The class from which items are inherited is called the "base class", and the class that inherits from the base is the "derived class". The derived class inherits all of the functionality and functions of the base class, while allowing for specialization in the derived class.

For example, weapons are the base class, and sword and axe are the derived classes. Swords and axes are weapons, but swords are not axes, and vice versa. They're still weapons, though, and they need to act like weapons, so they inherit from the weapon class, but because they are separate weapons, you can give them different functionality, like axes being faster than swords but doing less damage.