

## NOUNS - INTRODUCTORY

### Lesson 13

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One characteristic of Kiribati word formation is that the same form may often serve diverse functions. Thus a word may appear as a noun, verb, or adjective, without any change of spelling:

te mm'akuri	work
te tia mm'akuri	worker
e mm'akuri	he works
te taibora ni mm'akuri	work table

#### 1. Nominalization

Kiribati has the capacity to form nouns from verbs by preceding them with the article te (see next lesson). Nouns may be formed similarly from most adjectives:

nako	to go
te nako	the going
mm'akuri	to work
te mm'akuri	the work
uraura	red
te uraura	the redness
nanokaawaki	sad
te nanokaawaki	sadness

#### 2. Possession

A singular characteristic of nouns is their ability to be possessed. Kiribati makes great use of this process, and it is somewhat complex. (See lesson on possession):

uraura	red
uraurana	its redness
nako	to go
nakou	my going

## LESSON 13

Often possession is indicated by a suffix as in the above examples. Separate possessive pronouns also precede nouns:

ana auti	his house
aia boki	their books

3. Plurality

Most nouns have no distinct plural form, but those that do usually lengthen the first vowel in the plural. No general rule governs which nouns operate in this manner. Many other markers are available, however, so plurality is usually quite clear. (See lesson on plurals)

te boki	book
booki	books
te b'airi	nose
b'airi	noses

4. Gender

Kiribati nouns have no intrinsic gender (like English, but unlike French or German). When necessary to indicate the sex of a noun, mm'aane (male) or aine (female) is added to the noun. (See lesson on compounding):

te moa	chicken
te moa mm'aane	rooster
te moa aine	hen

When the noun is human, the linker 'n' may be used. (See lesson on 'n' in lesson on possessives):

ataei	child
ataeinimm'aane	boy
ataeinnaiine	girl