Proper Nouns

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Identify proper nouns.
• Brainstorm proper nouns.
• Write sentences using proper nouns.

Preparation

Materials Needed

• Chart paper and markers
• Proper Nouns (BLM 6)
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text (with errors), the Proper Nouns anchor chart, and the EL practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.

1. Focus

Explain Proper Nouns

Say: We use nouns in just about every sentence that we write. There are two types of nouns, common nouns and proper nouns. Common nouns name a person, like a girl or boy; a place, like a school or a house; or a thing, like a dog or a tree. Proper nouns name a specific person, place, or thing. The name Michael is a proper noun. So is Austin, the name of a city in Texas. Oh, yes—names of states are proper nouns, too. The name of a specific thing, like Independence Day, is also a proper noun. Anytime we use a proper noun, it begins with a capital letter. We use proper nouns when writing a personal narrative to tell the reader about the special people, places, and things in our story.

Model Using Proper Nouns

Display the modeling text (with errors) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, and read it aloud to students.

Last sSaturday I went biking with my friend aAmy.
We went to eCenterdale pPark, a huge park in aAmes, iIowa.
I saw my neighbor, mMr. bBloom, at the park.

Modeling Text

Say: I’m going to share with you part of a personal narrative that I wrote. When I write a personal narrative, I want to tell my readers about specific people and events. I want my readers to be able to picture everything that I’m telling them. Using proper nouns helps me tell exactly what happened to who, and where. The first sentence names a specific day, Saturday, and a specific person, Amy. But something looks wrong. These proper nouns don’t begin with a capital letter. I know that proper nouns are always capitalized. (Capitalize the words Saturday and Amy in the text.) In the next sentence, I tell where we were:
Centerdale Park. This is the name of a specific park, and it’s a proper noun. I need to begin both words in the name with capital letters. (Capitalize the words Centerdale Park in the text.) Then I give even more information about where this story takes place. I explain that the park is in Ames, Iowa. Names of cities and states are proper nouns. I need to fix the capitalization here. (Capitalize the words Ames and Iowa in the text.) In the last sentence, I introduce another person who is part of my story, my neighbor. It’s not just any neighbor, it’s my neighbor Mr. Bloom. Names of specific people are proper nouns. I need to capitalize his name. (Capitalize the words Mr. Bloom in the text.) There. Now the proper nouns have the correct capitalization. Create an anchor chart and
record the proper nouns from the modeling text in the appropriate columns in
the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proper Nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bloom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lashawn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Proper Nouns Anchor Chart**

**2. Rehearse**

**Practice Using Proper Nouns**

Work with students to add other proper nouns to the anchor chart. Ask them to
think of proper nouns they might use to write a personal narrative. Then invite
partners to choose two proper nouns from the anchor chart and write sentences
using them.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use
“Strategies to Support ELs.”

**Share Practice Sentences**

Invite students to share the sentences they wrote. Ask the class the following
questions:

- What proper nouns were used in the sentences?
- What should each proper noun begin with?

**3. Independent Writing and Conferring**

**Say:** We use proper nouns when we are writing about specific people, places, or
things, such as the people, places, and things in a personal narrative. Remember
to always begin a proper noun with a capital letter.

If you would like to give students
additional practice recognizing and using
proper nouns, have them complete BLM 6.

**4. Share**

Bring students together. Review and
provide corrective feedback based on
students’ answers to BLM 6.

**Strategies to Support ELs**

**Beginning**

Beginning ELs may need additional practice to identify proper nouns and to understand that they begin with capital letters. Write simple sentences on chart paper using proper nouns such as students’ names, the days of the week, etc., but without capitalizing the proper nouns. (For example: “Your name is tina,” “Today is friday.”) Read each sentence aloud and use pantomime to communicate its meaning. Then model how to cross out the incorrect beginning lowercase letter on each proper noun and change it to a capital letter. Help students correct the capitalization of the rest of the proper nouns.

**Intermediate and Advanced**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to develop sentences. Make sure they understand the meaning of each word before they begin the activity. Remind them to use the correct capitalization of proper nouns, as shown on the anchor chart.