**Abstract Nouns**

We all communicate with abstraction at times.  Though abstract nouns don’t convey things we can experience with our senses – we can’t feel, touch, see, hear, or taste them – they allow us to express important meaning, nonetheless.

Being able to recognize and use abstract nouns is important, especially in written communication.  While abstract nouns can convey deep emotion, the writer runs the risk of not clearly expressing his or her meaning.  Things get lost in translation so to speak. Since abstract words are by definition abstract, they can mean different things to different people, so take care to make sure your writing using concrete nouns for clarification.

What is an Abstract Noun?

Abstract nouns are the opposite of concrete nouns – nouns that refer to objects you can experience with your five senses.  Abstract nouns are intangible.  They can identify concepts, experiences, ideas, qualities, and feeling.

Examples of Abstract Nouns

In some cases, it’s a little difficult to recognize when a noun is abstract. Some nouns can function as verbs and abstract nouns are no exception.

For example, see how the word “fear” is used in the following two sentences.

I fear the night.  (In this sentence, fear shows action so it’s a verb.)

The night was shrouded in fear.  (In this sentence, fear is an abstract noun because you can’t physically touch, feel, hear, taste, smell, or see it.)

List of Abstract Nouns

Below is a list of common abstract nouns.

Love

Anger

Hate

Peace

Loyalty

Integrity

Pride

Courage

Deceit

Honesty

Trust

Compassion

Bravery

Misery

Childhood

Knowledge

Patriotism

Friendship

Brilliance

Truth

Charity

Justice

Faith

Kindness

Pleasure

Liberty

Freedom

Delight

Despair

Hope

Awe

Calm

Joy

Reality

Wisdom

Though the above list is by no means exhaustive, it should start you thinking about the power of abstract words and how to use them in your writing. But hopefully you won’t think too abstractly!

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| adoration | artistry |   |   |   |   |
| belief | bravery |   |   |   |   |
| calm | charity | childhood | comfort | compassion |   |
| dexterity |   |   |   |   |   |
| ego |   |   |   |   |   |
| failure | faith | feelings | friendship |   |   |
| g |  |  |  |  |  |
| happiness | hate | honesty | hope |   |   |
| idea | impression | infatuation |   |   |   |
| Joy |   |   |   |   |   |
| K |  |  |  |  |  |
| Law | liberty | love | loyalty |   |   |
| maturity | memory |   |   |   |   |
| N |  |  |  |  |  |
| omen |   |   |   |   |   |
| peace | pride | principle | power |   |   |
| Q |  |  |  |  |  |
| redemption | romance |   |   |   |   |
| sadness | sensitivity | skill | sleep | success | sympathy |
| talent | thrill | truth |   |   |   |
| U |  |  |  |  |  |
| V |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wit |   |   |   |   |   |
| X |  |  |  |  |  |
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