Common & Proper Nouns Worksheet • Grade 3

Sort the nouns, fix the capitals, and choose the right word.

Name: _____ Date: _____

GOLDEN RULE Specific = capital letter. General = small letter.

Common: teacher, city, dog

Proper: Ms. Johnson, Chicago, Buddy

A Part A: Sort It — Common or Proper?

teacher Ms. Johnson city Chicago dog Buddy holiday Thanksgiving
river Mississippi River month July girl Maya school Lincoln Elementary School

	Common Noun	Proper Noun
Person		
Place		
Thing		
Idea / Time		

B Part B: Fix the Capitals

Rewrite each sentence with the capitals fixed. The first one is done for you.

1. (done for you) Our teacher Ms. Johnson took us to the park.
2. i love Summer because we swim every day.
3. my favorite subject is Math, but my sister likes english best.
4. The Teacher gave a Book to liam on monday.
5. We visited the grand canyon in arizona last Spring.
6. dr. patel speaks spanish and works at our School.
7. In december, our class read a story about the titanic.
8. My friend sara moved to texas, but she misses the mississippi river.

C Part C: Tricky Cases — You Choose

Circle the right choice. The same word can change its answer — the sentence decides!

1. “Can I have a cookie, (Mom / mom)?”
2. My (Mom / mom) drives me to school.
3. I walk to (school / School) every day.
4. I go to (lincoln elementary school / Lincoln Elementary School).
5. A (river / River) runs behind our town.
6. We crossed the (mississippi river / Mississippi River) on a bridge.
7. I ate an (apple / Apple) for lunch.
8. My new tablet was made by (apple / Apple).

Bonus Challenge • Part D: Name Games

Sometimes a name does a common noun's job: it can be plural, and it can follow a or the — but it always keeps its capital letter. Finish each sentence. The name you need is in brackets.

1. There are two _____ in our class. (Maya)
2. The _____ live next door to us. (Patel family)
3. All the _____ came to the party. (Jones family)
4. The _____ moved to Texas last year. (Martinez family)
5. Ben can fix any toy in the class. He is a little _____! (Einstein)
6. Two _____ in the story both wanted the same name. (Emma)

THE SECRET
Names take **-s** like other nouns — two Mayas, the Patels. Names ending in **s, x, z, ch,** or **sh** take **-es** — the Joneses, the Martinezes.

Super challenge: write one sentence with a plural name of your own, then circle it.

CHECK YOURSELF — I CAN...

- ☐ I can sort nouns into common and proper.
- ☐ I can fix the capital letters in a sentence.
- ☐ I can decide the tricky cases — the sentence tells me!
- ☐ I tried the bonus name games with plurals like Mayas and Joneses.

How did it feel? Circle one: I did it! Almost — one more try I need more practice

My favorite proper noun today: _____

Answer Key • Common & Proper Nouns, Grade 3

Check the worksheet together, part by part.

A Part A: Sort It

	Common Noun	Proper Noun
Person	teacher, girl	Ms. Johnson, Maya
Place	city, school	Chicago, Lincoln Elementary School
Thing	dog, river	Buddy, Mississippi River
Idea / Time	holiday, month	Thanksgiving, July

Sorting note: "river" is the general word, so it sits with the things; "Mississippi River" names one river — proper.

B Part B: Fix the Capitals

1. Our teacher Ms. Johnson took us to the park. (teacher = job word, small) · 2. I love summer because we swim every day. (summer = season) · 3. My favorite subject is math, but my sister likes English best. (English = language) · 4. The teacher gave a book to Liam on Monday. · 5. We visited the Grand Canyon in Arizona last spring. (spring = season) · 6. Dr. Patel speaks Spanish and works at our school. (school common here — no name) · 7. In December, our class read a story about the Titanic. · 8. My friend Sara moved to Texas, but she misses the Mississippi River.

C Part C: Tricky Cases

1. **Mom** — used as her name, like Sara. · 2. **mom** — a job word here ("my mom"). · 3. **school** — any school. · 4. **Lincoln Elementary School** — that school, by name. · 5. **river** — any river. · 6. **Mississippi River** — that river, by name. · 7. **apple** — the fruit. · 8. **Apple** — the company.

D Bonus Challenge — Part D: Name Games

1. **Mayas** — "two Mayas"; names take -s. · 2. **Patels** — the whole family; plain -s. · 3. **Joneses** — Jones ends in s, so -es. · 4. **Martinezes** — Martinez ends in z, so -es. · 5. **Einstein** — "a little Einstein" = a very smart person; the name does a common noun's job but keeps its capital. · 6. **Emmas** — "two Emmas"; plain -s.

Key note: plural names keep their capital. Names ending in s, x, z, ch, or sh add -es; all others add -s.

For Teachers • Quick Guide

Everything you need to run this worksheet in about 20 minutes.

Before you start (2–3 minutes). Write the Golden Rule on the board: Specific = capital letter. General = small letter. Ask “Which one?” about one pair — city / Chicago — then point to Part B, Question 1: already worked as an example.

You need. One printed sheet per child (pages 1–2 of this PDF) and a pencil.

Timing (about 20 minutes). Teach 4 minutes · Parts A–C 11 minutes · check together 5 minutes. Part D (page 2) runs on its own for fast finishers.

Support (a step up). Keep the refresher table from the web post visible, do Part A in pairs, and let students say “Which one?” to a partner before they write.

Challenge (fast finishers). Part D — plural names (two Mayas, the Joneses) and “a little Einstein.” It is the Grade 4–5 stretch of this same rule, and it is ungraded.

Quick check before they leave. Each student turns one common noun into a proper noun: “river — Mississippi River.” Ten seconds each shows who owns the rule.

Marking. In Part B, a correctly placed capital with shaky spelling still earns the mark — choosing counts more than spelling. In Part C, Mom really is proper in Question 1 and common in Question 2; the sentence decides.

Homework. Send pages 1–2 home. Keep the answer key (page 3) and this guide at school.

Curriculum. Builds on CCSS L.1.1.b (common and proper nouns) and L.2.2a (capitalizing holidays, product names, and geographic names); supports Grade 3 capitalization conventions, CCSS L.3.2.