, happiness, wisdom
Concrete Noun	Names something that can be perceived by one or more of the five senses	Tangible	stone, music, perfume, heat
Material / Mass Noun	Names a substance or material from which things are made	Uncountable; used without 'a/an'; no plural	gold, water, cotton, air, sand
Countable Noun	Can be counted; has singular and plural forms	Takes a/an; uses 'many', 'few'	chair → chairs, idea → ideas
Uncountable Noun	Cannot be counted individually; has no plural form	No a/an; uses 'much', 'little'	furniture, advice, luggage, information
Compound Noun	Made of two or more words that together name one thing	May be written as one word, hyphenated, or separate	toothbrush, mother-in-law, post office

Type of Noun	Definition	Key Feature	Examples
Verbal Noun (Gerund)	A verb form ending in -ing that functions as a noun	Can be subject, object, or complement	Swimming is healthy. (Swimming = subject)

## 2.1 Proper Nouns — Expanded Classification

Sub-category of Proper Noun	Examples
Names of persons	Sachin Tendulkar, Albert Einstein, Rani Lakshmbai
Names of places (cities, countries, rivers, mountains)	Paris, India, Nile, Himalayas
Names of institutions / organisations	United Nations, Supreme Court of India, Oxford University
Names of days, months, festivals	Monday, January, Diwali, Christmas
Names of books, films, newspapers	The Hindu, Harry Potter, Mughal-e-Azam
Names of languages, nationalities	Hindi, French, Japanese
Names of historical events / periods	World War II, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution

## 2.2 Collective Nouns — Important Groups

Group Word	Used For	Group Word	Used For
a fleet	ships / cars	a pride	lions

Group Word	Used For	Group Word	Used For
a flock	birds / sheep	a pack	wolves / cards
a swarm	bees	a litter	kittens / pups
a jury	jurors	a bouquet	flowers
a board	directors	a gaggle	geese
a panel	judges / experts	a troupe	actors / dancers
a brood	chicks	a herd	cattle / elephants
a colony	ants / bats	a crew	sailors

### 2.3 Abstract Nouns — Formation Patterns

Formed from	Base Word	Abstract Noun
Adjective → Abstract	brave	bravery
Adjective → Abstract	kind	kindness
Adjective → Abstract	just	justice
Adjective → Abstract	free	freedom
Verb → Abstract	know	knowledge
Verb → Abstract	achieve	achievement

Formed from	Base Word	Abstract Noun
Verb → Abstract	govern	governance / government
Proper Noun → Abstract	hero	heroism
Common Noun → Abstract	child	childhood
Common Noun → Abstract	king	kingdom

### 3. Gender of Nouns

Nouns in English are classified into four genders: Masculine, Feminine, Common, and Neuter.

Gender	Definition	Examples	How Gender Changes
Masculine	Refers to males	man, king, actor, tiger, host	—
Feminine	Refers to females	woman, queen, actress, tigress, hostess	Adding suffix: -ess, -ine, -rix, -trix
Common	Refers to either male or female	student, friend, teacher, doctor, person	Context / pronoun clarifies
Neuter	Refers to things, ideas, or non-living entities	table, justice, city, river, book	Always uses 'it'

### 3.1 Methods of Forming the Feminine Gender

Method	Masculine	Feminine	Notes
Add suffix -ess	actor	actress	Most common method
Add suffix -ess	host	hostess	
Add suffix -ess	lion	lioness	
Add suffix -ine	hero	heroine	Greek-origin words
Completely different word	man	woman	Suppletive forms
Completely different word	king	queen	
Completely different word	bull	cow	
Completely different word	nephew	niece	
Completely different word	bachelor	spinster / maid	
Add prefix (she/woman/lady)	dog (or he-goat)	she-dog / nanny-goat	Prefix method

## 4. Number of Nouns — Singular and Plural

### 4.1 Regular Plural Formation

Rule / Pattern	Singular	Plural	Notes
Add -s (default)	book	books	Most nouns
Add -es (ends in -s, -ss, -sh, -ch, -x, -z)	bus / brush / church / box	buses / brushes / churches / boxes	Adds a syllable
Consonant + y → drop y, add -ies	city / baby / story	cities / babies / stories	Vowel + y → add -s: keys, boys
Add -s (vowel + y)	monkey / key	monkeys / keys	Do NOT change y
-f or -fe → -ves	leaf / wife / knife	leaves / wives / knives	Some exceptions: chiefs, roofs, proofs
Nouns ending in -o	hero / tomato / potato	heroes / tomatoes / potatoes	But: pianos, photos, radios (loanwords) → -s

### 4.2 Irregular Plurals

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
man	men	child	children
woman	women	ox	oxen
foot	feet	mouse	mice

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
tooth	teeth	louse	lice
goose	geese	die	dice

### 4.3 Same Form for Singular and Plural (Invariable Nouns)

Some nouns do not change form between singular and plural: sheep, deer, fish, series, species, aircraft, swine, offspring.

### 4.4 Pluralia Tantum (Always Plural, No Singular Form)

Some nouns exist only in plural form and take a plural verb: scissors, trousers, spectacles, tongs, pliers, wages, alms, tidings, cattle, police, people, gentry.

### 4.5 Singularia Tantum (Always Singular, No Plural Form)

Some uncountable nouns have no plural: advice, information, furniture, luggage, baggage, knowledge, news, poetry, scenery, traffic, progress, work (in the sense of effort).

Important: The word 'news' looks plural but is singular — 'The news IS good.' | 'Information' has no plural — say 'a piece of information', NOT 'informations'.

## 5. Case of Nouns

Case	Function in Sentence	Examples
Nominative (Subjective)	Noun acts as the subject of the verb	The judge gave his verdict. (The judge = nominative)

Case	Function in Sentence	Examples
Objective (Accusative)	Noun acts as the object of a verb or preposition	She met the president. (president = objective) They spoke about justice. (justice = objective)
Possessive (Genitive)	Noun shows ownership or relationship	Ravi's book is on the table. The voice of the teacher echoed.
Nominative in Apposition	A noun placed after another noun to explain it	Mr. Sharma, our principal, spoke at length. (our principal = appositive)

### 5.1 Rules for the Possessive Case (Apostrophe Use)

The possessive case is one of the most error-prone areas in noun usage. The following rules must be observed precisely.

**RULE 1: For a singular noun, add apostrophe + s ('s) to form the possessive, regardless of the ending letter.**

**Ex. 1:** The student's notebook was torn. (one student → student's)

**Ex. 2:** The boss's decision was final. (boss ends in s; still add 's)

**Ex. 3:** James's car is parked outside. (proper noun ending in s still takes 's)

**RULE 2: For a regular plural noun ending in -s, add only an apostrophe (') after the s to form the possessive.**

**Ex. 1:** The students' notebooks were collected. (multiple students → students')

**Ex. 2:** The ladies' committee met on Friday. (ladies → ladies')

**Ex. 3:** The workers' union went on strike. (workers → workers')

**RULE 3: For irregular plural nouns that do NOT end in -s, add apostrophe + s ('s) to form the possessive.**

**Ex. 1:** The children's games were disrupted by the rain. (children → children's)

**Ex. 2:** The men's room is on the second floor. (men → men's)

**Ex. 3:** The oxen's yoke had to be repaired. (oxen → oxen's)

**RULE 4: When two or more nouns share joint possession, add 's only to the last noun. When possession is separate, add 's to each noun.**

**Ex. 1:** Ram and Shyam's business is thriving. (joint: one business owned by both)

**Ex. 2:** Ram's and Shyam's businesses are thriving. (separate: each owns a business)

**Ex. 3:** Meena and Leena's mother is a doctor. (joint: they share the same mother)

**RULE 5: For compound nouns and phrases, add 's to the last word of the compound.**

**Ex. 1:** My mother-in-law's advice was invaluable.

**Ex. 2:** The commander-in-chief's order was obeyed without question.

**Ex. 3:** The editor-in-chief's column appears on Sundays.

## 6. Countable and Uncountable Nouns — Detailed Rules

**RULE 6:** Uncountable nouns never take an indefinite article (a/an) and have no plural form. To quantify them, use a partitive expression ('a piece of', 'a bit of', 'a grain of', etc.).

**Ex. 1:** CORRECT: She gave me a piece of advice. | INCORRECT: She gave me an advice.

**Ex. 2:** CORRECT: We need two pieces of furniture. | INCORRECT: We need two furnitures.

**Ex. 3:** CORRECT: A bolt of lightning struck the tree. | INCORRECT: A lightning struck the tree.

**RULE 7:** Some nouns shift between countable and uncountable depending on meaning. As uncountable, they refer to a substance or concept; as countable, they refer to a type or instance.

**Ex. 1:** Hair (uncountable = the mass): Her hair is long. | A hair (countable = one strand): A hair was found on the table.

**Ex. 2:** Light (uncountable = illumination): The room has good light. | A light (countable = a lamp): Turn on a light.

**Ex. 3:** Paper (uncountable = material): Buy some paper. | A paper (countable = a newspaper / document): She submitted a paper.

**RULE 8: 'News', 'mathematics', 'physics', 'economics', 'athletics', and similar -s-ending words are singular nouns and take a singular verb.**

**Ex. 1:** The news is disturbing. (NOT: The news are disturbing.)

**Ex. 2:** Mathematics is a compulsory subject. (NOT: Mathematics are...)

**Ex. 3:** Economics deals with the allocation of resources. (NOT: Economics deal...)

**RULE 9: Collective nouns take a singular verb when the group acts as a unit, and a plural verb when members act individually.**

**Ex. 1:** The committee has reached a decision. (unit acting together → singular verb)

**Ex. 2:** The committee are divided in their opinions. (members acting individually → plural verb)

**Ex. 3:** The jury was unanimous. vs. The jury were arguing among themselves.

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## 7. Special Categories and Advanced Noun Rules

**RULE 10: Nouns of multitude (people, cattle, police, gentry, clergy, peasantry, nobility, infantry) always take a plural verb even though they appear singular.**

**Ex. 1:** The police are investigating the matter. (NOT: The police is...)

**Ex. 2:** Cattle were grazing in the field. (NOT: Cattle was...)

**Ex. 3:** The clergy have protested against the law. (NOT: The clergy has...)

**RULE 11:** When a numeral + noun combination acts as a compound adjective before another noun, the noun in the compound does not take a plural form.

**Ex. 1:** A five-year plan was announced. (NOT: a five-years plan)

**Ex. 2:** She is a twelve-year-old girl. (NOT: a twelve-years-old girl)

**Ex. 3:** The marathon is a forty-two-kilometre race. (NOT: forty-two-kilometres)

**RULE 12:** Latin and Greek plurals: Many academic and technical nouns retain their original plural forms. Mixing these is a critical error.

**Ex. 1:** datum → data; criterion → criteria; phenomenon → phenomena; alumnus → alumni; stratum → strata

**Ex. 2:** The data suggest (plural) that the hypothesis is wrong. | INCORRECT: The data suggests...

**Ex. 3:** The criteria for selection are (plural) unclear. | INCORRECT: The criteria is unclear.

**RULE 13:** Verbal Nouns (Gerunds) function grammatically as nouns but retain some verb properties. They can be subjects, objects, or complements and may take a possessive noun or pronoun before them.

**Ex. 1:** His constant interrupting annoyed the teacher. (possessive pronoun + gerund as subject)

**Ex. 2:** The manager disapproved of Ravi's arriving late. (possessive noun + gerund as object of preposition)

**Ex. 3:** INCORRECT: The manager disapproved of Ravi arriving late — when emphasis is on the action, possessive is preferred in formal contexts.

## 8. Common Errors — Correct vs. Incorrect

INCORRECT	CORRECT
She gave me an advice.	She gave me a piece of advice.
The news are shocking.	The news is shocking.
I have many informations to share.	I have a great deal of information to share.
The criteria is unclear.	The criteria are unclear.
The phenomena was observed twice.	The phenomena were observed twice. / The phenomenon was observed twice.
The childrens' rights must be protected.	The children's rights must be protected.
He is a ten-years-old boy.	He is a ten-year-old boy.
The police is investigating.	The police are investigating.
These scissor is sharp.	These scissors are sharp.
She has a long hairs.	She has long hair.
The faculty were in agreement. (acting as unit)	The faculty was in agreement. (acting as unit)

INCORRECT	CORRECT
Ram and Shyam's books are missing. (if each has his own)	Ram's and Shyam's books are missing. (separate possession)
The cattles were sold at the market.	The cattle were sold at the market.
He bought two luggages.	He bought two pieces of luggage.
The committee have made a final decision. (acting as unit)	The committee has made a final decision.

## 9. Comparison Tables

### 9.1 Proper Noun vs. Common Noun

Proper Noun	Common Noun
Always capitalised regardless of position	Capitalised only at the start of a sentence
Names one specific entity	Names any member of a class
Does not usually take an article (a/an)	Takes a/an or the as appropriate
E.g.: Mumbai, Ganga, Shakespeare	E.g.: city, river, author
Cannot ordinarily be pluralised	Most can be pluralised

## 9.2 Countable vs. Uncountable Nouns

Feature	Countable Noun	Uncountable Noun	Example Pair
Article	Takes a/an	Never takes a/an	a coin / money
Plural form	Has a plural	Has no plural	books / knowledge
Quantifier	many, few, a few	much, little, a little	few books / little advice
Number verb	Can be singular or plural	Always singular	One coin is... / Money is...
Partitive expression	Optional	Necessary for a portion	a piece / a piece of information

## 9.3 Abstract Noun vs. Concrete Noun

Abstract Noun	Concrete Noun
Cannot be perceived by the five senses	Can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched
Usually uncountable	Usually countable
E.g.: freedom, love, justice, anger, truth	E.g.: rose, thunder, smoke, apple, stone
Often ends in -ness, -ity, -tion, -ism, -ment	No fixed ending pattern
Cannot usually be pointed to	Can be pointed to or shown physically

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## 10. Memory Tricks and Mnemonics

### Mnemonic for Types of Nouns — P-C-Co-Ab-Ma

P-C-Co-Ab-Ma: Proper, Common, Collective, Abstract, Material — the five foundational noun types. Memorise as a sequence: 'People Collect Common Abstract Materials.'

### Apostrophe Rule — SAS / PAP

SAS: Singular → Add 's (student's, boss's, child's).

PAP: Plural Already ends in -s → Add only apostrophe (students', ladies').

PNA: Plural, Not ending in -s → Add 's (children's, men's, oxen's).

### Latin / Greek Plural Reminder — D-C-P-S (Data, Criteria, Phenomena, Strata)

These four are the most frequently misused. Remember: if it sounds like it ends in '-a', it is already plural. 'Data are', 'Criteria are', 'Phenomena are', 'Strata are.'

### Uncountable Noun Clusters (A-F-L-N-T)

A-F-L-N-T: Advice, Furniture, Luggage, News, Traffic — five of the most commonly pluralised by mistake. Treat all five as singular and uncountable in all contexts.

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## RULES SUMMARY — Quick Revision Reference

All thirteen rules covered in this document are consolidated below for rapid revision. Each rule is numbered to match the rule boxes above.

Rule #	Rule Statement	Sharp Example
<b>Rule 1</b>	<b>Singular Possessive: Add 's to any singular noun, including those ending in -s or -z.</b>	James's book; the boss's chair
<b>Rule 2</b>	<b>Regular Plural Possessive: Plural nouns ending in -s take only an apostrophe (').</b>	the teachers' lounge; the rivers' courses
<b>Rule 3</b>	<b>Irregular Plural Possessive: Irregular plurals not ending in -s take 's.</b>	the children's ward; the men's team
<b>Rule 4</b>	<b>Joint vs. Separate Possession: Joint possession → 's on last noun only; separate → 's on each noun.</b>	Ram and Shyam's shop (joint) vs. Ram's and Shyam's shops (separate)
<b>Rule 5</b>	<b>Compound Noun Possessive: Add 's to the final element of the compound.</b>	my sister-in-law's advice
<b>Rule 6</b>	<b>Uncountable Nouns: No a/an, no plural form; use a partitive expression to indicate a portion.</b>	a piece of advice; a bolt of lightning
<b>Rule 7</b>	<b>Dual Countable/Uncountable: Some nouns shift meaning between countable and uncountable use.</b>	hair (mass) vs. a hair (strand); paper vs. a paper
<b>Rule 8</b>	<b>Singular -s Words: News, mathematics, physics, economics, etc. are singular and take singular verbs.</b>	The news is good. Mathematics is fascinating.

Rule #	Rule Statement	Sharp Example
<b>Rule 9</b>	<b>Collective Noun Number:</b> Singular verb when acting as a unit; plural verb when members act individually.	The team has won. / The team are arguing.
<b>Rule 10</b>	<b>Nouns of Multitude:</b> Police, cattle, clergy, people, gentry always take plural verbs.	The police are on duty. Cattle are grazing.
<b>Rule 11</b>	<b>Compound Adjective Rule:</b> When a numeral + noun acts as a compound adjective, the noun stays singular.	a five-year plan; a ten-kilometre run
<b>Rule 12</b>	<b>Latin/Greek Plurals:</b> data, criteria, phenomena, strata are already plural and take plural verbs.	The data suggest...; The criteria are...
<b>Rule 13</b>	<b>Gerund as Noun:</b> A gerund may serve as subject, object, or complement; it is preceded by a possessive noun/pronoun in formal writing.	His writing is clear. / The teacher noticed Ravi's sleeping in class.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

### PART 1 — ALL 60 QUESTIONS (Answers in Part 2)

#### CATEGORY 1 — Spot the Mistake (Q1–Q15)

What it demands: Identify the grammatical error involving noun usage in each sentence, name the rule being violated, and supply the corrected form.

- Q1.** The committee have reached its final verdict unanimously.
- Q2.** He gave me several advices on how to handle the situation professionally.
- Q3.** All the furnitures in the office were replaced after the renovation.
- Q4.** She was shocked by the childrens' irresponsible behaviour during the event.
- Q5.** The phenomenas observed during the experiment were never reported in the journal.
- Q6.** They need to buy two luggages for the international trip next month.
- Q7.** My brother-in-laws opinion on the matter was completely different from mine.
- Q8.** The news are disturbing; three workers were injured in the factory explosion.
- Q9.** A ten-years-old prodigy won the national chess championship last year.
- Q10.** Neither the students or the teacher have submitted their reports on time.
- Q11.** The police is conducting a thorough investigation into the financial fraud.
- Q12.** The data suggests that the new treatment is more effective than the old one.
- Q13.** He is looking for a new work after resigning from the software company.
- Q14.** The criterias set by the selection board were considered extremely stringent.
- Q15.** Ram and Meena's parents live in separate cities, but they meet every summer.

## CATEGORY 2 — Fill in the Right Word (Q16–Q30)

What it demands: Choose the grammatically precise option from the given choices. More than one option may appear plausible — precision of noun rules determines the correct answer.

- Q16.** The \_\_\_\_\_ of ministers has approved the new education policy.
- (A) cabinet  
(B) cabinets  
(C) Cabinet

(D) a cabinet

**Q17.** She submitted three \_\_\_\_\_ of evidence to the court.

- (A) pieces
- (B) piece
- (C) bits
- (D) samples

**Q18.** The \_\_\_\_\_ are grazing in the open field near the village.

- (A) cattle
- (B) cattles
- (C) herd of cattle
- (D) a cattle

**Q19.** We received very little \_\_\_\_\_ from the government on the environmental issue.

- (A) information
- (B) informations
- (C) pieces of information
- (D) Both A and C are grammatically correct

**Q20.** The \_\_\_\_\_ of the criminal was established beyond reasonable doubt.

- (A) guiltiness
- (B) guilty
- (C) guilt
- (D) guiltyness

**Q21.** \_\_\_\_\_ is a fundamental requirement for any democratic society.

- (A) Justices
- (B) Justice
- (C) A justice
- (D) Justnesses

- Q22.** The \_\_\_\_\_ jury were unable to agree on the verdict.  
(A) member of the  
(B) (no article needed)  
(C) a  
(D) complete
- Q23.** He always asks for \_\_\_\_\_ before making any major financial decision.  
(A) an advice  
(B) advices  
(C) pieces of advices  
(D) advice
- Q24.** The \_\_\_\_\_ around the lake was breathtaking in the early morning light.  
(A) sceneries  
(B) scenery  
(C) a scenery  
(D) the sceneries
- Q25.** The Supreme Court ruled that \_\_\_\_\_ of expression is non-negotiable.  
(A) freedom  
(B) a freedom  
(C) freedoms  
(D) free
- Q26.** After the merger, the two companies \_\_\_\_\_ headquarters will be combined.  
(A) companys'  
(B) companies'  
(C) company's  
(D) companies's
- Q27.** The flock of birds \_\_\_\_\_ south every winter without fail.

- (A) migrate
- (B) migrates
- (C) are migrating
- (D) have migrated

**Q28.** Several \_\_\_\_\_ of the team objected to the new training schedule.

- (A) member
- (B) members
- (C) memberships
- (D) memberries

**Q29.** The professor's research produced startling \_\_\_\_\_ about urban migration.

- (A) datum
- (B) datas
- (C) data
- (D) datums

**Q30.** The \_\_\_\_\_ of the river has been changing due to deforestation upstream.

- (A) course
- (B) courses
- (C) a course
- (D) coursings

### CATEGORY 3 — Choose the Correct Sentence (Q31–Q45)

What it demands: From four sentences, identify the one that is grammatically correct and explain precisely why each of the other three is wrong.

**Q31.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The team are playing very well today as an unit.

- (B) The team is playing very well today as a unit.
- (C) The team plays very well today as an unit.
- (D) The team have been played very well today as a unit.

**Q32.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) All the luggages were sent to the wrong address.
- (B) All the luggage was sent to the wrong address.
- (C) All the luggage were sent to the wrong address.
- (D) All of luggage was sent to the wrong address.

**Q33.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The chairman of the board of directors' decision shocked everyone.
- (B) The chairman of the board of director's decision shocked everyone.
- (C) The chairman's of the board of directors decision shocked everyone.
- (D) The chairman of the board of directors decision shocked everyone.

**Q34.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The phenomena that the scientist observed was extraordinary.
- (B) The phenomenon observed by the scientist were extraordinary.
- (C) The phenomena that the scientist observed were extraordinary.
- (D) The phenomenons observed by the scientist was extraordinary.

**Q35.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) Mathematics are essential for developing analytical thinking.
- (B) Mathematics is essential for developing analytical thinking.
- (C) A mathematics is essential for developing analytical thinking.
- (D) Mathematicses are essential for developing analytical thinking.

**Q36.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The jury has disagreed among themselves on the verdict.
- (B) The jury have disagreed among themselves on the verdict.

- (C) The jury are disagreed among themselves on the verdict.
- (D) The jury was disagreed among themselves on the verdict.

**Q37.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) He is a well-known twelve-years-old chess prodigy.
- (B) He is a well-known twelve-year-old chess prodigy.
- (C) He is a twelve year old, well-known, chess prodigy.
- (D) He is a well-known, twelve years old chess prodigy.

**Q38.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The childrens' right to education must be guaranteed.
- (B) The children's right to education must be guaranteed.
- (C) The childrens right to education must be guaranteed.
- (D) The child's right to education must be guaranteed for all children.

**Q39.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The police is searching every vehicle at the border.
- (B) A police are searching every vehicle at the border.
- (C) The police are searching every vehicle at the border.
- (D) Polices are searching every vehicle at the border.

**Q40.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The data clearly suggests that economic inequality is rising.
- (B) The datas clearly suggest that economic inequality is rising.
- (C) The data clearly suggest that economic inequality is rising.
- (D) The datum clearly suggest that economic inequality is rising.

**Q41.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) Priya and Kavya's mother teaches at the same school as their aunt.
- (B) Priya's and Kavya's mother teaches at the same school as their aunt.
- (C) Priya and Kavya mother's teaches at the same school as their aunt.

(D) Priya's and Kavya mother teaches at the same school as their aunt.

**Q42.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The three boys each submitted their own project — it was Tom, Jack, and Peter's projects.
- (B) Tom's, Jack's, and Peter's projects were each submitted on time.
- (C) Tom, Jack and Peter's projects were each submitted on time.
- (D) Tom, Jack, and Peters' projects were each submitted on time.

**Q43.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The stratas of society have shifted dramatically in the last century.
- (B) The stratum of society have shifted dramatically in the last century.
- (C) The strata of society have shifted dramatically in the last century.
- (D) The strata of society has shifted dramatically in the last century.

**Q44.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) Her constant interruption of the speaker annoyed the audience.
- (B) Her constant interrupting of the speaker annoyed the audience.
- (C) Hers constant interrupting the speaker annoyed the audience.
- (D) She's constant interrupting of the speaker annoyed the audience.

**Q45.** Choose the grammatically correct sentence:

- (A) The news of the earthquake are spreading fear across the country.
- (B) A news of the earthquake is spreading fear across the country.
- (C) The news of the earthquake is spreading fear across the country.
- (D) The newses about the earthquake are spreading fear across the country.

#### **CATEGORY 4 — Analyse, Rewrite and Explain (Q46–Q60)**

What it demands: Deep grammatical analysis, identification of noun types and functions, paragraph correction, rewriting for precision, and discussion of competing or nuanced rules.

**Q46.** Identify the type (proper, common, collective, abstract, material, verbal) and the grammatical function (subject, object, complement, appositive, possessive) of each italicised noun: 'Justice, our guiding principle, demands that the jury reach a unanimous verdict before dawn.'

**Q47.** The following sentence contains multiple noun errors. Identify each error, state the rule being violated, and rewrite the sentence correctly: 'The committee have given three advices and the childrens' feedback were ignored.'

**Q48.** Explain in detail the difference between these two sentences, identifying what change in noun type or function changes the meaning: (a) 'The criminal's guilt was established.' (b) 'The criminal was found guilty.'

**Q49.** Rewrite the following paragraph correcting all noun-related errors: 'The polices arrested the suspects. Several informations were gathered at the scene. Two luggages belonging to the suspects were searched. The criterias used for arrest were later questioned.'

**Q50.** Both (a) and (b) appear similar but differ in a critical grammatical respect. Analyse and explain: (a) 'The audience was silent.' (b) 'The audience were divided in their reactions.'

**Q51.** Identify all abstract nouns in the passage and explain how each was formed (from which adjective, verb, or noun): 'His bravery and the wisdom of his counsel brought the company great prosperity and finally a measure of freedom.'

**Q52.** Convert the following concrete nouns to abstract nouns and use each in a sentence: (a) friend (b) king (c) child (d) brave

**Q53.** The sentence below contains a compound noun error and an apostrophe error. Identify both, state the rules, and rewrite: 'His mothers-in-law's advice conflicted with his sister's in laws expectations.'

- Q54.** Discuss whether 'staff' should take a singular or plural verb in these sentences and justify your answer: (a) 'The staff is dedicated to its work.' (b) 'The staff have been informed of the new policy individually.'
- Q55.** Analyse the noun function in each clause: 'Swimming every morning, which his doctor recommended, has made his endurance remarkable.' Identify: (i) the gerund and its function, (ii) the possessive construction if present, and (iii) any abstract noun.
- Q56.** Explain the grammatical difference between these two uses of 'paper': 'She bought paper for the printer.' and 'She read an interesting paper on climate change.' What noun category does each use represent?
- Q57.** The sentence 'The flock of geese that were resting on the bank suddenly flew away' contains a concord issue rooted in collective noun usage. Explain whether the verb 'were' is correct or incorrect, and give a fully reasoned answer.
- Q58.** Identify and classify all nouns in the following sentence, then state the grammatical function of each: 'The discovery of penicillin, a landmark achievement in medicine, transformed humanity's approach to infectious diseases.'
- Q59.** Rewrite the following sentences to use the possessive case (apostrophe) correctly, and state which rule applies to each: (a) 'The responsibilities of the employees are outlined in the manual.' (b) 'The throne of the king was made of solid gold.' (c) 'The decisions of the board of directors cannot be appealed.'
- Q60.** Write a short paragraph (5–6 sentences) on the topic 'The Role of Knowledge in Society'. After writing, go back and identify: (i) all abstract nouns, (ii) all collective nouns if any, (iii) any uncountable nouns used, and (iv) any possessive constructions used.

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## PART 2 — ALL 60 ANSWERS WITH DETAILED EXPLANATIONS

### CATEGORY 1 — Spot the Mistake: Answers (Q1–Q15)

**Q1 — Ans:** Error: 'have reached its' — the verb and pronoun disagree with each other. CORRECT: 'The committee has reached its final verdict unanimously.'

When a collective noun (committee) acts as a single, unified body taking one action together, it takes a singular verb (has) and a singular pronoun (its). Using 'have' (plural verb) alongside 'its' (singular pronoun) is internally inconsistent. The correction aligns both verb and pronoun to the singular. Rule 9 applies.

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**Q2 — Ans:** Error: 'advices' — advice is an uncountable noun; it has no plural form. CORRECT: 'He gave me several pieces of advice...'

'Advice' belongs to the class of uncountable nouns that cannot be pluralised directly. The word 'several' requires a countable item, so the partitive expression 'pieces of advice' is used. Rule 6 applies. Never write 'advices', 'an advice', or 'many advices'.

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**Q3 — Ans:** Error: 'furnitures' — furniture is an uncountable noun and has no plural. CORRECT: 'All the furniture in the office was replaced...'

'Furniture' is a classic uncountable noun. It cannot be pluralised as 'furnitures'. The verb must also agree: 'furniture was replaced' (singular). If you want to refer to individual items, say 'pieces of furniture'. Rule 6 applies.

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**Q4 — Ans:** Error: 'childrens' — the plural of child is the irregular 'children', which does not end in -s; therefore, add 's, not just '. CORRECT: 'the children's irresponsible behaviour'

'Children' is an irregular plural. It does not end in -s, so the possessive is formed by adding 's (children's), not by adding only an apostrophe. 'Childrens' is doubly wrong: it implies a non-existent plural 'childrens'. Rule 3 applies.

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**Q5 — Ans:** Error: 'phenomenas' — the correct plural of phenomenon is phenomena, not phenomenas. CORRECT: 'The phenomena observed... were never reported...'

'Phenomenon' is a Greek-origin noun. Its plural is 'phenomena'. Adding -s to 'phenomena' to make 'phenomenas' is a common error. Also note: 'phenomena' is plural and should take a plural verb ('were'). If referring to a single event, use 'phenomenon'. Rule 12 applies.

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**Q6 — Ans:** Error: 'luggages' — luggage is uncountable; it has no plural. CORRECT: 'They need to buy two pieces of luggage...'

'Luggage' is an uncountable noun and cannot be pluralised. To express quantity, use the partitive structure 'pieces of luggage'. Similarly, 'baggage' follows the same rule. Rule 6 applies.

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**Q7 — Ans:** Error: 'brother-in-laws' — the plural of brother-in-law is brothers-in-law, but for the possessive singular, add 's to the last element. CORRECT: 'My brother-in-law's opinion...'

For the possessive of a compound noun, add 's to the final word of the compound. The sentence is using the singular possessive (one brother-in-law), so the form is 'brother-in-law's'. If it were plural possessive, it would be 'brothers-in-law's'. Rule 5 applies.

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**Q8 — Ans:** Error: 'news are' — news is a singular uncountable noun despite ending in -s. CORRECT: 'The news is disturbing...'

'News' looks plural because of the -s ending, but it is a singular noun and always takes a singular verb. This is one of the most frequently tested rules. Rule 8 applies: news, mathematics, physics, economics all behave this way.

**Q9 — Ans:** Error: 'ten-years-old' — when a numeral-noun combination functions as a compound adjective, the noun remains singular. CORRECT: 'A ten-year-old prodigy...'

When a number-noun compound modifies another noun (acting as an adjective), the noun in the compound does not take a plural form: ten-year-old, not ten-years-old. This applies to all such constructions: a two-hour exam, a five-kilometre run, a three-bedroom house. Rule 11 applies.

**Q10 — Ans:** Error: 'or' — with 'neither...nor', the conjunction is 'nor', not 'or'. Additionally, verb agreement follows the nearer subject. CORRECT: 'Neither the students nor the teacher has submitted...'

The correlative conjunction 'neither...or' is incorrect. It must be 'neither...nor'. With 'neither...nor', the verb agrees with the noun closer to it (the teacher — singular), so the verb is 'has'. The plural noun 'students' is farther away and does not control the verb. This tests both conjunction use and subject-verb agreement rooted in noun number.

**Q11 — Ans:** Error: 'police is' — police is a noun of multitude and always takes a plural verb. CORRECT: 'The police are conducting...'

'Police' belongs to the class of nouns of multitude (along with cattle, clergy, people, gentry) that take plural verbs even though they appear to be singular. Writing 'police is' is always incorrect. Rule 10 applies.

**Q12 — Ans:** Error: 'data suggests' — data is the plural of datum and takes a plural verb. CORRECT: 'The data suggest that the new treatment is more effective...'

'Data' is a Latin plural (datum → data) and should take a plural verb in formal and academic writing. In very informal contexts, 'data is' appears, but in grammatical usage, 'data suggest/show/indicate' is correct. Rule 12 applies.

**Q13 — Ans:** Error: 'a new work' — 'work' as effort or employment is uncountable; do not use 'a'. CORRECT: 'He is looking for a new job / new employment / new work' (no article before 'work').

The noun 'work' meaning effort, occupation, or employment is uncountable and cannot take the indefinite article 'a'. Say 'new work', 'a new job', or 'new employment'. However, 'work' as a countable noun means a creative piece: 'a work of art', 'works of Shakespeare'. Rule 6/7 applies.

**Q14 — Ans:** Error: 'criterias' — the word criteria is already the plural of criterion; adding -s is incorrect. CORRECT: 'The criteria set by the selection board were considered extremely stringent.'

'Criterion' (singular) → 'criteria' (plural). 'Criterias' does not exist. Because 'criteria' is plural, the verb must also be plural: 'were considered', not 'was considered'. Rule 12 applies.

**Q15 — Ans:** Possible error or correctly used depending on context: If Ram and Meena share the same parents, use 'Ram and Meena's parents'. If they have different parents, use 'Ram's and Meena's parents'. The sentence as written ('Ram and Meena's parents') is correct only if they are siblings (which is the intended implication). CORRECT AS IS if they share parents.

This question tests understanding of joint versus separate possession. 'Ram and Meena's parents' signals that Ram and Meena share the same parents (joint possession). If the sentence intended separate parents, it would need to be 'Ram's and Meena's parents'. The sentence is correct as written for the context given. Rule 4 applies.

## CATEGORY 2 — Fill in the Right Word: Answers (Q16–Q30)

**Q16 — Ans:** (C) Cabinet

The Cabinet of ministers is a proper noun — it refers to the official government body and must be capitalised. Option (A) 'cabinet' is common noun usage (incorrect in this context). Option (B) 'cabinets' is plural and wrong. Option (D) 'a cabinet' is wrong because the definite article 'the' is already provided in the question.

**Q17 — Ans:** (A) pieces

'Evidence' is an uncountable noun. To quantify it, the partitive 'pieces of' is used. Option (B) 'piece' is singular, inconsistent with 'three'. Option (C) 'bits' is informal and imprecise. Option (D) 'samples' changes the meaning (samples ≠ pieces of evidence in a legal context).

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**Q18 — Ans:** (A) cattle

'Cattle' is a noun of multitude (always plural, no singular form, no article). Option (B) 'cattles' is non-existent. Option (C) 'herd of cattle' would require 'the herd of cattle is grazing' (singular verb) — but the sentence uses 'are', so 'cattle' alone is correct. Option (D) 'a cattle' is impossible; cattle cannot take the indefinite article.

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**Q19 — Ans:** (D) Both A and C are grammatically correct

'Information' is uncountable. 'Very little information' (A) is correct — 'little' is the appropriate quantifier for uncountables. 'Pieces of information' (C) is also correct as a partitive construction. Option (B) 'informations' is never correct. The answer acknowledges that both A and C work.

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**Q20 — Ans:** (C) guilt

'Guilt' is the abstract noun formed from the adjective 'guilty'. Option (A) 'guiltiness' is not a standard English word. Option (B) 'guilty' is an adjective, not a noun — cannot be the subject of 'was established'. Option (D) 'guiltyness' does not exist.

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**Q21 — Ans:** (B) Justice

'Justice' is a singular abstract uncountable noun and fits the sentence as a subject. Option (A) 'Justices' (plural) would require a plural verb 'are' and changes meaning. Option (C) 'A justice' refers to a judge — a countable use, which shifts the meaning entirely. Option (D) 'Justnesses' does not exist.

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**Q22 — Ans:** (B) (no article needed)

Collective nouns like 'jury', 'committee', 'team' do not require an article when they are already preceded by 'The'. The question's full sentence 'The \_\_\_\_\_ jury' already has 'The'. Adding another article or adjective in the blank is the test. The blank is testing whether the student knows no additional determiner is needed. The jury as a collective body acting individually (were unable to agree) takes a plural verb, which the sentence already provides.

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**Q23 — Ans:** (D) advice

'Advice' is uncountable. Option (A) 'an advice' is incorrect — uncountable nouns do not take 'a/an'. Option (B) 'advices' is a non-existent plural. Option (C) 'pieces of advices' compounds two errors.

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**Q24 — Ans:** (B) scenery

'Scenery' is uncountable. Option (A) 'sceneries' is incorrect. Option (C) 'a scenery' incorrectly uses the indefinite article with an uncountable noun. Option (D) 'the sceneries' compounds the article with a non-existent plural.

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**Q25 — Ans:** (A) freedom

'Freedom' is the correct abstract noun for this context. Option (B) 'a freedom' is used in specific contexts ('a freedom I cherish') but is not idiomatic with 'freedom of expression'. Option (C) 'freedoms' implies specific individual freedoms, which changes the meaning. Option (D) 'free' is an adjective, not a noun.

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**Q26 — Ans:** (B) companies'

'Two companies' is a regular plural ending in -s; the possessive is formed by adding only an apostrophe after the -s: companies'. Option (A) 'companys'" incorrectly pluralises the noun. Option (C) 'company's' is singular possessive. Option (D) 'companies's' violates the rule — never add 's after an -s ending plural.

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**Q27 — Ans:** (B) migrates

'A flock of birds' — the head noun is 'flock', a collective noun acting as a unit. When a collective noun acts as a unit, it takes a singular verb. 'Migrates' is the singular present tense. Option (A) 'migrate' is plural. Options (C) and (D) shift the tense unnecessarily.

**Q28 — Ans:** (B) members

'Several' requires a plural countable noun. 'Members' is the correct plural of member. Option (A) 'member' is singular, incompatible with 'several'. Option (C) 'memberships' refers to the status of being a member, not to the people themselves. Option (D) 'memberries' does not exist.

**Q29 — Ans:** (C) data

'Data' is the plural of 'datum'. The sentence uses the plural verb 'produced', and 'data' fits. Option (A) 'datum' is singular, inappropriate with the plural context. Option (B) 'datas' does not exist. Option (D) 'datums' is incorrect in formal usage (the Latin plural 'data' is preferred).

**Q30 — Ans:** (A) course

'Course of a river' is the standard expression for the path or direction a river follows. It is a countable singular noun here. Option (B) 'courses' would require 'The courses of the river', implying multiple rivers. Options (C) and (D) are grammatically awkward.

### CATEGORY 3 — Choose the Correct Sentence: Answers (Q31–Q45)

**Q31 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) The team is playing very well today as a unit.

When a collective noun (team) acts as a single, unified body, it takes a singular verb (is) and the article 'a' (not 'an') before 'unit' (since 'unit' starts with a consonant sound). (A) wrong: 'are' plural + 'an unit' — double

error. (C) wrong: 'plays' is correct in simple present for habitual action, but 'an unit' is wrong. (D) wrong: 'have been played' is passive and grammatically incoherent for this meaning.

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**Q32 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) All the luggage was sent to the wrong address.

'Luggage' is uncountable — it has no plural and takes a singular verb. (A) 'luggages' does not exist. (C) 'luggage were' — wrong verb agreement for uncountable noun. (D) 'All of luggage' — 'all of' requires a determiner before the noun: 'all of the luggage'.

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**Q33 — Ans:** CORRECT: (A) The chairman of the board of directors' decision shocked everyone.

For a compound noun phrase like 'the chairman of the board of directors', the possessive 's is added to the last noun in the phrase that performs ownership ('directors'). (B) 'director's' makes only one director the possessor, which is wrong. (C) 'chairman's of the board' places the apostrophe incorrectly mid-phrase. (D) 'directors decision' omits the apostrophe entirely.

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**Q34 — Ans:** CORRECT: (C) The phenomena that the scientist observed were extraordinary.

'Phenomena' is the plural of 'phenomenon' and requires a plural verb ('were'). (A) uses singular verb 'was' with plural 'phenomena' — wrong. (B) uses 'phenomenon' (correct singular) but pairs it with plural verb 'were' — inconsistent. (D) 'phenomenons' is not a valid English plural.

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**Q35 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) Mathematics is essential for developing analytical thinking.

Words ending in -ics that refer to a field of study (mathematics, physics, economics, athletics) take singular verbs. (A) 'Mathematics are' is incorrect. (C) 'A mathematics' — uncountable abstract nouns do not take 'a/an'. (D) 'Mathematicses' does not exist.

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**Q36 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) The jury have disagreed among themselves on the verdict.

The phrase 'among themselves' signals that the jury members are acting individually, not as a single unit. When members act individually, the collective noun takes a plural verb ('have'). (A) mixes 'has' (singular) with

'themselves' (plural pronoun) — internally inconsistent. (C) 'are disagreed' is not standard. (D) 'was disagreed' — same inconsistency as A.

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**Q37 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) He is a well-known twelve-year-old chess prodigy.

When a numeral-noun compound is used as a compound adjective before a noun, the noun stays singular. 'Twelve-year-old' modifies 'chess prodigy', so 'year' must be singular. (A) 'twelve-years-old' is incorrect. (C) removes the hyphens and creates ambiguity. (D) 'twelve years old' without hyphens as an adjective is informal but also structurally awkward here.

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**Q38 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) The children's right to education must be guaranteed.

'Children' is an irregular plural (not ending in -s), so the possessive is formed by adding 's: children's. (A) 'childrens' treats 'childrens' as a regular plural, which is wrong — 'childrens' is not a word. (C) 'childrens right' omits the apostrophe entirely. (D) 'child's right... for all children' is logically and grammatically mixed.

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**Q39 — Ans:** CORRECT: (C) The police are searching every vehicle at the border.

'Police' is a noun of multitude and always takes a plural verb. (A) 'police is' — incorrect. (B) 'A police are' — you cannot use the indefinite article 'a' with 'police'. (D) 'Polices' — incorrect plural; 'police' has no plural form.

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**Q40 — Ans:** CORRECT: (C) The data clearly suggest that economic inequality is rising.

'Data' is the Latin plural of 'datum' and requires a plural verb in formal usage. (A) 'data suggests' — wrong verb agreement. (B) 'datas' — does not exist. (D) 'The datum clearly suggest' — singular noun with plural verb is inconsistent.

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**Q41 — Ans:** CORRECT: (A) Priya and Kavya's mother teaches at the same school as their aunt.

If Priya and Kavya share the same mother (which 'their aunt' confirms — a common family), joint possession applies: add 's only to the last noun (Kavya's). (B) 'Priya's and Kavya's mother' implies two different mothers

— contradicted by context. (C) 'Priya and Kavya mother's' is grammatically malformed. (D) 'Kavya mother' omits the possessive.

**Q42 — Ans:** CORRECT: (B) Tom's, Jack's, and Peter's projects were each submitted on time.

Since each boy submitted his own separate project (separate possession), each name must take 's independently. (A) is an awkward, run-on construction with inconsistent possessive logic. (C) 'Tom, Jack and Peter's projects' implies joint ownership (one collective project), contradicting 'each submitted on time'. (D) 'Peters' — Peters is not a standard plural possessive for the name Peter; it should be Peter's.

**Q43 — Ans:** CORRECT: (C) The strata of society have shifted dramatically in the last century.

'Strata' is the plural of 'stratum' (Latin) and requires a plural verb. (A) 'stratas' — non-existent form. (B) 'stratum... have shifted' — singular noun with plural verb is wrong. (D) 'strata... has shifted' — plural noun with singular verb is wrong.

**Q44 — Ans:** CORRECT: (A) Her constant interruption of the speaker annoyed the audience.

Option (A) uses 'interruption', a standard abstract noun, as the subject — perfectly correct. Option (B) uses a gerund 'interrupting' which is also grammatically acceptable — but the more natural and formal phrasing in this context is (A) with 'interruption'. Option (C) 'Hers' is a possessive pronoun standing alone (not modifying a noun), which is incorrect before a gerund. Option (D) 'She's' is a contraction (she is), not the possessive.

**Q45 — Ans:** CORRECT: (C) The news of the earthquake is spreading fear across the country.

'News' is singular despite its -s ending, and always takes a singular verb. (A) 'news are' — incorrect. (B) 'A news' — uncountable nouns do not take 'a/an'. (D) 'newses' — does not exist; news has no plural form.

## CATEGORY 4 — Analyse, Rewrite and Explain: Answers (Q46–Q60)

**Q46 — Ans:** Sentence: 'Justice, our guiding principle, demands that the jury reach a unanimous verdict before dawn.'

JUSTICE: Abstract noun (it names a quality/concept) | Function: Subject of the verb 'demands'. OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE: Common noun 'principle' — used in apposition to 'Justice', functioning as Nominative in Apposition. THE JURY: Collective noun | Function: Subject of the verb 'reach' in the noun clause. A UNANIMOUS VERDICT: Common, countable noun | Function: Direct object of 'reach'. DAWN: Common noun (time reference) | Function: Object of the preposition 'before'.

**Q47 — Ans:** Corrected sentence: 'The committee has given three pieces of advice, and the children's feedback was ignored.'

Error 1 — 'committee have': Committee is acting as a unit (giving a collective result), so it takes the singular verb 'has'. Rule 9. | Error 2 — 'advices': 'Advice' is uncountable; the correct form is 'pieces of advice'. Rule 6. | Error 3 — 'childrens': 'Children' is an irregular plural not ending in -s; the possessive is 'children's', not 'childrens'. Rule 3. | Error 4 — 'were ignored': 'Feedback' is uncountable (singular), so the verb should be 'was ignored'. Rule 6.

**Q48 — Ans:** (a) 'The criminal's guilt was established.' — (b) 'The criminal was found guilty.'

In sentence (a), 'guilt' is an abstract noun (formed from the adjective 'guilty') functioning as the subject of the passive verb phrase 'was established'. The possessive construction 'The criminal's guilt' makes 'guilt' the focus — the establishment of the abstract quality is the event. In sentence (b), 'guilty' is a predicate adjective functioning as the subject complement after the linking verb 'found'. There is no noun for 'guilt' here; the adjective describes the subject directly. The key grammatical difference: sentence (a) nominalises the quality into an abstract noun that acts independently as a sentence element, while sentence (b) uses the adjective in the complement position. Both express the same real-world meaning, but through different grammatical structures.

**Q49 — Ans:** Corrected paragraph: 'The police arrested the suspects. A great deal of information was gathered at the scene. Two pieces of luggage belonging to the suspects were searched. The criteria used for arrest were later questioned.'

Error 1 — 'polices': 'Police' is a noun of multitude with no plural form; the plural verb 'arrested' is already correct. Rule 10. | Error 2 — 'Several informations': 'Information' is uncountable; use 'A great deal of information' and the singular verb 'was gathered'. Rule 6. | Error 3 — 'Two luggages': 'Luggage' is uncountable; use 'Two pieces of luggage'; the verb 'were searched' is correct because the subject 'pieces' is plural. Rule 6. | Error 4 — 'criterias': 'Criteria' is already plural; 'criterias' is non-existent. The plural verb 'were questioned' is correct. Rule 12.

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**Q50 — Ans:** (a) 'The audience was silent.' — (b) 'The audience were divided in their reactions.'

Both sentences use 'audience', a collective noun. In sentence (a), the audience is treated as a single unified body with one collective state (silence), so the singular verb 'was' is correct. In sentence (b), the members of the audience are acting individually, having different individual reactions, so the plural verb 'were' and the plural pronoun 'their' are both correct. This is Rule 9 in operation. The critical indicator is the phrase 'in their reactions' — 'their' signals that individual members are being referred to. This distinction is one of the most nuanced and frequently tested points in English grammar at the advanced level.

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**Q51 — Ans:** Abstract nouns and their formation: bravery, wisdom, prosperity, freedom.

**BRAVERY:** Formed from the adjective 'brave' by adding the suffix -ry (brave + ry = bravery). It names the quality of being brave. | **WISDOM:** Formed from the adjective 'wise' by adding the suffix -dom (wise + dom, with vowel change = wisdom). It names the quality of being wise. | **PROSPERITY:** Formed from the adjective 'prosperous' by dropping -ous and adding -ity (prosperous → prosper + ity = prosperity). It names the state of being prosperous. | **FREEDOM:** Formed from the adjective 'free' by adding the suffix -dom (free + dom = freedom). It names the state or condition of being free.

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**Q52 — Ans:** Abstract nouns formed and used in sentences:

(a) friend → friendship: The friendship between the two nations has endured for decades. | (b) king → kingdom: The kingdom was known for its prosperity and just laws. | (c) child → childhood: Her childhood in the hills gave her a lifelong love of nature. | (d) brave → bravery: His bravery under fire earned him the nation's highest honour. — Note: 'friendship' is formed by adding -ship; 'kingdom' by adding -dom; 'childhood' by adding -hood; 'bravery' by adding -ry (after dropping the final -e). All four are abstract nouns that cannot be perceived by the senses.

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**Q53 — Ans:** Corrected sentence: 'His mother-in-law's advice conflicted with his sister-in-law's expectations.'

Error 1 — Compound noun error: 'mothers-in-law's' is the plural possessive form. Since the sentence refers to one mother-in-law (his), the correct singular possessive is 'mother-in-law's'. Rule 5. | Error 2 — 'sister's in laws': This is a compound noun split incorrectly. The noun is 'sister-in-law' and the possessive is 'sister-in-law's'. The original phrasing 'sister's in laws' places the apostrophe on the wrong word and separates the compound noun. Rule 5.

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**Q54 — Ans:** Analysis of 'staff' as singular or plural:

Sentence (a): 'The staff is dedicated to its work.' — Here, 'staff' is treated as a collective body acting in unity (all members sharing the same quality of dedication). The singular verb 'is' and singular pronoun 'its' are consistent and correct. Rule 9. | Sentence (b): 'The staff have been informed of the new policy individually.' — The word 'individually' is the key. It signals that each member of staff received the information as an individual. Because the members are acting separately, 'staff' takes a plural verb 'have been'. This is identical in logic to 'The jury have disagreed among themselves'. Both sentences are grammatically correct; the choice of singular or plural verb depends entirely on whether the collective body acts as a unit or as individuals.

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**Q55 — Ans:** Sentence: 'Swimming every morning, which his doctor recommended, has made his endurance remarkable.'

(i) GERUND AND FUNCTION: 'Swimming' is a gerund (a verb form ending in -ing used as a noun). It is the subject of the main verb 'has made'. It is a verbal noun, and the entire phrase 'Swimming every morning' is the subject of the sentence. | (ii) POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTION: There is no explicit possessive before the

gerund in this sentence; the gerund phrase is used without a possessive determiner. However, 'his doctor' contains a possessive pronoun 'his' modifying 'doctor' in the relative clause. | (iii) ABSTRACT NOUN: 'Endurance' is an abstract noun (formed from the verb 'endure' + suffix -ance). It names a quality or capacity and functions as the object of 'has made' within the object complement construction ('has made his endurance remarkable').

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**Q56 — Ans:** Two uses of 'paper': (a) 'She bought paper for the printer.' — (b) 'She read an interesting paper on climate change.'

In sentence (a), 'paper' is used as a material/mass noun (uncountable). It refers to the substance from which sheets are made — it cannot be counted ('papers' in this sense would be awkward), takes no article, and cannot be preceded by 'a'. In sentence (b), 'paper' is used as a countable common noun, meaning a written document, article, or research report. It takes the indefinite article 'an' and can be pluralised ('papers on climate change'). This is a classic dual-function noun (Rule 7) where context determines whether the noun is countable or uncountable, and the grammatical behaviour changes accordingly.

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**Q57 — Ans:** Concord analysis: 'The flock of geese that were resting on the bank suddenly flew away.'

The main subject is 'The flock', a collective noun. However, the relative clause 'that were resting on the bank' contains the verb 'were'. The antecedent of 'that' in the relative clause is 'geese' (the noun immediately preceding 'that'), not 'flock'. Because 'geese' is a plural noun, the verb 'were' in the relative clause is grammatically correct — it agrees with 'geese', not with 'flock'. The main verb 'flew away' also logically refers to the flock as a whole (acting in unison), and 'flew' is an uninflected past tense that works for both singular and plural. Verdict: 'were' is CORRECT in the relative clause, as it agrees with its plural antecedent 'geese'.

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**Q58 — Ans:** Sentence: 'The discovery of penicillin, a landmark achievement in medicine, transformed humanity's approach to infectious diseases.'

DISCOVERY: Common, abstract noun | Function: Subject of the verb 'transformed'. | PENICILLIN: Material/common noun (a substance) | Function: Object of the preposition 'of'. | A LANDMARK ACHIEVEMENT: Common, countable noun ('achievement') | Function: Nominative in Apposition to 'The

discovery of penicillin'. | MEDICINE: Abstract/common noun (a field of knowledge, uncountable here) | Function: Object of the preposition 'in'. | HUMANITY'S: Proper/abstract noun used in possessive case ('humanity' + 's) | Function: Possessive modifier of 'approach'. | APPROACH: Common, abstract noun (method/attitude) | Function: Direct object of 'transformed'. | INFECTIOUS DISEASES: Common, countable noun (plural) | Function: Object of the preposition 'to'.

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**Q59 — Ans:** Rewritten using possessive case:

(a) 'She gave me several advices...' → 'The employees' responsibilities are outlined in the manual.' — Rule applied: Regular plural possessive. 'Employees' is a regular plural ending in -s; add only an apostrophe after the -s (employees'). Rule 2. | (b) 'The king's throne was made of solid gold.' — Rule applied: Singular possessive. 'King' is a singular noun; add 's (king's). Rule 1. | (c) 'The board of directors' decision cannot be appealed.' — Rule applied: Compound noun phrase possessive. Add 's to the final noun of the compound phrase (directors'). Because 'directors' already ends in -s (it is plural), add only an apostrophe. Rule 2 and Rule 5 together.

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**Q60 — Ans:** Sample paragraph and grammatical analysis:

Sample paragraph: 'Knowledge is the foundation of all human progress. A society that values education builds a legacy for its future generations. The wisdom of its scholars and the courage of its reformers determine whether a civilisation endures or fades. Without knowledge, freedom itself becomes difficult to exercise, and the governance of a nation loses its moral authority.' | (i) ABSTRACT NOUNS: Knowledge, progress, education, legacy, wisdom, courage, freedom, governance, authority. | (ii) COLLECTIVE NOUNS: Society (can be treated as collective); 'scholars' and 'reformers' are plural common nouns, not collective nouns. | (iii) UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS: Knowledge, freedom, wisdom, courage, governance, education, progress, authority — all uncountable abstract nouns. | (iv) POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS: 'its future generations' (pronoun possessive); 'its scholars' (pronoun possessive); 'a nation's moral authority' (possessive apostrophe if reworded). Note: 'The wisdom of its scholars' uses the 'of-possessive' (periphrastic genitive) rather than the apostrophe possessive, which is standard when referring to inanimate or abstract entities.

