Noun Technique

Here are the steps to follow when using the noun technique:

1. Using the use cases, actors, and other information about the system—including inputs and outputs—**identify all nouns**.

2. Using other information from existing systems, current procedures, and current reports or forms, **add items or categories of information needed**. Some of these items might be additional things, and some might be specific information (called attributes) about things you have already identified. Refine the list and then record assumptions or issues to explore.

3. As this list of nouns builds, you will need to **refine** it. Ask these questions about each noun to help you **decide whether you should include it**:
    - Is it a unique thing the system needs to know about?
    - Is it inside the scope of the system I am working on?
    - Does the system need to remember more than one of these items?

Ask these questions about each noun to **decide whether you should exclude it**:
- Is it really a synonym for some other thing I have identified?
- Is it really just an output of the system produced from other information I have identified?
- Is it really just an input that results in recording some other information I have identified?

Ask these questions about each noun to **decide whether you should research it**:
- Is it likely to be a specific piece of information (attribute) about some other thing I have identified?
- Is it something I might need if assumptions change?

4. **Create a master list of all nouns identified** and then note whether each one should be included, excluded, or researched further.

5. **Review the list** with users, stakeholders, and team members and then refine the list of things in the problem domain.