**Nouns: Gender**

Read the following sentences

* The boys play cricket ball.
* Mary has a little lamb
* The box is made of steel
* The child is eating chocolates

The noun boy ,in the first sentence ,refers to a male . It is therefore to be of Masculine gender

A noun that is name of any male person, or animal is said to be of the Masculine gender ,such as man grandfather ,dog, ox.

A noun Mary ,in the second sentence, is the name of female .It is therefore said to be of the feminine Gender.

A noun that is the name of any female person or animal is said to be of the Feminine Gender such as girl, grandmother ,hen ,cow.

The noun in the third sentence ,is the name of a nonliving thing .It is therefore said to be of the Neutral Gender.

The noun child ,in the fourth sentence ,may be used both for a male child and female child . It is therefore said to be of the common gender.

But what about the other nouns tree , flower and child. They are neither male or female .

Nouns such as chair ,marble ,bench, sword that are the names of neither male or female are said to be of the Neuter gender (Neuter meaning neither )

Note: Collective nouns even when they denote living beings are considered to be of the neuter gender .

Note: Sometimes a little child or an animal , particularly a small anialis treated as the neuter gender and spoken of as it.

On the other hand some animals a dog or a house for example are usually spoken of as ‘he’ while a cat is often referred to as ‘she’.

There are three ways of forming the Feminine Nouns .

1. By using an entirely different word.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Feminine** |
| bachelor | spinster |
| boy | girl |
| brother | sister |
| bull | cow |
| cock | hen |
| earl | countess |
| father | mother |
| gentleman | lady |
| Horse | mare |
| husband | wife |
| king | queen |
| Lord | lady |
| man | woman |
| nephew | niece |
| sir | Madam |
| son | daughter |
| uncle | aunt |
| dog | bitch |
| papa | mamma |

1. By adding a syllable -ess, trix,-a ,ote such as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Feminine** |
| hero | heroine |
| author | authoress |
| sultan | sultana |
| administrator | administratix |

Note that in the following –ess is added after dropping the vowel of masculine ending

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Feminine** |
| actor | actress |
| enchanter | enchantress |
| instructor | instructress |
| negro | negress |
| duke | duchess |
| prince | princess |
| tiger | tigress |
| waiter | waitress |
| master | mastress |
| emperor | empress |

Note : The suffix –ess is the commonest suffix used to form feminine nouns from the masculine and is only which we now use in feminine noun

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Feminine** |
| heir | heiress |
| host | hostess |
| steward | stewardess |
| lion | lioness |
| poet | poetess |
| priest | priestess |
| Jew | Jewess |
| shepherd | shepherdess |

1. By placing a gender showing word /male or female before or after such as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Feminine** |
| Grandfather | Grandmother |
| peacock | peahen |
| Manservant | Maidservant |
| landlord | landlady |
| milkman | milkmaid |
| washerman | washerwoman |

………………….…………………………………………………………………………………