

## 29 Uncountable nouns ending in -ics

### Activity A

There are a number of uncountable nouns in English ~~which~~ end in -ics, and they often relate to fields of expertise. Match each noun in column A with one of the meanings in column B. Then choose four suitable nouns to complete the sentences ~~which~~ follow. Check your answers in the dictionary.

Match the nouns and their meanings:

A: NOUN	B: MEANING
1 athletics	<del>a</del> the branch of medicine <del>concerned</del> with injuries and diseases of the bones or muscles
2 ballistics	b the scientific study of language or of particular languages
3 cybernetics	c the science that deals with the relations between heat and other forms of energy
4 geophysics	d the scientific study of things that are shot or fired through the air, such as bullets and missiles
5 linguistics	<del>e</del> the scientific study of communication and control, <del>especially concerned with</del> comparing human and animal brains with machines and electronic devices
6 orthopaedics	f sports that people compete in, such as running and jumping
7 phonics	g a method of teaching people to read based on the sounds that letters represent
8 thermodynamics	h the scientific study of the physics of the earth, including its atmosphere, climate and magnetism

Complete the sentences using a noun from column A:

- 1 We believe that our colleagues in \_\_\_\_\_ will be able to identify the gun that the bullet was fired from.
- 2 Young children in UK primary schools are taught \_\_\_\_\_ to help them learn to read.
- 3 I am so proud that my country won three Olympic gold medals in \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 Her son has just graduated with a degree in \_\_\_\_\_ and will shortly begin work as a specialist at Royal College Hospital.

### Activity B

We have said that all these nouns are uncountable. Read the following correct sentences. Why is it possible to use a determiner (a/the/few)? Check your answer in the key and check the meanings of the nouns in bold in the dictionary if necessary.

- 1 She has just started a **gymnastics** course, which involves using equipment such as the balance beam and springboard.
- 2 After visiting the **orthodontics** specialist, Paul was pleased with how his teeth looked.
- 3 Few **phonetics** experts would say that there is any difference in the pronunciation of these two words.