

Lesson 1

Nominative and Objective Cases

Teaching

Personal pronouns change their forms, called **cases**, depending on how they function in a sentence. The three cases are nominative, objective, and possessive.

| | | Nominative | Objective | Possessive |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Singular | <i>First Person</i> | I | me | my, mine |
| | <i>Second Person</i> | you | you | your, yours |
| | <i>Third Person</i> | he, she, it | him, her, it | his, her, hers, its |
| Plural | <i>First Person</i> | we | us | our, ours |
| | <i>Second Person</i> | you | you | your, yours |
| | <i>Third Person</i> | they | them | their, theirs |

Use the **nominative case** of a personal pronoun when the pronoun functions as a subject or a predicate nominative, or as part of a compound subject.

Subject I have been learning about President Eisenhower.
Part of compound subject My grandmother and I were talking about the 1950s.

A **predicate pronoun** takes the nominative case. It immediately follows a linking verb and identifies the subject of the sentence.

Predicate pronoun The president elected in 1953 was he.

Use the objective case of a personal pronoun when the pronoun functions as a direct object, indirect object, or object of a preposition. Use it also when the pronoun is part of a compound object.

Direct object The Republicans nominated him for president.
Indirect object People voting in 1952 gave him 55 percent of the vote.

Object of preposition My grandmother campaigned for him.
Part of compound object Voters decided between Adlai Stevenson and them.

To decide which case to use in a compound construction, consider each part separately.

A. Identifying the Case of a Pronoun

Identify the case of each boldfaced personal pronoun in the following sentences. On the line write **N** for nominative or **O** for objective.

- Dwight Eisenhower was born in Texas, but **he** grew up in Kansas. _____
- Classmates nicknamed his big brother "Big Ike" and gave **him** the name "Little Ike." _____
- Both his brother and **he** raised and sold vegetables. _____

B. Using the Correct Case of Personal Pronouns

Underline the correct pronoun to complete each sentence.

- During World War II, (he, him) commanded the Allies' military forces.
- The decision to launch D-Day was difficult for his advisors and (he, him).
- After the war, the first commander of NATO forces was (he, him).

Nominative and Objective Cases*More Practice***A. Using the Correct Case of Personal Pronouns**

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form.

1. Dwight Eisenhower became president in 1953; voters re-elected (he, him) in 1956.
2. Everybody called (he, him) Ike, so his campaign buttons read "I Like Ike."
3. The public first learned about (he, him) as an Army general during World War II.
4. His friend General George Patton and (he, him) were both heroes of the war.
5. By the end of the war, the general in charge of all Allied forces was (he, him).
6. As supreme commander of the Allied forces, Eisenhower selected reliable people for his staff and depended on (they, them) to carry out their responsibilities.
7. As president, he selected people he trusted for his cabinet so that he and (they, them) could work well together.
8. He created the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and appointed Oveta Culp Hobby to head (it, they).
9. That action made (she, her) a member of Eisenhower's cabinet.
10. The other cabinet members and (she, her) had to be strong managers.
11. Eisenhower's vice-president, Richard Nixon, succeeded (he, him) as president.
12. His wife Mamie and (he, him) retired to their farm in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

B. Choosing Personal PronounsFill in the blanks in the following sentences with appropriate personal pronouns. Vary the person and number of the pronouns, and do not use the pronoun *you*.

1. Joel and _____ hope to get tickets for the opening day of the auto show.
2. Kendra invited T.J. and _____ to come over and watch a movie.
3. Cassie will go with Vinnie and _____ to the museum exhibit next week.
4. Will Cho and _____ play a duet for the recital?
5. Gymnastics is what Margo and _____ plan to take next fall.
6. The fans gave Tracy and _____ a standing ovation for their dance program.
7. Was it Langston Hughes or _____ who wrote the poem called "Dreams"?
8. The flute players in our orchestra will be Mr. Kruse and _____.
9. The widower, who had one daughter, divided his estate equally among _____ and her brothers.
10. No one thought the owner of the sports car to be _____.

Lesson 1

Nominative and Objective Cases

Application

A. Proofreading

Proofread the following story to make sure that the correct cases of pronouns have been used. When you find a pronoun used incorrectly, cross it out. Then insert this proofreading symbol ^ and write the correct pronoun above it.

During Dwight Eisenhower's first term, one of the most dangerous people in the country was Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin. McCarthy had gained national attention in 1950 by claiming that there were Communist spies in the government. His Senate subcommittee and him held televised hearings. TV viewers watched McCarthy's allies and he as they charged individuals with being Communist sympathizers. People were afraid to fight McCarthy because their friends and them would be called Communists too. McCarthy tried to ban books as well. He said them and their authors supported Communists. President Eisenhower made it clear there was a difference of opinion between him and McCarthy. In 1953, the President was making a speech to Dartmouth College students. He told they and their teachers, "Don't join the book burners." McCarthy continued to attack people and give them problems with getting and keeping jobs. But him and his allies never produced proof. Finally, in December of 1954, the rest of the Senate condemned him and they. That move stopped his threat.

B. Using Personal Pronouns in Writing

Write a paragraph about a recent president whom you admire, or a person you believe would make a good president. Be sure to use personal pronouns correctly.

Possessive Case

Teaching

Personal pronouns that show ownership or relationships are in the **possessive case**.

The possessive pronouns *mine, ours, yours, his, hers, its, and theirs* can be used in place of a noun. These pronouns can function as subjects or objects.

We won't mix up our black jackets. Mine has red buttons; yours has white ones.

The possessive pronouns *my, our, your, his, her, its, and their* can be used to modify a noun or a gerund. The pronoun precedes the noun or gerund it modifies. Do not use a possessive pronoun with a participle.

Our buying similar clothes has given us problems. (*buying* used as gerund)

My aunt saw us buying boots yesterday. (*buying* used as participle)

Don't confuse these possessive pronouns with the contractions that they sound like: *their/they're (they are), its/it's (it is), your/you're (you are)*.

A. Identifying Possessive Pronouns

Underline all the possessive pronouns in each sentence.

1. My brother and I share a room, but his things are always on my desk and my bed.
2. My clothes are hung up, but his are all over, including on top of mine.
3. He had books stacked so high that their weight broke a shelf.
4. Mom borrowed my camera because she had lost hers, and she took pictures of her room and ours.
5. Do other people have problems with their siblings like the ones I have with mine?

B. Using Personal Pronouns Correctly

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form.

1. The cast appreciated (him, his) hard work helping them learn their parts.
2. The plates with the blue rim are (our, ours).
3. Please turn off that alarm before (its, it's) buzzing deafens me.
4. (Me, My) worrying about the test did not affect the result.
5. Olga took her skates home, but she left (your, yours) on the bench.
6. Many of the kindergartners had trouble putting on (they're, their) boots.
7. Haddonfield, New Jersey's claim to fame is (it, its) being the site of the first dinosaur skeleton discovered in North America.
8. Joan heard (him, his) singing the Broadway tunes at the benefit performance.
9. Has the deadline for applications passed, or may Leah still turn (her, hers) in?
10. (Your, You're) interrupting our song spoiled the recording.
11. The coach didn't object to (them, their) being late for practice.
12. The tree cast (it's, its) shadow on the picnic table.
13. I need to borrow an umbrella because I left (my, mine) at the library.
14. We found the cat in (its, it's) usual hiding place.
15. He couldn't understand (me, my) walking out in the middle of a fine rehearsal.

Possessive Case*More Practice***A. Using Personal Pronouns Correctly**

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form.

1. The doctor praised (them, their) exercising on a rowing machine at least three times a week.
2. Why is the rubber plant losing (its, it's) leaves?
3. (Him, His) devising an identification certificate for refugees earned the Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922.
4. You shouldn't be taking (your, you're) time to do someone else's job.
5. (Them, Their) making the first successful powered airplane flight guaranteed the Wright brothers a place in history.
6. The whole team watches (them, their) practicing for the mixed doubles championship match.
7. Have all the students found (they're, their) seats?
8. That biology book is either (yours, your) or mine.
9. I was awakened by (you, your) banging on the screen door.
10. A shark's skin is abrasive because of (it, its) having toothlike scales.
11. Aren't you amazed at (us, our) being able to remember all those dates?
12. I tried to picture (you, your) wearing a helmet and carrying a spear in an opera.

B. Using Personal Pronouns Correctly

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with appropriate possessive pronouns.

1. Every family has _____ problems.
2. Two brothers or two sisters will share _____ clothes and then argue about who got the clothes torn.
3. A toddler sees her brother's toy and, even though she has her own, she wants _____ too.
4. Older children bring _____ problems from school home with them.
5. As if there weren't enough problems at home already, parents bring _____ from their jobs.
6. Usually my mother can keep _____ temper when things go wrong, but I always lose _____.
7. My family and I don't believe that _____ is an unusual home.
8. I'm asking you for _____ thinking on the matter.

Lesson 2

Possessive Case

Application

A. Proofreading for Pronoun Errors

Proofread the following essay. When you find a possessive pronoun used incorrectly, cross it out. Then insert this proofreading symbol ^ and write the correct pronoun above it.

Sometimes, when I have an argument with mine family, I compare ours problems with those of other families. You should try it. When you look at the difficulties that characters in Greek tragedies have with they're relatives, you're family will look wonderful.

For example, there was Oedipus. The parents of baby Oedipus tried to kill him. Them hearing a warning that he would kill his father and marry his mother drove them to it. But when they left they're child outside to die, he was saved and grew to manhood. Him not knowing who he was resulted in tragedy when he fulfilled the prophecy.

And think about Electra. While Electra's father was off at war, hers mother took a lover. Electra longed to see her father, but upon him coming home, Mom and her lover killed him. To Electra, no crime was worse than their. She waited till her baby brother grew up and then helped him kill they're mother and hers lover.

No matter how upset I get at home, me knowing what Electra's family was like makes mine attractive. For yours sake, I hope that the same is true of you're situation.

B. Using Pronoun Cases Correctly in Writing

Write a paragraph about a time when you or someone else in your family had a problem with other members of the family, and how the problem was resolved or came to an end. Use the correct cases of personal pronouns in your sentences. Be sure to use at least five pronouns in the possessive case. Use a separate piece of paper, if necessary.

Who and Whom

Teaching

The case of the pronoun *who* is determined by the pronoun's function in the sentence.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Nominative | who, whoever |
| Objective | whom, whomever |
| Possessive | whose, whosever |

Who and *whom* can be used to ask questions and to introduce subordinate clauses.

In a question, *who* is used as subject or predicate pronoun. The objective pronoun *whom* is used as a direct or indirect object of a verb or as the object of a preposition.

- Subject** Who will be the new principal?
- Indirect object** Whom did you tell about the rumor?
- Object (of preposition)** From whom did you hear the news?

When deciding whether to use *who* or *whom* in a subordinate clause, consider only how the pronoun functions in the clause. If it is the subject, use *who*. If the pronoun is an object in the subordinate clause, use *whom*.

- Subject of clause** The person who replaces Ms. Theo has to be good.
- Object in clause** The students whom Ms. Theo supervised will miss her.

Using *Who* and *Whom* Correctly

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form. If the pronoun choice is in a subordinate clause, first draw brackets [] around the clause, and then mark the right choice.

EXAMPLE When will we know [who, whom] will get the job?

1. Everyone in school wonders (who, whom) our new principal will be.
2. No one knows (who, whom) actually chooses the person for the job.
3. We certainly hope that he or she will give the job to (whoever, whomever) seems best qualified.
4. Our present principal, (who, whom) everyone likes and respects, has held the position for 15 years.
5. To (who, whom) has Ms. Theo explained her reasons for leaving?
6. Mr. Capp, (who, whom) is the assistant principal, says that Ms. Theo is retiring.
7. From (who, whom) did he hear that?
8. Mr. Capp didn't say from (who, whom) he heard his information.
9. Could the person (who, whom) replaces Ms. Theo be someone at school now?
10. Probably it can be anyone (who, whom) is qualified, perhaps even Mr. Capp.
11. (Who, Whom) could we ask for more information?
12. My mother knows someone (who, whom) is on the school board.
13. Her friend might not give information to just anyone (who, whom) asks.

Who and Whom**More Practice****A. Identifying the Function of *Who* and *Whom***

In the following sentences, determine the function of *who/whoever* or *whom/whomever*. If a sentence uses *who* or *whoever*, underline once the verb of which it is the subject. If a sentence uses *whom* or *whomever*, underline twice the verb or preposition of which it is an object.

EXAMPLES People **who** gossip should find better things to do.
Some gossips talk about **whomever** they choose.

- Whom** is Richard inviting to the prom?
- We argued about **who** the hero really was.
- The ad offers a reward to **whoever** returns the missing wallet.
- Whom** do you think the voters will elect?
- The very proper butler inquired, "May I ask **who** is calling?"
- Is Captain Ahab the character **who** pursued the white whale Moby Dick?
- To **whom** did the judges award first prize?
- The reporters were misinformed about **whom** the governor had named to the post.
- Leave the message with **whoever** answers the phone.
- Can you tell **whom** Harry is imitating?

B. Using *Who* and *Whom* Correctly

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form.

- Does anyone know (who, whom) took the photo of the chorus?
- The prize will go to (whoever, whomever) deserves it.
- Toby asked him (who, whom) the book was for.
- Amos, (who, whom) called last night, is working at Fred's gas station.
- No one in the cabin knew (who, whom) our new counselor was.
- Arlene, (who, whom) is fluent in Spanish, won the scholarship to Spain.
- Mrs. Judson is a teacher (who, whom) everyone admires.
- The team will accept (whoever, whomever) the coach chooses.
- We were surprised when we discovered (who, whom) the salesclerk was.
- The singer (who, whom) no one could hear, seemed nervous.

Lesson
3

Who and Whom

Application

A. Proofreading for Who and Whom

Proofread the following paragraph. Decide whether each numbered use of some form of *who* is correct. If the wrong form of the pronoun is used, write the correct form on the line below. If the correct form is used, write **Correct**.

Norman Rockwell was a painter (1) whose work usually presented stories of everyday happenings. The people (2) who he presented were average-looking, the sort of person (3) who you might meet on the street. (4) Whoever saw his illustrations on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* recognized easily (5) whomever appeared there. For example, one memorable illustration is named *The Gossips*. The illustration is made up of 15 tiny scenes. In each, two people are talking, either face-to-face or by phone. The woman (6) who appears at the top left, beginning a rumor, also appears at the bottom right, hearing with dismay the effects of what she started. In between are the people (7) whom hear and pass on the rumor. Even if the ages and the hairstyles of the characters (8) who you see in the illustration may not match those of the gossips you know, you recognize in the work the attitudes of (9) whomever indulges in gossip.

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ | 9. _____ |

B. Using Who, Whom, and Whose in Writing

Rewrite each sentence or pair of sentences below as a single sentence that uses a subordinate clause introduced by or containing *who*, *whom*, or *whose*. Use the pronoun given in parentheses in your new sentence.

EXAMPLE I will skate with that girl. She just began taking lessons. (who)
I will skate with the girl who just began taking lessons.

- George Washington was a leader. He was respected even by his enemies. (who)

- Mrs. Tarleton called the mother of the boy. His application came in late. (whose)

- Many a boy and girl entered the contest. Each one of them won a prize. (whoever)

- Here is the phone number of the counselor. You wanted to call her. (whom)

- Min contacted many people for support in the election. She impressed all of them. (whomever)

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Teaching

A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number, gender, and person. An **antecedent** is the noun or pronoun that a pronoun refers to or replaces.

If the antecedent is singular, use a singular pronoun. If it is plural, use a plural pronoun.

Because this dollhouse is almost 300 years old, it is historically important.

The furnishings are noticeably different from their modern counterparts.

Compound Subjects A plural pronoun is used to refer to nouns or pronouns joined by *and*.

The tiny chest and dresser still have their original hardware.

A pronoun that refers to nouns or pronouns joined by *or* or *nor* should agree with the noun or pronoun nearest to it.

Neither the bedrooms nor the dining room have its original drapery.

With Collective Nouns A collective noun such as *class* may be referred to by either a singular or a plural pronoun, depending upon the meaning of the noun in the sentence.

The family that owns the house loaned its treasure to the library. (singular)

The family wanted their friends to see the house. (plural)

Gender and Person The **gender** of the pronoun—masculine (*he, his, him*), feminine (*she, her, hers*), or neuter (*it, its*)—must be the same as the gender of its antecedent. The **person** (*first, second, third*) of the pronoun also must agree with the person of its antecedent.

Any miniaturist would like his or her creation to last for hundreds of years.

You would be proud to see your work appreciated by future generations.

Identifying Pronouns and Their Antecedents

In each sentence underline once the personal pronoun and underline twice its antecedent.

- As a child, Aunt Livia often played with her dollhouse.
- In the 1500s, dollhouse owners used the dollhouses to show off their wealth.
- The dollhouses were made to imitate their owners' homes.
- In one place, a rich woman could show visitors how beautifully her whole house was decorated.
- The man of the house could give guests an idea of treasures he kept in storage.
- These houses were not small; some of them were six feet high.
- Dutch merchants made their dollhouses much smaller.
- The Utrecht Dollhouse, one of the most famous of its kind, consists of a cabinet with tiny furnished rooms instead of drawers or shelves.
- Craftspeople of the late 1600s gave their talents to creating the Utrecht Dollhouse.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

More Practice

A. Identifying Pronouns and Their Antecedents

In each sentence draw an arrow to connect each pronoun with its antecedent.

1. Anyone thinking that dollhouses are only for children should revise his or her belief.
2. Dollhouses of the 1500s and 1600s, miniature copies of their wealthy owners' homes, can help a researcher improve his or her understanding of those times.
3. In the 1920s, a society woman created a dollhouse, and Carrie Stettheimer's artist friends contributed their talents to making it special.
4. Among those friends was the painter Marcel Duchamp, best known for his pioneering the artistic movement called Dada.
5. Duchamp contributed to the Stettheimer dollhouse a tiny work painted by him.

B. Making Pronouns and Antecedents Agree

Underline the pronoun that correctly completes each sentence. Also underline the antecedent(s) of the pronoun.

1. When the team scored a touchdown, the crowd threw (its, their) hats in the air.
2. Neither Carmen nor her sisters have bought a gift for (her, their) brother.
3. Scuba divers are taught that (you, they) should check (your, their) equipment.
4. Patrick and Warren will present (his, their) routine before the other gymnasts do.
5. Not one hiker would set out without (his or her, their) compass.
6. Sal and Marcus shop for clothes here because (you, they) can find good bargains.
7. Either Debbie or Melinda will bring (her, their) ice skates.
8. Anyone who wants a job should bring (his or her, their) application to me.
9. Arctic explorers discover that (you, they) cannot expose skin to the icy air.
10. I told everyone in the boys' choir that (you, he) had to bring a boxed lunch.
11. Neither Carl nor Mark asked (his, their) parents to chaperone the dance.
12. The town council will be presenting (its, their) own proposal for the new park.
13. Fran always liked walking home because (you, she) saved money on bus fare.
14. If (you, they) should fall, experienced in-line skaters know that knee and elbow pads will reduce the risk of injury.
15. Neither Kate nor Anne has had (her, their) vacation pictures developed yet.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Application

A. Making Pronouns and Antecedents Agree in Writing

Read the following paragraph. Look especially for errors in agreement between pronouns and their antecedents. On the lines below, write the numbers of the sentences with agreement errors. Then write each of those sentences correctly.

(1) Kathy has always liked dollhouses, and she got an idea for a business from their hobby. (2) Now she and her brothers make dollhouses for sale. (3) Neither she nor her brothers give all of her time to the business. (4) Still, the team makes all its spending money from their sales. (5) Kathy's older brother, Murray, builds the shells. (6) He chooses the plywood, cuts it to scale, and assembles the pieces. (7) Her younger brother, Max, paints the houses inside and out, giving it details like doors, windows, and shutters. (8) While Murray and Max do his jobs, Kathy buys miniature furniture. (9) Then she sews curtains, rugs, tablecloths, and bedspreads to make each house special. (10) From October until mid-December, the crew take turns selling its products at craft sales.

B. Writing with Pronouns

Write a description of someone from whom you have learned a craft or how to make something useful. Describe how this person taught you and what you learned. Be sure to include at least five personal pronouns with clear antecedents. Use a separate piece of paper, if necessary.

Lesson
5

Indefinite Pronouns as Antecedents

Teaching

When an indefinite pronoun is the antecedent of a personal pronoun, the personal pronoun must agree in number with the indefinite pronoun. This chart shows the number of some common indefinite pronouns.

| Indefinite Pronouns | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|----------|---------------|--------------------|------|
| Always Singular | | | | Always Plural | Singular or Plural | |
| another | each | everything | one | both | all | none |
| anybody | either | neither | somebody | few | any | some |
| anyone | everybody | nobody | someone | many | most | |
| anything | everyone | no one | | several | | |

Use a singular pronoun to refer to a singular indefinite pronoun. The phrase "his or her" is considered a singular pronoun.

Each of the cars has its sponsor's name painted on it. (singular)

Use a plural pronoun to refer to a plural indefinite pronoun.

Many of the cars are in their first race. (plural)

Some indefinite pronouns can be singular or plural. Use the meaning of the sentence to determine whether the indefinite pronoun is singular or plural.

Some of the equipment was still packed in its containers. (singular)

Some of the race teams were still looking for their equipment. (plural)

Using Indefinite Pronouns

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun. Also underline its antecedent. If its antecedent is a pronoun that can be either singular or plural, underline twice the word that indicates its number in the sentence.

EXAMPLE None of the cars in the race have had (its, their) tires changed.

- All of the mineral water has lost (its, their) sparkle.
- Everyone must bring (his or her, their) own instrument to the music class.
- Last spring one of the baby robins fell and broke (its, their) wings.
- Nobody appreciates (his or her, their) own good health until illness strikes.
- None of the books are in (its, their) proper positions on the shelves.
- Each of the boys enjoyed (his, their) trip to the Art Institute.
- Both of the girls had to take medication for (her, their) allergies.
- Each of the exhibits at the museum required (its, their) own special lighting.
- One of the brochures has a photograph of Barcelona on (its, their) cover.
- Few of the members on the girls' team had arranged (her, their) own transportation.
- Everything in the jewelry case has (its, their) own price tag.
- None of the new dimes have been removed from (its, their) wrapper.
- Either of those girls may be invited to display (her, their) paintings at the fair.

Lesson
5

Indefinite Pronouns as Antecedents

More Practice

A. Identifying Indefinite Pronouns

Underline the indefinite pronoun in each sentence. Then underline the correct pronoun in parentheses.

1. Each of the baby girls has already received (her, their) vaccinations.
2. Neither of those dogs ever learned to obey (its, their) master.
3. During the violent thunderstorm, most of the county lost (its, their) electricity.
4. All but one of the alligators that escaped from the zoo found (its, their) way back safely.
5. Each of the boys on the team is wearing (his, their) new uniform.
6. Many have expressed (his or her, their) support for our plan.
7. Neither of the women has told me (her, their) opinion.
8. Everyone in the gardens planted (his or her, their) tomatoes just before the unexpected frost.
9. None of the women skaters has taken (her, their) turn on the ice yet.
10. Most of the bus drivers had completed (his or her, their) routes by midnight.
11. Some of the flowers have lost (its, their) fragrance.
12. Several of the men insist that (his, their) votes were not counted.

B. Using Pronouns Correctly

In each sentence below, decide whether the pronouns agree with their antecedents. If the sentence is correct, write **Correct** on the line. If it contains a pronoun that does not agree with its antecedent, rewrite the sentence correctly on the line.

1. None of the spectators at this car race regret his or her attendance.

2. Many of the fans cheered loudly for their favorite drivers.

3. Everybody in the crowd enjoyed their experience here.

4. Do any of the food kiosks have veggie burgers on its menus?

5. Some of the drink that I spilled left its mark on my souvenir booklet.

6. All of the contestants expressed its interest in returning next year.

Lesson 5

Indefinite Pronouns as Antecedents

Application

A. Proofreading for Pronoun-Antecedent Errors

Proofread the following paragraph. When you find an error involving a pronoun and its agreement with its antecedent, cross the pronoun out. Then insert this proofreading symbol \wedge and write the correct pronoun or pronouns above it. If necessary, mark any verb that must agree with the changed pronoun to be changed, also.

One of the most popular sports worldwide holds their events in stadiums, on city streets, and on mountain roads. That sport is auto racing. Many of the drivers are professionals who earn his or her living from competing. Tens of thousands more, however, are amateurs who participate at their own expense. There are many kinds of auto races, and almost anyone can test their abilities in one of them. For example, some of the drivers in kart races have only celebrated his or her eighth birthday. However, most of the people interested in racing get their pleasure from watching others race. Almost everybody in the United States has heard of drag racing, even if they haven't seen it. Several of the other well known races are known by its French name, Grand Prix, which means "large prize." All of these races draw hundreds of thousands of spectators to its courses on roads in Canada, the United States, Monaco, and other countries.

B. Using Indefinite Pronouns in Writing

Write a paragraph about the sport you most enjoy watching, either live or on television. Explain what makes the event of interest to you. Use at least four of these indefinite pronouns: *all, any, most, none, some*. Be sure that any personal pronouns agree with their indefinite pronoun antecedents in number.

Other Pronoun Problems

Teaching

Pronouns may be used with an appositive, in an appositive, or in a comparison. Pronouns can also be used reflexively or intensively

Appositives An **appositive** is a noun or pronoun that follows another noun or pronoun to identify or explain it. The pronouns *we* and *us* are often followed by appositives. To determine whether to use *we* or *us*, drop the appositive from the sentence and determine whether the pronoun is a subject or an object.

We hikers scheduled a ten-mile hike. (We scheduled a ten-mile hike.)

The park rangers encouraged us hikers. (The park rangers encouraged us.)

A pronoun used in an appositive is in the same case as the noun to which it refers.

The hike leaders, Kurt and she, planned the route. (*Leaders* is the subject of *planned*; use the nominative case.)

Club members followed the hike leaders, Kurt and her. (*Leaders* is the object of *asked*; use the objective case.)

Comparisons A comparison can be made using *than* or *as* to begin a clause. When words are left out of such a clause, the clause is said to be **elliptical**. To determine the correct pronoun to use in an elliptical clause, mentally fill in the unstated words.

My sister likes hiking more than I. (more than I like hiking)

My sister likes hiking more than me. (more than she likes me)

Reflexive and Intensive Pronouns Pronouns ending in *-self* or *-selves* can be used reflexively or intensively. Reflexive and intensive pronouns may never be used alone; they must refer to, or intensify, an antecedent in the same sentence.

I myself suggested hiking past Strawberry Lake. (used as intensive pronoun)

I saw myself in the water of Strawberry Lake. (used as reflexive pronoun)

A. Choosing the Correct Pronoun

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form.

1. (We, Us) hikers met at dawn.
2. Ben walked faster than (I, me).
3. The bear chased the two hikers, Lucinda and (he, him), when they approached the cub.
4. The bees stung Barbara fewer times than (I, me).
5. A sudden rainstorm gave (we, us) hikers a slippery path.
6. The slowest walkers, Briana and (she, her), arrived half an hour after the rest of us.
7. (We, Us) survivors decided we'd had a good time.

B. Choosing the Correct Pronoun

In each set, underline the correct sentence.

1. Kendra asked myself a question. / Kendra asked me a question.
2. I myself will help you. / Myself will help you.
3. Kelvin asked himself a question. / Kelvin asked him, Kelvin, a question.
4. Did herself break Tina's lens? / Did Tina herself break her lens?

Other Pronoun Problems*More Practice***A. Choosing the Correct Pronoun**

In each sentence, underline the correct pronoun form.

1. Dad handed rakes to both of (we, us) boys.
2. (We, Us) able-bodied rakers attacked the back yard.
3. Lester has longer arms than (I, me).
4. He raked in wide circles around (himself, hisself).
5. (Myself, I myself) preferred to rake one long row at a time.
6. No other pair of rakers could have cleaned off that yard faster than (us, we).
7. (We, Us) workers wanted to get the lawn clear of leaves before any more fell.
8. Unfortunately, the leaves were faster than (we, us).
9. By the time the two of (we, us) boys worked our way across the lawn, the first half was already re-covered with leaves.
10. Later, Dad came to help his sons with sore arms, Lester and (I, me).

B. Using Pronouns Correctly

Write an appropriate pronoun on the line in each sentence. Do not use the pronoun *you* or any possessive pronoun.

1. The two winning gymnasts, Briana and _____, received medals.
2. The administration will not give _____ students a voice in school policy.
3. Marco knows how to play bridge better than _____.
4. Francine was curious about where _____ magicians learn our tricks.
5. _____ latecomers had to wait at the back of the hall till the orchestra finished the first piece.
6. The critics praised several of the artists, especially Wolf Kahn and _____.
7. The blown spray wet me as much as _____.
8. At soccer, Carlos protects the cage better than _____.
9. _____ poets should get together to share ideas and our poems, as well.
10. Izaak is as interested in developing a new cartoon character as _____.

Other Pronoun Problems

Application

A. Writing Elliptical Sentences Using Pronouns

Write an elliptical sentence with the same meaning as each of the following sentences. Replace the boldfaced noun with a pronoun. Use the correct pronoun to communicate your meaning.

EXAMPLE George is generally more truthful than **Bill** is.

*George is generally more truthful than **he**.*

1. Anne has been seen on stage by more people than **Emma** has been seen by.

2. Frank is a better driver than **Cher** is.

3. Victor knows as many people in town as **Art** knows.

4. The Wicked Queen was determined to be more beautiful than **Snow White** was.

5. Did you arrive earlier than **Janine** arrived?

6. Nancy is as eager to see Mark as **Becca** is eager to see him.

B. Proofreading for Correct Pronoun Usage

Proofread the following paragraph. When you find a pronoun used incorrectly, cross it out. Then insert this proofreading symbol \wedge and write the correct pronoun above it.

To we visitors to Rocky Creek Park, there's no greater challenge than climbing Mount Baldy. Two regular park visitors, my neighbor Tom and me, tried to scale that smooth cliff again last week. The park rangers warned climbers, other teens and we, to stay with buddies. Tom is more daring than me, so I keep him in line. I myself need some of his self-confidence. He started up faster than me, and for a while I felt bad that I wasn't doing as well as him. But then he slowed down. Finally he stopped altogether. He told myself that some dirt or dust had gotten into his eyes. He could feel for handholds, but he himself couldn't see where to reach over the vertical cracks in the wall. We were closer to the top than to the bottom by then, so we continued up. But from that point on, I had to see for him as well as for myself. No one was more relieved to reach the top than us! Now Tom goes around bragging that he can scale Mount Baldy blindfolded.

Pronoun-Reference Problems

Teaching

If readers cannot find or determine the antecedent of a pronoun, they can be confused.

General reference problems occur when the pronouns *it*, *this*, *that*, *which*, and *such* are used to refer to a general idea rather than to a specific noun. Correct the problem by adding a clear antecedent or by rewriting the sentence to eliminate the pronoun.

Awkward Norse mythology reflects the weather in Scandinavia, which is well known.

Revised It is well-known that Norse mythology reflects the weather in Scandinavia.

Indefinite reference occurs when the pronoun *it*, *you*, or *they* does not refer to a specific person or thing. Correct the problem by rewriting the sentence to eliminate the pronoun.

Awkward In Norse myths about creation, you have land of ice and mist.

Revised A land of ice and mist appears in Norse myths about creation.

Ambiguous reference occurs when a pronoun could refer to two or more antecedents. Correct the problem by rewriting the sentence to clarify what the pronoun refers to.

Awkward Thor and Odin are two Norse gods; his weapon is the hammer.

Revised Thor and Odin are two Norse gods; Thor's weapon is the hammer.

Identifying Clear Pronoun References

In each pair of sentences below, one sentence has an indefinite, general, or ambiguous pronoun reference. The other is correct. Underline the one that is correct.

- Thor was Odin's oldest son and the god of thunder and lightning; he was proud of him.
Thor was Odin's oldest son and the god of thunder and lightning; Odin was proud of him.
- When Thor threw his hammer, which was magic, it never missed its mark.
When Thor threw his hammer, it never missed its mark, which was magic.
- In different Norse myths, you have different versions of certain events.
Different Norse myths give different versions of some events.
- Many tales tell of Thor's fantastic appetite.
It said in many tales that Thor had a fantastic appetite.
- Thor tried to drink the oceans, which caused the first tides.
Thor's attempt to drink the oceans caused the first tides.
- Thor had many battles with giants, the enemies of the gods, and they always came out in his favor.
Thor had many battles with giants, the enemies of the gods, and those battles always came out in his favor.

Pronoun-Reference Problems

More Practice

Avoiding Indefinite, General, and Ambiguous References

Rewrite the following sentences to correct indefinite, general, and ambiguous pronoun references. More than one interpretation may be possible. Add any words that are needed to make the meaning clear.

1. According to Norse myths, the gods created the first humans from trees, which makes them odd ancestors. _____

2. In Greek myths, the home of the gods was the top of Mount Olympus, but in Norse myths you have Asgard. _____

3. Greek myths told about the Fates and the similar Norns appeared in Norse myths; they lived at the base of the tree that supported creation. _____

4. In the myths it explains that the three Norns controlled the past, present, and future. _____

5. Valhalla was a special place in Asgard, the Norse heaven, for warriors killed in battle, and that gave Viking warriors more courage. _____

6. The Vikings honored such gods as Odin and Thor; they gave us the names of some weekdays. _____

7. Odin asked to drink from the spring of wisdom, but it cost him one eye, _____

8. In these northern myths they have a god of agriculture called Frey. _____

9. The people of ancient times carried an image of Frey with them when they traveled, which they thought would keep them safe. _____

10. The evil god Loki was jealous of the Balder, the god of beauty, and when he wasn't expecting danger, he killed him. _____

Lesson
7

Pronoun-Reference Problems

Application

A. Eliminating Pronoun Reference Problem

Revise the sentences below to correct all indefinite, general, or ambiguous pronoun reference problems. More than one interpretation may be possible.

1. Browsing in bookstores is satisfying when you finally find one.

2. Please explain to me what they mean by "Pyrrhic" victory.

3. The difference between an alligator and a crocodile is not important when it is about to bite you.

4. He dropped his headphones, which interrupted the tape.

5. Smitty argued with Dad about the curfew, which made Dad storm out of the room.

B. Using Clear Pronoun References

In the following paragraph, find five sentences with indefinite, general, or ambiguous pronoun references. Revise the sentences on the lines below. Use a separate piece of paper, if necessary.

(1) In Norse myths it talks about gods and giants, magic plants and weapons. (2) Two of them were Loki and Balder. (3) Loki was an evil god, who hated the other gods, especially Balder. (4) Balder, the god of beauty, goodness, and light, was a son of the goddess Frigg and the ruler of the gods, Odin. (5) He is also called Woden, and Wednesday is named after him. (6) Frigg persuaded all things on earth, even stones, to promise not to hurt Balder, which made Balder lose all sense of danger. (7) Nobody but Loki knew that the mistletoe had not made the promise. (8) For fun, the blind god Hoder was going to throw something at Balder. (9) He gave him a sprig of it to throw. (10) The mistletoe pierced Balder's body, killing him.

