

Regular and irregular plurals storytelling game

Instructions for teachers

Cut up one pack of at least twenty or thirty cards per group of two to four students, with the plurals attached to the singular but folded behind, including some words which are lower than their level to make up the number. You can also make similar cards on the blank cards if there aren't enough, but make sure that the vocabulary is suitable for storytelling. Students spread the cards across the table singular side up, then take turns choosing a card and continuing the story with one or more of the things mentioned (e.g. adding "a soldier" to the story or adding "three soldiers" to the story). They can turn the card over to check the plural if they aren't sure. After they finish, test them on their memories of the plurals and/ or ask them to test each other orally.

Cards to cut up/ Suggested answers

Elementary

boy	boys	child	children
foot	feet	leg	legs
king	kings	man	men
person	people	adult	adults
policeman	policemen	soldier	soldiers
postman	postmen	bus driver	bus drivers
princess	princesses	schoolchild	schoolchildren
woman	women	mother	mothers

Pre-Intermediate

daughter	daughters	fish	fish
knife	knives	lip	lips
mouse	mice	rat	rats
sword	swords	tooth	teeth
turtle	turtles	wife	wives

Intermediate

cookie	cookies	criminal	criminals
loaf	loaves	thief	thieves

Upper Intermediate

alumnus	alumni	aircraft	aircraft
cow	cows	crisis	crises
deer	deer	swan	swans
factory	factories	fox	foxes
goose	geese	problem	problems
sheep	sheep	goat	goats
steelworks	steelworks	a third	two thirds
wolf	wolves	student	students

Advanced

bacterium	bacteria	biceps	biceps
(blind) date	(blind) dates	(wild) boar	(wild) boar
calf	calves	caterpillar	caterpillars
criterion	criteria	diagnosis	diagnoses
elf	elves	faux pas	faux pas
flea	fleas	giraffe	giraffes
grouse	grouse	hoof	hooves
larva	larvae	louse	lice
virus	viruses	moose	moose
muscle	muscles	neurosis	neuroses
oasis	oases	lake	lakes
ox	oxen	pheasant	pheasants
prawn	prawns	puppy	puppies
rendezvous	rendezvous	salmon	salmon
sardine	sardines	spacecraft	spacecraft
species	species	squid	squid
starfish	starfish	UFO	UFOs
vertebra	vertebrae	rib	ribs

Without looking above, write the plurals in the gaps of the section or sections below that your teacher tells you to work on.

Elementary

boy		child	
foot		leg	
king		man	
person		adult	
policeman		soldier	
postman		bus driver	
princess		schoolchild	
woman		mother	

Pre-Intermediate

daughter		fish	
knife		lip	
mouse		rat	
sword		tooth	
turtle		wife	

Intermediate

cookie		criminal	
loaf		thief	



Upper Intermediate

alumnus		aircraft	
cow		crisis	
deer		swan	
factory		fox	
goose		problem	
sheep		goat	
steelworks		a third	
wolf		student	

Advanced

bacterium		biceps	
(blind) date		(wild) boar	
calf		caterpillar	
criterion		diagnosis	
elf		faux pas	
flea		giraffe	
grouse		hoof	
larva		louse	
virus		moose	
muscle		neurosis	
oasis		lake	
ox		pheasant	
prawn		puppy	
rendezvous		salmon	
sardine		spacecraft	
species		squid	
starfish		UFO	
vertebra		rib	

Check above. Other plurals might sometimes be possible, so please check if you wrote something different.

Try to find patterns in how regular plurals are made.

Are there any patterns in how irregular plurals are made?