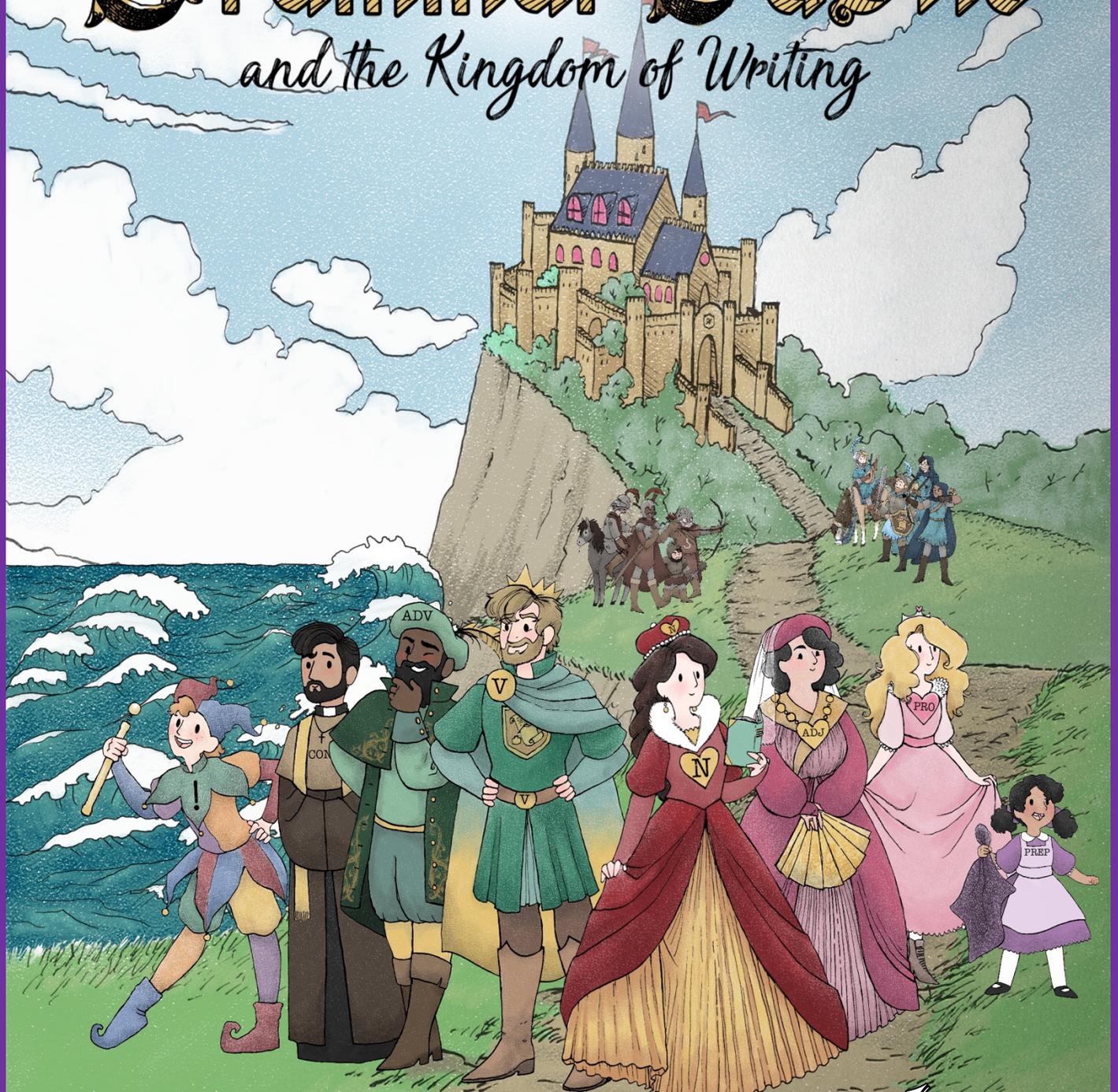


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# Grammar Castle

*and the Kingdom of Writing*



MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

STUDENT EDITION

SAMPLE

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**G**rammar **C**astle  
*and the Kingdom of Writing*

*Middle School*  
*Student Edition*

Written by Rusty Gorby  
Illustrated by Rebecca Atkins  
Edited by Mindy Piehler

By the Book Writing Publishers  
Grapevine, TX

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*Grammar Castle and the Kingdom of Writing*  
Middle School  
Student Edition

Written by Rusty Gorby  
illustrated by Rebecca Atkins  
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# SAMPLE

## **Understanding the Workbook for *Grammar Castle and the Kingdom of Writing* Middle School Level**

Discover the Kingdom of Writing through adventures in Grammar Castle. Using a metaphorical kingdom, this interactive grammar program helps students to get a grasp on grammar concepts while they learn to write well. Why not learn grammar in a fun and applicable way!

Each part of speech is represented by a character living in the Kingdom of Writing, so it is easy for students to remember them and their functions. Also, by color-coding each part of speech, students can make connections to the characters. For example, Queen Noun is represented by a **red N** for **noun**. She is dressed in red and has a personality of loving people, going places, and using things; so students can remember her function in a sentence. These memory devices make it easier for a teacher to teach. We always love to teach what we enjoy ourselves.

In addition, the parts of speech are put into 3 groups:

**The Royal Family:** **King Verb**, **Queen Noun**, and **Princess Pronoun**

**The Describer Family:** **Lord Adverb**, **Lady Adjective**, and **Lady Preposition**.

**The Grammar Friends:** **Father Conjunction** and **Interjection, the Court Jester**

### **Design Influence**

In addition to learning the parts of speech, the timeless **Canons of Rhetoric** (invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery) have influenced the writing of this curriculum, focusing on brainstorming, paragraph arrangement, essay format, memorable style, simple editing, and excellent delivery. Since many students and grownups today are afraid to write a paper, to give a speech, or to present their work, we must have young writers share their work aloud to catch silly mistakes and to build confidence. Sharing writing aloud grows a positive mindset towards editing—a forgotten art.

**The teacher edition of *Grammar Castle and the Kingdom of Writing, Middle School Level***, has the answers for the exercises and teaching tips. The teacher edition may be purchased in eBook format or as a hard copy.

# SAMPLE

## Set-up of Lessons

Each Lesson should take 1-2 hours. Feel free to break a lesson into 2-3 days, instead of completing it in 1 day. Finishing one lesson a week would be a great goal.

- 1) The lessons include grammar stories and grammar songs about the **8 parts of speech**, exercises on the mistakes made in writing (represented by the **Knights of the Wrong Table**), and exercises on the **strategies in writing** (represented by the **Knights of the Write Table**).

Middle school students love to laugh. Motivate the student to sing the grammar songs. Participating is key! Engaged students will remember concepts that they learned at an earlier age which will open their minds to new concepts for success in writing—the goal of learning grammar concepts in the first place. Having fun certainly beats the traditional, boring grammar book!

Grammar concepts are reviewed in weeks 14 and 30. These lessons may be used as tests, but a review is sufficient since applying the grammar concepts in writing activities is more important.

- 2) Traditional grammar uses random subjects for content, but we have incorporated **classic literature** and **scripture** to model beautiful writing with signposts of Truth. For example, while finding common and proper nouns in the first chapter of the Book of Esther, the student contemplates the plot of the lovely, ironic Bible story and learns to write a literary analysis paper about the life-giving story.

In fact, a student will read not only the **Book of Esther**, but also **Scripture passages about Jesus, A Christmas Carol**, and **Peter and Wendy** (Peter Pan)—famous people from the past and famous characters from fiction. This integration of grammar, writing, and lovely literature makes learning cohesive and meaningful.

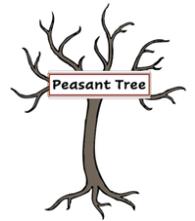
- 3) Every lesson has applicable writing activities where they are either prewriting, writing, or rewriting in one of the following assignments:
  - a. 3 single paragraphs
  - b. 1 literary analysis essay (11 sentences)
  - c. 2-3 page creative narrative

# SAMPLE

- 4) With **each** writing assignment, the student’s goal is to move through 3 levels of editing to become a **Knight of the Write Table**—always avoiding the **Knights of the Wrong Table**. To encourage **independent student editing**, the student is instructed to share some aspect of his/her writing at the beginning of most lessons in the section called “At the Knights’ Write Table.”

All students should **share** their **writing aloud**. Sharing his/her writing may be scary at first, but a student overcomes fears and learns to write well by reading work aloud, by independently catching mistakes, and by receiving praise for what is well-written. Writing well is a process—it takes time, not talent. God certainly gifts us, but too many people think they don’t have the gift of writing. We must remember that anyone can learn to write well if he/she sees it as a process that takes time.

**PAGE PREP SCHOOL:** To learn the process of writing and editing, the student (the Peasant of Writing) meets Sir Sentence and Sir Punctuation at the “**Peasant Tree**” and enters Page Prep School in the village near Grammar Castle. This imaginary but important step of humility helps the student acknowledge, “Yes, I have some things to learn about writing.”



Sir Sentence and Sir Punctuation enroll peasants (students) in the school, and the student becomes a **Page of Writing** because he/she has finished a “page” of homework.

**Note:** To become a knight in Medieval times, a young person would become a **page**, then a **squire**, then a **knight** after demonstrating some magnificent feat on the battlefield.

A student will learn **3 Levels of Editing**:

**LEVEL-1 EDITING: A Page of Writing goes to FOOLS’ FOREST.**

In Fools’ Forest the student focuses on more elementary skills: spelling, capitalization, punctuation (periods, commas, etc.), paragraph structure, transition words, and following directions on a writing prompt. The lessons include word battles with Sir Wrong Words, for example, whether to use *smarter* or *smartest*.

# SAMPLE

No student wants to remain in a place called “Fools’ Forest,” so he/she is motivated to enter a Level-2 Editing—a level that most students do not usually enter when correcting a “page of writing.” Most students turn in rough draft-caliber writing. It is just a “page” with poor mechanics, weak sentence structure, and no beauty. A student becomes a **Squire of Writing** at the “**Family Tree**” where he/she exits Fools’ Forest, meets Sir Usage, and enters the battlefield and swamp.



## **LEVEL-2 EDITING: A Squire of Writing goes to the Battlefield and Swamp.**

On the battlefield and in the swamp between Fools’ Forest and Grammar Castle, students apply more advanced grammar and writing concepts to their editing: correct verb usage and pronoun usage, development of all 4 sentence structures, complements, passive voice, active voice, dialogue, writing a thesis statement, recognition of fragments and run-ons, the use of the semicolon and new comma rules, etc.

With the goal of becoming a Knight of the Write Table, a student battles Sir Wrong Words, Sir Fragment, Sir Run-ons-a-lot, and Sir Mismark to win the duels on the battlefield and in the swamp to make his/her way to the “**Artist Tree**” in the courtyard of Grammar Castle. Here, the student may be dubbed a **Knight of the Write Table**.



## **LEVEL-3 EDITING: A Knight of the Write Table does “Castle Writing.”**

At the “**Artist Tree**” of Grammar Castle, the new Knight of the Write Table learns more about the beauty of writing with Sir Rhythm: sentence beginning variety, sentence length variety, sentence structure variety, use of literary elements in writing, implementing a biblical worldview, the use of the dash, et cetera. Students that edit at a Level 3 will enjoy the success of writing well!

# SAMPLE

## **For Students with Time Constraints or Learning Disabilities**

If your middle school student is young, has time constraints, or is struggling with comprehension, simplify this curriculum.

- a) The **“minimalist” option** requires the student to complete only the grammar lesson instruction and practice assignments. The teacher omits the “Knights at the Write Table” and all homework for grammar and writing.
- b) The **“writing-focus” option** requires the student to complete “Knights at the Write Table,” all grammar lesson instruction and practice, and only the writing homework assignment. The teacher omits the grammar homework but has the student do the writing activities.
- c) The **“grammar-focus” option** requires the student to complete the grammar lesson instruction and grammar homework. The teacher omits the “Knights at the Write Table” and all writing activities.

## **For the Advanced Student**

If your student is advanced, add some writing assignments and/or novels to your language arts for the school year. Email us at [grammar.castle@gmail.com](mailto:grammar.castle@gmail.com) for suggestions.

## **The Heartbeat of the Curriculum**

When designing writing curriculum, our motto is that “quality work is always better than quantity work.” After teaching writing for over 30 years, we have found that too many hours of writing homework breeds frustration and insecurity. We want students to enjoy writing and most of all love learning—throughout middle school, throughout high school, throughout college, and throughout life.

**Discover the *Kingdom of Writing*  
through adventures in Grammar Castle.**

# SAMPLE

## A Note of Encouragement to the Teacher

“How I love your Temple, LORD Almighty! [. . .]. Even the sparrows have built a nest, and the swallows have their own home; they keep their young near your altars, LORD Almighty, my King and my God” (GNBDC Psalms 84:1, 3).

Sharing truth with our children brings us near our God. In this grammar and composition book, we hope to point you and your students toward our Father in Heaven. If we can use God’s truths to teach a young person to write, how wonderful that is! Writing is a process. Never grow weary in teaching writing. Pray with your student, and God will cause the growth. A friend shared this prayer (from a *Precept Study*) recently:

“Even in the waiting, God is at work.

Oh, that He’d give me grace to worship in the waiting.”

We will always be waiting—waiting to be better, waiting for our children to mature, waiting for growth. We will never arrive. We will never be the perfect teacher! So, we might as well worship in our waiting.

Let’s worship as we teach our students, our children!

Let’s worship and give thanks as we watch God grow our children.

## Lesson 1: INTRODUCTION

On the outskirts of the Kingdom of Writing near Grammar Castle, live the bad **Knights of the Wrong Table**. During the Dart Ages, the bad knights struck terror in the Kingdom of Writing and destroyed almost all writing and the storybooks.



Today, the **Knights of the Wrong Table** — Sir Fragment, Sir Run-ons-a-lot, Sir Mismark, Sir Wrong Words—patrol the land around Grammar Castle by day and lurk about the *oogly googly* **FOOLS' FOREST** wreaking havoc in Writing.

At nightfall the bad knights slink back to their dark castle **BAD MANOR** where they author manuscripts of mayhem.

Sir Fragment, Sir Mismark, and Sir Wrong Words report to Sir Run-ons-a-lot, the Lord of **BAD MANOR** and the composer of calamity for Writing.



Sadly, the peasants of the village are enslaved to the **Knights of the Wrong Table**. The peasants long for freedom.

They long to live a better life—a life that creates beauty in the Kingdom of Writing, instead of destruction at the commands of the bad knights. By **Page Prep School** under “Peasant Tree,” the Peasants of Writing wait for the **Knights of the Write Table** to rescue them.



The **Knights of the Write Table**—once orphans of the village—recruit and train the peasants at **Page Prep School** to duel the **Knights of the Wrong Table**. Sir Sentence, Sir Punctuation, Sir Usage, and Sir Rhythm train Peasants of Writing to be good

- **Pages of Writing,**
- then **Squires of Writing,** and eventually
- **Knights of the Write Table.**



Sir Sentence



Sir Punctuation



Sir Usage



Sir Rhythm

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! It is time to join the good knights—the Knights of the Write Table!

To become a good **Page of Writing**, peasants must enroll in **Page Prep School**, then enter the *oogly googly* **FOOLS' FOREST** to complete the Page-Level Quests. With the help of Sir Sentence and Sir Punctuation, the pages will outwit lazy Sir Wrong Words and sneaky Sir Mismark.

After the **Pages of Writing** complete the Page-Level Quests, they will be dubbed **Squires of Writing** at the “**Family Tree**” on the edge of the *oogly googly* **FOOLS' FOREST**.



# SAMPLE

On the battlefield and in the swamp, the new **Squires of Writing** must complete the Squire-Level Quests and continue dueling the **Knights of the Wrong Table**, especially the farming Sir Fragment and the period-juggling Sir Run-ons-a-lot.

After the duels with the bad knights, the wise **Squires of Writing** arrive at Grammar Castle where they are dubbed **Knights of the Write Table** beside the “**Artist Tree**.” In the castle the stylish knights can focus on the beauty of Writing.



In Grammar Castle live the King and Queen of Writing. **King Verb** and **Queen Noun** have quite a story to tell. Before they met, no one in the kingdom could write a sentence, a clause, or even a phrase. It was tragic! Poor writing was rampant!



However, with the help of the **Knights of the Write Table**,



Sir Sentence



Sir Punctuation



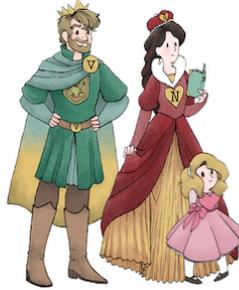
Sir Usage



Sir Rhythm

with the help of **The Royal Family,**

**The Royal Family**  
King Verb,  
Queen Noun, and  
Princess Pronoun



with the help of **The Describer Family,**

**The Describer Family**  
Lord Adverb,  
his wife, Lady Adjective and  
his daughter, Lady Preposition.



and with the help of **The Grammar Friends,** the  
kingdom will defeat the evil knights.

**The Grammar Friends**  
Father Conjunction and  
Interjection, the Court Jester



The 8 different people in Grammar Castle represent the 8 parts of speech in the English language.

**Princess Pronoun**, **Lady Preposition**, **Lady Adjective**,  
**Lord Adverb**, **Interjection**, **the Court Jester**, and  
**Father Conjunction**



Long live **King Verb** and **Queen Noun**  
and all her *subjects!*



As a **Knight of the Write Table**, YOU too will forever rule in the **Kingdom of Writing**. You have the right to become a knight every time you write!



Discover the *Kingdom of Writing* through adventures in **Grammar Castle**.

**Note:** Because you are in the **Kingdom of Writing**, names such as “Page of Writing,” “The Knights of the Write Table,” and “Writing” are capitalized to make them proper nouns (specific names) in the story.

# SAMPLE PAGE PREP SCHOOL

Lesson 1



**Calling all Peasants of Writing!!!**

**Hear Ye! Hear Ye! It is time to join the  
good knights—the Knights of the Write Table!**

**Enroll in *Page Prep School* today!!**

**You will meet the Royal Family and Friends who live in  
Grammar Castle, and you will learn how to defeat the  
Knights of the Wrong Table.**

**Sign your name below to enroll in *Page Prep School*.**

---

## Meet Queen Noun



Before **Lady Noun** became **Queen Noun** of Writing, the evil Knights of the Wrong Table had destroyed all the well written pieces of literature in the kingdom. This dark time became known as the "Dart Ages" because the wicked knights used storybooks as dartboards during their tournaments and merrymaking.



The evil Knights of the Wrong Table had stolen all of the storybooks in the kingdom, and the only stories left were guarded in Grammar Castle, the home of King Verb. Sadly, the villagers no longer read or wrote great stories. It was a dark time.



During these "Dart Ages," **Lady Noun** was just a common **person**—a girl who lived in a common **place** with her kind mother and father who taught her to serve the people of the village. While **Lady Noun** was cleaning up **things** after one of the evil knights' dart tournament, she found true treasures buried beneath the rubble: lovely storybooks.

Even though the books had dart holes from the evil knights' destructive darts, she read the storybooks to the village's children about many wonderful **people, places, things, and ideas**. Then, she taught the villagers to love and value **people, places, things, and ideas** by naming them.



When King Verb heard about **Lady Noun** teaching the village children, he decided to find this special teacher so that she could help King Verb and the **Knights of the Write Table** start **Page Prep School**.



Searching the kingdom for hours, King Verb finally found **Lady Noun** singing the “**Noun Song**” to the village children. He thought to himself, “I have seen this fair lady before—perhaps when we were children.”



## “Noun Song”

(Tune of “Ring Around the Rosie”)

**Naming people, places, things,  
Makes them special, so we sing,  
“Nouns are, nouns are,  
Naming words.”**

## Queen Noun's Common and Proper Nouns

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised (NIV Proverbs 31: 30).



A woman who fears God, **Queen Noun** names everyone and everything to show their value. **Queen Noun** is often **common**, but sometimes she is called upon to be **proper**.

1. **Common Nouns** name **people, places, things, activities,** and **ideas**.
2. **Proper nouns** name **specific** people, places, and things, so proper nouns are **capitalized**.

**Practice 1:** On your paper list the following **common nouns** or **proper nouns**. For each common noun, write a proper noun that is capitalized. For each proper noun, write a common noun that corresponds.

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. hotel --                       | 11. coffee --           |
| 2. Europe --                      | 12. Grammar Street --   |
| 3. school --                      | 13. mother --           |
| 4. ocean --                       | 14. ship --             |
| 5. <i>*Pride and Prejudice</i> -- | 15. Writing Hospital -- |
| 6. beach --                       | 16. restaurant --       |
| 7. Jane Austen --                 | 17. dramatic play --    |
| 8. King Verb --                   | 18. teacher --          |
| 9. city --                        | 19. Genesis --          |
| 10. Mediterranean Sea --          | 20. actress --          |

**Note:** Specific movies, books, and ship titles are underlined or italicized.

Learn about the **4 Specific Types of Common Nouns**



1. **Compound nouns** consist of words fused together that form a single noun. Ex. lawbreaker, great-grandfather
2. **Collective nouns** refer to a group of people, places, activities, things, and ideas. These collective nouns may be singular or plural. Ex. class, herd, colony
3. **Concrete nouns** refer to material people, places, and things: nouns you can perceive with your senses. Ex. citizens, England, waves
4. **Abstract nouns** refer to ideas, feelings, qualities, fruits of the spirit, or attitudes that cannot be seen because they have no material existence. Ex. freedom, love, humility, citizenship

**Practice 2:** Underline all the **common** and **proper nouns** with a **red** pencil in this introduction of *The Kingdom of Writing and Grammar Castle*. Notice the different types of nouns in the introduction. Keep in mind the 2 tips below as you search for the nouns.

1. The names (titles) of people and places are proper nouns, and they should be counted as 1 noun in this assignment.  
Ex. Knights of the Wrong Table and Kingdom of Writing
2. Don't underline **pronouns**: *they, no one, him, his, her, he, she, which, who, whom, that, all, any, it*, etc. These words are not nouns. We will learn about pronouns later.

In the Kingdom of Writing, live the king and queen of Grammar Castle. King Verb and Queen Noun have quite a story to

tell. Before they met, no one could write even a sentence, a clause, a phrase. It was tragic! Poor writing was rampant. Sir Run-ons-a-lot, Sir Fragment and other Knights of the Wrong Table struck terror in the Kingdom of Writing during the Dart Ages, destroying well-written pieces of literature, demolishing punctuation, omitting subjects and verbs from perfectly written sentences. However, after a short engagement and a lovely wedding, the kingdom was saved.

The villagers knew that the marriage of King Verb and Queen Noun would once again restore well written pieces of literature and essays to the Kingdom of Writing. They would make beautiful clauses and sentences together. With the help of close family and friends, such as Princess Pronoun, Lady Adjective, Interjection—the Court Jester, Lord Adverb, Father Conjunction, and Lady Preposition, as well as the Knights of the Write Table, the kingdom surmised that Sir Fragment and his evil companions, the Knights of the Wrong Table, could no longer wreak havoc in Writing. Grammar Castle would forever rule in the Kingdom of Writing. Long live King Verb and Queen Noun and all her subjects!

## Homework 1



**Queen Noun** often reads from the classics in the library of the castle. Being a queen with kingdom troubles, she especially loves the Book of Esther from the *Bible*. The queen knows that by reading the *Bible*, she can wisely help the king lead their people; and by reading the *Bible*, she will witness the best writing: the Holy Scriptures.

### Directions:

1. As you read the first two chapters of the Book of Esther, underline and put a **red N** above all **common nouns** and **proper nouns** in the highlighted sentences.
2. Don't label **pronouns: they, no one, him, his, her, he, she, which, who, whom, that, all, any, it**, etc. These words are not nouns. We will learn about pronouns later.

### **Esther Chapter 1** [New International Version (NIV)]

#### **Queen Vashti Deposed**

1 This is what happened during the time of Xerxes, the Xerxes who ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush: **(1)<sup>2</sup> At that time King Xerxes reigned from his royal throne in the citadel of Susa,** <sup>3</sup> and in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. **(2) The military leaders of Persia and Media, the princes, and the nobles of the provinces were present.**

<sup>4</sup> For a full 180 days, he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty. <sup>5</sup> When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting seven days, in the enclosed garden of the king's palace, for all the people from the

least to the greatest who were in the citadel of Susa.

(3)<sup>6</sup> The garden had hangings of white and blue linen, fastened with cords of white linen and purple material to silver rings on marble pillars. (4) There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and other costly stones. <sup>7</sup> Wine was served in goblets of gold, each one different from the other, and the royal wine was abundant, in keeping with the king's liberality. <sup>8</sup> By the king's command each guest was allowed to drink with no restrictions, for the king instructed all the wine stewards to serve each man what he wished.

(5)<sup>9</sup> Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.

(6)<sup>10</sup> On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him—Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Karkas—<sup>11</sup> to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at. <sup>12</sup> But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. (7) Then the king became furious and burned with anger.

<sup>13</sup> Since it was customary for the king to consult experts in matters of law and justice, he spoke with the wise men who understood the times <sup>14</sup> and were closest to the king—Karshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memukan, the seven nobles of Persia and Media who had special access to the king and were highest in the kingdom.

(8)<sup>15</sup> “According to law, what must be done to Queen Vashti?” he asked. “She has not obeyed the command of King Xerxes that the eunuchs have taken to her.”

(9)<sup>16</sup> Then Memukan replied in the presence of the king and the nobles, “Queen Vashti has done wrong, not only against the king but also against all the nobles and the peoples of all the provinces of King Xerxes. <sup>17</sup> For the queen’s conduct will become known to all the women, and so they will despise their husbands and say, ‘King Xerxes commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him, but she would not come.’ <sup>18</sup> This very day the Persian and Median women of the nobility who have heard about the queen’s conduct will respond to all the king’s nobles in the same way. (10) There will be no end of disrespect and discord.

(11)<sup>19</sup> “Therefore, if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal decree and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti is never again to enter the presence of King Xerxes. Also let the king give her royal position to someone else who is better than she. <sup>20</sup> Then when the king’s edict is proclaimed throughout all his vast realm, all the women will respect their husbands, from the least to the greatest.”

(12)<sup>21</sup> The king and his nobles were pleased with this advice, so the king did as Memukan proposed. <sup>22</sup> He sent dispatches to all parts of the kingdom, to each province in its own script and to each people in their own language, proclaiming that every man should be ruler over his own household, using his native tongue.

## Esther Chapter 2

### Esther Made Queen

1 Later when King Xerxes' fury had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what he had decreed about her.

2 Then the king's personal attendants proposed, "Let a search be made for beautiful young virgins for the king. (13)<sup>3</sup> Let the king appoint commissioners in every province of his realm to bring all these beautiful young women into the harem at the citadel of Susa.

Let them be placed under the care of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let beauty treatments be given to them. (4 Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This advice appealed to the king, and he followed it.

(14)<sup>5</sup> Now there was in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, named Mordecai son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, <sup>6</sup> who had been carried into exile from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, among those taken captive with Jehoiachin king of Judah. (15)<sup>7</sup> Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This young woman, who was also known as Esther, had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died.

<sup>8</sup> When the king's order and edict had been proclaimed, many young women were brought to the citadel of Susa and put under the care of Hegai. Esther also was taken to the king's palace and

entrusted to Hegai, who had charge of the harem. <sup>9</sup> She pleased him and won his favor. (16) Immediately he provided her with her beauty treatments and special food. He assigned to her seven female attendants selected from the king's palace and moved her and her attendants into the best place in the harem.

(17)<sup>10</sup> Esther had not revealed her nationality and family background, because Mordecai had forbidden her to do so. <sup>11</sup> Every day he walked back and forth near the courtyard of the harem to find out how Esther was and what was happening to her.

<sup>12</sup> Before a young woman's turn came to go in to King Xerxes, (18) she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments prescribed for the women, six months with oil of myrrh and six with perfumes and cosmetics. <sup>13</sup> And this is how she would go to the king: Anything she wanted was given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. <sup>14</sup> In the evening she would go there and in the morning return to another part of the harem to the care of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the concubines. She would not return to the king unless he was pleased with her and summoned her by name.

<sup>15</sup> When the turn came for Esther (the young woman Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail) to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the harem, suggested. And Esther won the favor of everyone who saw her. (19)<sup>16</sup> She was taken to King Xerxes in the royal residence in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

(20)<sup>17</sup> Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. <sup>18</sup> And the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his nobles and officials. He proclaimed a holiday throughout the provinces and distributed gifts with royal liberality.

## **Mordecai Uncovers a Conspiracy**



(21)<sup>19</sup> When the virgins were assembled a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. <sup>20</sup> But Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality just as Mordecai had told her to do, for she continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up.

<sup>21</sup> During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Xerxes.

(22)<sup>22</sup> But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. <sup>23</sup> And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were impaled on poles. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.

