

English Communication Skills

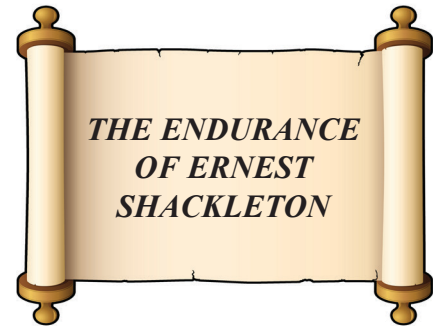


Topic 1

Chapter 1

Section 1

Topics 1-5



Ernest Shackleton



The South Pole

Ernest Shackleton was *impetuous* and restless, but also a man of *endurance*. In fact, that was the name of the ship on which Shackleton, with 28 crewmen, left England and set out to map the vast South Pole ice cap in 1914. While they were mapping the polar region, the *Endurance* became frozen in an ice pack and crushed. Shackleton and his 28 men escaped with most of their supplies. They salvaged timbers and other materials from the wreckage of their ship and made *sledges*. The men loaded the sledges with supplies and set out across the ice to find help. Shackleton's courageous band of men walked 180 miles to Elephant Island.

For more than 18 months, the *haggard* men lived on fish and seals, and endured sub-zero temperatures, snowstorms, and freezing rain. When supplies became low and rescue seemed hopeless, Shackleton selected five men to build and sail a boat 800 miles across the bone-chilling South Pole waters to get help. Shackleton and the five men used their math skills to navigate by the stars and sun, and eventually land on South Georgia Island. The weary band hiked across snow-covered mountains for several days to reach a whaling village. There, Shackleton requested a ship to return to Elephant Island to rescue his stranded men.

The villagers pressured Shackleton to abandon his plans to rescue his men, assuming that they were probably frozen to death. However, Shackleton had vowed to rescue his men. Immeasurable endurance, sense of duty, and moral courage drove Shackleton to fulfill his promise to return to his men. The villagers were finally persuaded to assist in the rescue; miraculously, all the stranded men were rescued. That demonstration of endurance set Shackleton apart as a hero.

People who achieve goals usually demonstrate endurance to withstand pressure and opposition. Such people possess emotional, moral, and physical strength to endure discouragement, fear, hardship, ridicule, or pain, in order to complete a task or noble goal.

VOCABULARY

Impetuous: impulsive.

Endurance: strength of will to keep going.

Sledges: heavy sleds.

Haggard: exhausted after prolonged suffering.

PARTS OF SPEECH

Words are the building blocks of language, just as bricks may be the building blocks of a house. In order for the building to stand firm and look right, it must rest on a firm foundation and include all necessary parts. All builders must follow specific codes and laws in order to achieve success. One well-built building after another soon turns into a neighborhood. Neighborhoods combine to become towns.

The same construction principles apply to building sentences. Words properly combined become sentences. Sentences combine to become paragraphs. Paragraphs make up stories, letters, or other documents. Grammar is a set of rules designed to help you know how to put words together and to communicate ideas clearly.

Words are divided into groups based upon their **functions**. Functional groups are called the Parts of Speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. You use Parts of Speech every time you talk and write.

Some words can belong to more than one group and have different functions, depending on how and where they are used in a sentence. Words can also change groups by adding different endings. This may sound a bit **daunting** at first, but an intelligent person, such as yourself, can learn and apply grammar rules with careful attention and **perseverance**.

Nouns are usually the first words we speak when learning to talk or learning a new language. They are also the types of words used most frequently. Let's look at nouns.

NOUNS

The word “noun” comes from the Latin word *nomen*, which means name. Nouns are “naming words” that identify **persons**, **places**, **things**, and **ideas**.

- Persons: This category names people and includes who they are and what they are.

Examples: Shackleton, crewmen, villagers

- Places: This category names all kinds of places—where people live, visit, and work.

Examples: England, South Pole, Elephant Island, South Georgia Island

- Things: This category is very **broad**. Things are items you can see and items you cannot see. In this category are objects, animals, times, and events.

Examples: supplies, timbers, fish, yesterday, Christmas

- Ideas: This category expresses beliefs, feelings, and **concepts**.

Examples:

endurance, duty,
courage, discouragement,
fear

VOCABULARY

Functions: purposes
Daunting: overwhelming.
Perseverance: determination to finish.
Broad: wide-ranging.
Concepts: thoughts; theories.



Shackleton's men on
Elephant Island being
rescued.

Chapter 1, Section 1, Topic 1

Common and Proper Nouns

Common nouns give the general names of persons, places, things, or ideas. Common nouns begin with small letters (lower case). *Proper nouns* name specific persons, places, and things. Proper nouns begin with capital letters.

Common Nouns	Proper Nouns
crewmen	Ernest Shackleton
supplies	England
sledge	Elephant Island
fish	South Georgia Island

Singular and Plural Nouns

Nouns are either singular or plural. If a noun names only one person, place, thing, or idea, the noun is *singular*. If a noun names more than one person, place, thing, or idea, the noun is *plural*.

Singular Nouns	Plural Nouns
ship	timbers
region	materials
sun	crewmen
boat	mountains

Noun Genders

In the English language, nouns have a gender. *Gender* is a word that refers to whether a noun is male (*masculine*) or female (*feminine*). Most nouns are either masculine or feminine. Some nouns can be either male or female (*common*) and other nouns are neither male nor female (*neutral*). Let us look at some examples of each *gender*.

Masculine Gender Nouns	Feminine Gender Nouns	Common Gender Nouns	Neutral Gender Nouns
man	woman	child	glass
groom	bride	witness	rock
husband	wife	spouse	sunset
father	mother	parent	rain
brother	sister	sibling	tree
boy	girl	kid	mirror
host	hostess	guest	book
rooster	hen	chick	egg
stallion	mare	foal	saddle

In review, you learned that nouns name persons, places, things, and ideas. You learned that nouns can be either common or proper and that they can be either singular or plural. You also learned that nouns have a gender.

You are doing great! You have successfully completed the first half of Topic One. In order to complete the second half, read the life principle and continue to your activity book.



LIFE PRINCIPLE:

“Successful people persevere beyond what they thought they could endure.”

-Carmen Trimm, author