

PRONOUN AGREEMENT

PS-12

Whether singular or plural, it is important for a pronoun and its antecedent to agree. An **antecedent** is the noun to which a pronoun refers. If you remember that a pronoun must make reference to a noun and that the noun should be close to the pronoun, you will find it easier to make pronouns agree with their antecedents.

EXAMPLE: The **guide** for the tour related interesting stories about the artist as **she** discussed each painting.

In the example, the noun **guide** is the antecedent of the pronoun **she**.

SOME IMPORTANT RULES TO REMEMBER:

1. If the antecedent of a pronoun is singular, the pronoun is singular.
2. If the antecedent of a pronoun is plural, the pronoun is plural.
3. In addition to number, a pronoun should agree in person and gender with its antecedent.

REVIEW THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES:

1. This is your **hat**. Put **it** on. (**It** (neuter in gender) is the singular pronoun which agrees in number with its antecedent, **hat**.)
2. Jane was magnificent when **she** sang the lead role in the school opera. (**She** (feminine in gender) is the singular pronoun which agrees in number with its antecedent, **Jane**.)
3. The **students** wrote **their** essays during the composition class. (**Their** is the plural pronoun which agrees in number with its antecedent, **students**.)

THE FOLLOWING PRONOUNS ARE SINGULAR. MEMORIZE THEM!

anybody, anyone, each, either, everybody, everyone, neither, nobody, no one, somebody, someone, either, neither

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REVIEW THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES:

1. **Everyone** should work at **his/her** own pace.
(**Everyone** is the singular antecedent; therefore, **his/her** is in agreement.)
2. **Each** of the students writes **his/her** own test!
(**Each** is the singular antecedent; therefore, **his/her** is in agreement.)
Each, remember, is the subject; **of the students** is a prepositional phrase.

THE FOLLOWING NOUNS ARE KNOWN AS COLLECTIVE NOUNS AND ARE USUALLY SINGULAR IF THEY ARE REFERRED TO AS A UNIT:

audience, band, class, college, committee, company, crowd, family, government, group, jury, number, school, society, team

REVIEW THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES FOR UNDERSTANDING.

1. The **committee** made **its** recommendation yesterday. (The committee is singular because it made the recommendation as a unit; therefore, we must use the singular pronoun, **its**.)
2. The **jury** left the courtroom one at a time with **their** heads held high. (Jury is plural because each one left individually; therefore, the pronoun **their** refers to the jury and must be plural also.)

NOW, YOU MAY PRACTICE ALL THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED!

EXERCISE 1: UNDERLINE THE CORRECT WORD OR WORDS IN THE PARENTHESES. ALSO, UNDERLINE THE ANTECEDENT OF THE PRONOUN.

1. Someone has removed the grammar book, and I want (him, them) to return it.
2. Although I knew somebody called me, I did not answer (her, them).
3. Each man must do what (he, they) feel(s) is right.
4. Everybody in the lab was ready to complete (her, their) assignment.
5. No one wants to admit (his, their) weaknesses.
6. Everybody wanted to claim (his, their) strengths.
7. One of the students lost (his, their) books.

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8. Anybody who wants to improve (his, their) grades may sometimes need help.
9. Nobody is expected to do all the work (himself, themselves).
10. Either Ms. Marco or Ms. Linko wants to sell (her, their) car.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS ON THE LAST PAGE OF THE PACKET.

EXERCISE 2: CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT PRONOUN AND WRITE THE CORRECT FORM ABOVE IT. IF THE SENTENCE IS CORRECT AS WRITTEN, PLACE A “C” IN THE SPACE BETWEEN THE NUMBER AND THE BEGINNING OF THE SENTENCE.

1. Everyone should take their job seriously.
2. Each of the girls willingly did their share.
3. If anyone has an extra piece of paper, will they lend it to me?
4. Each of the members brought her contribution yesterday.
5. Everyone took their vacation early.
6. Each of the instructors left his car in the administrative parking lot.
7. If each of the students will do their best, FCCJ will win the contest.
8. Each of the presidents explained their reason for their decision.
9. Each student did their best to make the orientation a success.
10. Never vote for anyone because of their looks.
11. All students should bring his books to class.
12. Each person is responsible for their supplies.
13. My instructor gave each of the students their final grade.
14. Neither made an error on their test.

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15. Every student furnished her own transportation.
16. Each band member brought his own instrument.
17. The collection of books was famous for their popularity with young people.
18. The media wants to set its own hours for meeting with the staff.
19. Either Paul or Jim will lend me their notes.
20. Bad news always has its way of traveling fast.
21. The jury gave their verdict at sundown.
22. The United States expressed their disapproval of the war.
23. The United Nations didn't give its approval either.
24. Before the game, the team must try on its new uniforms.
25. After singing the national anthem, the audience took its seats.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS ON THE NEXT PAGE. IF YOU NEED MORE ASSISTANCE, ASK AN ADVISOR IN THE LAB.

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ANSWERS FOR PRONOUN AGREEMENT EXERCISES

Exercise 1:

1. him - someone is the antecedent
2. her - somebody is the antecedent
3. he - man is the antecedent
4. her - everybody is the antecedent
5. his - one is the antecedent
6. his - everybody is the antecedent
7. her - one is the antecedent
8. his - anybody is the antecedent
9. himself - nobody is the antecedent
10. her - Ms. Marco and Ms. Linko are antecedents, but because they are introduced by either and joined by or, the pronoun must be singular.

Exercise 2

	WORD CROSSED OUT	REPLACED WITH
1.	their	his or her
2.	their	her
3.	they	he or she
4.	CORRECT	
5.	their	his or her
6.	CORRECT	
7.	their	his or her
8.	their	his or her
9.	their	his or her
10.	their	his or her
11.	his	their
12.	their	his or her
13.	their	his or her
14.	their	his or her
15.	CORRECT	
16.	CORRECT	
17.	their	its
18.	its	their
19.	their	his

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	WORD CROSSED OUT	REPLACED WITH
20.	CORRECT	
21.	their	its
22.	their	its
23.	CORRECT	
24.	its	their
25.	its	their

Websites for Pronoun Practice

http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/cgi-shl/quiz.pl/pronoun_quiz.htm

Quiz on Pronoun Usage from Capitol Community College.

http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/pron2_quiz.htm

Quiz on Pronoun Forms from Capitol Community College.