

LESSON 117

634 Words not used in the plural

knowledge progress item encyclopedia

Some English nouns are never used in the plural. For example, the words "advice", "furniture", "information", "knowledge", "progress" and "news" do not have plural forms. We don't say "All those informations were useful"; we say "All that information was useful". However, we can sometimes communicate a plural idea with nouns like this by using expressions such as "pieces of" or "items of". For example, we can say "All those pieces of information were useful" or "I need to buy five new items of furniture".

Name some English nouns that are never used in the plural, please.

Some English nouns ... are "advice", "furniture", "information", "knowledge", "progress" and "news"

Which of these sentences is correct: "He hasn't made many progresses" or "He hasn't made much progress"?

"He hasn't made much progress" is correct

How can we sometimes communicate a plural idea with nouns like this?

We can sometimes ... by using expressions such as "pieces of" or "items of"

Give me an example, please.

She gave him two pieces of valuable advice

Do you agree that a little knowledge can sometimes be a dangerous thing?

Yes, I agree that ...
~ No, I don't agree that ...

Why or why not?

Because we might get completely the wrong idea about something if we only know half the facts ~ Because knowing a little about something is better than knowing nothing

635 What do you think is the best piece of advice a father can give to his son?

I think the best ... is ...

Why?

Does an encyclopedia contain pieces of information about all kinds of subjects?

Yes, an encyclopedia contains pieces of ...

mass

advantage

disadvantage

mass-production

production

product

identical

quality

Do you think that the masses should be educated to the age of eighteen?

Yes, I think ... ~ No, I don't think ...

Why or why not?

What would you say were the advantages of mass production?

I'd say the advantages of mass production were that products can be made quickly and more cheaply

And what would you say were the disadvantages?

I'd say ... the products are often identical, and the quality might sometimes be poor

pick up

date

vocabulary

What am I doing?

You're picking your pen up from the floor

636 When a boy and a girl have a date, is it more common for the boy to pick the girl up at her house or to meet her somewhere in town?

When a boy and a girl ..., it's more common for ...

Do you sometimes pick up new English vocabulary from songs?

Yes, I sometimes ... ~ No, I never ...

prevent

What do you think is the best way to prevent accidents on the roads?

I think the best way ...

drum

What am I doing?

You're **drumming** your fingers **on** the table

What's the difference between a drum and a barrel?

The **difference between ...** is that a **drum** is usually **made of metal** and has **straight sides**, whereas a **barrel** is usually **made of wood** and has **round sides**

What would you do if your next door neighbour played the drums loudly every evening?

If my ..., I'd ...

harbour

port

Although the words "harbour" and "port" are similar in meaning, a harbour is anywhere a boat or ship is protected from the weather, whereas a port is a place where goods are put onto or taken off a ship, or where passengers board a ship. We also use "port" to mean a town or city with a port. For example, Liverpool is a port.

What's the difference between the words "harbour" and "port"?

The **difference ...** is that a **harbour ...**

637 nosey

What do we mean if we say that someone is nose y?

If we say ..., we mean that they are **too interested in other people's private matters**

Have you got nose y neighbours?

Yes, I've **got ...**
~ No, I haven't **got ...**

Nouns with different forms

masculine

feminine

In English, there are a few nouns that are different depending on whether we are talking about a man or a woman. We call these nouns "masculine" if they refer to a man and "feminine" if they refer to a woman.

We can sometimes form a feminine noun from a masculine noun by adding the letters "ess".

actor – **actress**
host – **hostess**
prince – **princess**

waiter – **waitress**
god – **goddess**

How can we sometimes form a feminine noun from a masculine noun?

We can sometimes form ...
by adding the letters "ess"

- 638 What are the feminine forms of "actor", "host" etc.? The feminine forms of ... are "actress", "hostess", "princess", "waitress" and "goddess"

Other examples of masculine and feminine nouns are as follows:

nephew – **niece**
landlord – **landlady**
widower – **widow**

What are the feminine forms of "nephew", "landlord" and "widower"?

The feminine forms of ... are
"niece", "landlady" and "widow"

event **eventful** **uneventful**

What has been the most important event of your life so far?

The most ... so far has been ...

Why?

What type of sports event do you like to watch most?

I like to
watch ... most

Would you say you had led an eventful or uneventful life?

I'd say
I'd led ...

concern

Are you the kind of person who likes to put his nose into things that don't concern him?

Yes, I'm the kind of ...
– No, I'm not the kind of ...

639 **celebrate**

celebration

New Year's Eve

If you won the lottery, how would you celebrate?

If I ...,
I'd celebrate by ...

Do most countries have a big celebration on New Year's Eve?

Yes,
most ...

up to date

out of date

essential

Do you always buy clothes that are up to date?

Yes, I always ...
~ No, I don't always ...

If you're planning to travel around the world, is it essential to have an up-to-date passport?

Yes, if you're planning ...,
it's essential ...

If you bought some food in a supermarket and then discovered it was out of date, would you take it back?

Yes, if I ..., I'd ...
~ No, if I ..., I wouldn't ...

Idiom 18

a piece of cake = extremely easy to do

e.g. This town is full of hotels, so finding somewhere to stay will be a piece of cake.

What does the idiom "a piece of cake" mean?

The idiom ...
"extremely easy to do"

Give me an example, please.

Most of the questions
in the exam were really difficult,
but the first three were a piece of cake