Noun1 は Noun2 です：Noun1 is Noun2

は (wa) is the particle which indicates the subject or the topic of the sentence. です (desu) is a verb which means "to be" or "to equal". It shows the identity or the state of things and people.

- Note -
Subjects actually tend to be omitted in the conversation whenever it is clear to the listener what or who they are talking about.

ではありません：Noun1 is not Noun2

です (desu) is replaced with ではありません (dewa arimasen) to make a sentence in the negative form.

- Note -
Instead of ではありません (dewa arimasen), じゃないです (ja arimasen) is used in informal speech.
Complete the following sentences.

1. これ ______ ノート ________。
   This is a book.
2. それ ______ かばん ________。
   That is a bag.
3. わたし ______ がくせい ________。
   I am a student.
4. サラ ______ アメリカじん________。
   Sarah is American.
5. これ ______ じしょ ____________________。
   This is not a dictionary.
6. かれは ____________________________。
   He is not Japanese.
7. がくせい ____________________________。
   I am not a student.
8. それ ____________________________。
   This is not a dictionary.

Translate the following sentences into Japanese.

1. This is a bag.
2. That is not a book.
3. This is a newspaper.
4. I am a student.
5. That is not a notebook.
6. I am not a teacher.
7. I am an office worker.
8. Takeshi is an engineer.
9. This is a school.
文法

■ でした：Noun$^1$ was Noun$^2$

です (desu) is replaced with でした (deshita) to make the past tense in the affirmative form.

わたしがくせいでした。 I was a student.
watashi wa gakusei deshita

ほんでした。 (It) was a book.
hon deshita

にほんじんでした。 He/She was Japanese.
nihonjin deshita

■ ではありませんでした：Noun$^1$ was not Noun$^2$

です (desu) is replaced with ではありませんでした (dewa arimasendeshita) to make the past tense in the negative form.

わたしがくせいではありませんでした。 I was not a student.
watashi wa gakusei dewa arimasen deshita

ほんではありませんでした。 It was not a book.
hon dewa arimasen deshita

にほんじんではありませんでした。 (He/She) was not Japanese.
nihonjin dewa arimasen deshita

-Note-
Instead of ではありませんでした (dewa arimasen), じゃなかったです (ja nakatta desu) is used in informal speech.

がくせいじゃなかったです。 (I) was not a student.
gakusei ja nakatta desu

ほんじゃなかったです。 It was not a book.
hon ja nakatta deshita

にほんじんじゃなかったです。 (He/She) was not Japanese.
nihonjin ja nakatta desu

■ Particle か

When you want to ask a question, simply put the particle か (ka) at the end of the sentence.

あなたは がくせいですか？ Are you a student?
anata wa gakusei desu ka

ほんですか？ Is it a book?
kore wa hon desu ka

かれは にほんじんですか？ Is he Japanese?
kare wa nihonjin desu ka
Complete the following sentences.
1. これ ___ ノート ____。
   This was a book.
2. それ ___ かばん ____。
   That was a bag.
3. わたし ___ がくせい ____。
   I was a student.
4. サラ ___ アメリカじん______。
   Sarah was American.
5. これ ___ じしょ ____。
   This was a dictionary.
6. かれ は ___ かくせい ___。
   He was not Japanese.
7. がくせい ___。
   I was not a student.
8. それ ___ じしょ ____。
   This was not a dictionary.
9. これ ___ じしょ ____?
   Is this a dictionary?
10. かれ は ___ かくせい ___?
    Wasn’t he Japanese?
11. がくせい ___?
    Aren’t you a student?
12. それ ___ ___?
    Is that a newspaper?

Translate the following sentences into Japanese.
1. Is this a hospital?
2. Takeshi was a doctor.
3. That was not a magazine.
4. Sarah was a student.
5. (He) was not (my) friend.
6. I was not a teacher.
7. Are you a bank clerk?
8. Is it a park?
9. Are you Japanese?
The ANSWERS to a yes/no question usually starts with **はい** (hai) or **いいえ** (iie). **はい** (hai) means “Yes” and **いいえ** (iie) means “No”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>はい</strong></th>
<th><strong>いいえ</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I was a student.</td>
<td>No, I am not a teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hai, watashi wa gakusei deshita</td>
<td>iie, watashi wa sensei dewa arimasen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, that is a book.</td>
<td>No, this is not a dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hai, sore wa hon desu</td>
<td>iie, kore wa jisho dewa arimasen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

なに (nani) is an interrogative pronoun which means “What”. Before d, t, and n sounds, なに (nani) becomes なん (nan).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>なに</th>
<th>Affirmative, present</th>
<th>Negative, present</th>
<th>Affirmative, past</th>
<th>Negative, past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is this?</td>
<td>kore wa nan desu ka</td>
<td>kore wa jisho desu</td>
<td>What is that?</td>
<td>sore wa nan desu ka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That is a dictionary.</td>
<td>sore wa jisho desu</td>
<td>sore wa kaban desu</td>
<td>This is a bag.</td>
<td>are wa nan desu ka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is that?</td>
<td>are wa kaban desu</td>
<td>are wa gakkou desu</td>
<td>That is a school.</td>
<td>are wa gakkou desu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conjugating the verb です (desu)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative, present</th>
<th>Negative, present</th>
<th>Affirmative, past</th>
<th>Negative, past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>です (formal)</td>
<td>ではありません (formal)</td>
<td>でした (formal)</td>
<td>ではありませんでした (formal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>だ (informal)</td>
<td>じゃないです (informal)</td>
<td>だった (informal)</td>
<td>じゃなかったです (informal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Complete the following sentences.

1. ________ これ ___ しんぶん ________。
Yes, this is a newspaper.

2. ________ それ ___ ざっし ________________。
No, that is not a magazine.

3. ________ わたし ___ かいしゃいん ____________。
Yes, I was an office worker.

4. ________ サラ ___ エンジニア ________________。
No, Sarah was not an engineer.

5. ________ ?
What is this?

6. ________ は ________________?
What is that?

7. ________ ?
What was it?

8. あれ ___ ____________?
What is that (over there)?

Translate the following sentences into Japanese.

1. What is this?

2. Yes, I am a student.

3. What is this?

4. What is that (over there)?

5. No, I am not a student. I am an office worker.

6. No, Ken is not Japanese.