

Lesson Topic: Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Errors

Objective

Students will be able to write sentence with clear pronoun-antecedent agreement.

Lesson Outline

1. Objective
2. Teacher Model: Match group nouns to singular pronouns
3. Individual Practice: Add the correct pronoun to the sentence
4. Individual Practice: Write a sentence with a group noun
5. Teacher Model: Revise sentences with unclear pronouns
6. Individual Practice: Revise a sentence with an unclear pronoun
7. Wrap-Up

Optional Follow-up Activity

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.c

Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.d

Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).

Prerequisites

Students can identify the number, person, and case of pronouns.

Slide 1/7

By the end of class today, I will be able to:

- Write sentences with clear pronouns.

Objective

Introduce the objective of the lesson.

Say: Please read the objective for today's class.

Say: Sometimes we write sentences with pronouns, but the reader doesn't understand who the pronoun is talking about. Today we're going to practice correcting common mistakes that make our pronouns unclear.

Slide 2/7: Interactive Slide

Its, Their

The crew is proud of ___ ship.



Teacher Models Response

Teacher Model

Explain how group nouns take singular pronouns.

Say: This type of sentence often confuses writers. I have to insert a pronoun in this sentence. The pronoun is talking about the *crew*. Should I say "*their ship*" or "*its ship*"? Raise your hand if you think you have an answer.

Call on students and ask them to explain their answers.

Anticipated Student Responses:

- Their, because many people are part of a crew.
- Its, because there is only one crew.

Say: Good thinking, everyone. Let me walk you through the logic of this sentence. Even though a crew contains many people, the word crew is singular. It describes one group of people. One group of sailors is proud of the ship.

In your Model your Answer box, type: The crew is proud of ___ ship.

Say: Look at the action word. Notice that the sentence says "*the crew is*" and not "*the crew are.*" That's another clue that the noun is singular.

In your Model your Answer box, bold "is": The crew **is** proud of ___ ship.

Say: Since the noun is singular, the pronoun that I use to talk about it has to be singular too. The singular pronoun is *its*. I'm going to add *its* to my sentence.

In your Model your Answer box, type: The crew **is** proud of its ship.

Say: This idea works for all words that describe large groups. For instance, a team is a group of players, a flock is a group of birds, and a fleet is a group of ships. Can anyone think of more examples?

Call on students for examples of group nouns.

Say: Good thinking, everyone!

Slide 3/7: Interactive Slide

Its, Their

The wolf pack waits for __ leader to start eating.



Students Input Sentences

Individual Practice

Ask students to add a pronoun to a sentence with a group noun.

Say: Now I'd like you all to try this on your own. Look at the sentences on your screen and decide whether the correct pronoun is *its* or *their*. Rewrite the sentence and submit it in the box.

Discussion

Select 1-2 correct responses and 1-2 incorrect responses to display and discuss.

Ask the following questions about the incorrect responses:

- Is the word *pack* describing one thing or many things?
- Do the word *waits* tell us the noun is singular or plural?
- Is the singular pronoun *their*, *it's*, or *its*?

Slide 4/7: Interactive Slide

Write a sentence of your own using one of the words and a pronoun.

Jury
Swarm
Team



Students Input Sentences

Individual Practice

Ask students to write an original sentence using a group noun.

Say: Now write a sentence of your own. Choose one of the words on your screen and create a sentence with a pronoun.

Discussion

Select 2-3 correct responses and 1-2 incorrect responses to display and discuss.

Note: When members of a group must act individually, as in "The jury raise their hands," students can use a plural pronoun.

Potential Correct Answers:

- "The jury gave its decision."
- "The swarm of bees built its hive."
- "The baseball team won its first game!"

Ask the following questions:

- Does the pronoun match the noun?
- Does the verb match the noun?
- Is the pronoun *its* spelled correctly?

Slide 5/7: Interactive Slide

They say sea level will rise by as much as two meters by 2100.



Teacher Models Response

Teacher Model

Explain how to correct pronouns lacking a clear antecedent.

Say: Let's look at another type of unclear sentence. This sentence on your screen is grammatically correct, but it is still unclear. Here's why: who says sea levels will rise? Can you guess?

Anticipated Student Response:

- Scientists
- Weathermen
- Sailors

Say: Here's the problem: you're all correct. This sentence doesn't tell you who "*they*" are, so your source could be anyone! It's probably scientists, but it could also be teachers, or maybe even my neighbors down the street. The reader has to guess.

Say: When you write, make sure you don't use pronouns like "*they*" without talking about who *they* are first. We have to rewrite this sentence to make the actor, or the subject, of the sentence clear. I'll rewrite it on my slide.

In the Model Your Answer Box, type: Climate scientists say sea level will rise by as much as two meters by 2100.

Say: Now the sentence is much less confusing.

Slide 6/7: Interactive Slide

The fireman and the policeman rushed to the scene. He saved the kittens just in time.



Students Input Sentences

Individual Practice

Ask students to revise a sentence with unclear pronoun reference.

Say: Let's practice this one more time. Revise the underlined sentence to make it clear who *he* is. When you're finished, type the new sentence in the box and press submit.

Discussion

Select 2-3 correct responses and 1-2 incorrect responses to display and discuss.

Ask the following questions:

- Does the sentence tell the reader which man saved the kittens?
- How can we make this sentence clearer?
- Is the sentence grammatically correct?

Slide 7/7

Today I learned:

- When referring to many people, animals, or things with a group word, use the pronoun *it*, not *they*.
- Always match words like *they* to a specific noun.

Wrap-up

Review what the students learned today.

Say: Great work, everyone! Let's review what you learned today.

Ask students to read each bullet point out loud.

You can assign an independent practice activity that students can either complete now or later.

You can also pull aside the flagged students for small group instruction.

Say: Follow the instructions on your screen. If your screen says to begin the next activity, go ahead and begin it now. If your screen says to wait for instructions, please wait at your desk quietly for your next steps.