Both backticks and $() are called command substitution

Enclosing the last command in backticks within your script gets you the output in a variable, which is known as [*command substitution*](gloss01.html#gloss_57):

PID=`ps -ef | grep "[n]ginx: master process" | awk '{ print $2 }'`  
echo nginx is running at $PID

Another way you might see this written is in the **$()** style:

PID=$(ps -ef | grep "[n]ginx: master process" | awk '{ print $2 }')  
echo nginx is running at $PID

Both methods do the same thing. Parentheses are easier to match up when debugging problems, which makes the second method better to use.