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## Pronouns



### WHAT IS A PRONOUN?

A pronoun may be called a word that replaces a noun or a noun phrase. It can help you remove redundancy or unnecessary repetitive usage of nouns in writing.

**Look at the following examples.**

**Riya went to the grocery store, but Riya did not find anything there.**

**Martin told me to come to his office and Martin also told me to get the files to Martin.**

**Mom made some food and mom gave it to us in a lunchbox.**

**Janet wrote the letter but Janet did not send the letter on time.**

Does it sound repetitive?

Look at the repetitive usage of the following nouns:

1. Riya
2. Martin
3. Mom
4. Janet
5. letter

Does the repetitive usage of these nouns make the sentences sound boring or difficult to read? This is where pronouns come in. A pronoun takes the place of a noun to prevent its repetitive usage. The noun, in this case, may be called the antecedent. The antecedent specifies the nature of a pronoun.

**For example:**

**The girl went to sleep because she was very exhausted.**

Here, 'the girl' is the antecedent, and 'she' is the pronoun. Look at how a change in the antecedent can also cause a change in the pronoun.

**The boy went to the store because he was out of supplies.**

Here, a change in the antecedent causes a change in the nature of the pronoun.

### TYPES OF PRONOUN

**There are different types of pronoun.**

#### Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns are the pronouns that refer to a specific person or a thing. They can be divided into two types.

**Normative personal pronouns**—They act as the subject!

**For example:**

**I came home after the work was finished.**

**You should skip the show for today.**

**Objective personal pronouns**—They act as objects!

**Riya came to the store with Michael and me.**

**Michael hates him.**

#### Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns show ownership. They show that an object belongs to someone.

**For example:**

**The pencil box was mine.**

**Their problems are not mine to handle.**

**The piece of cake is yours.**

**The duty is hers.**

**This tent is ours.**

#### Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns show that the subject in a sentence is receiving the action of the verb.

**For example:**

**I can handle the project by myself.**

**They can write the paper themselves.**

**She can get home by herself.**

**He will tell them the instructions himself.**

**The situation can handle itself.**



PERSONAL (NORMATIVE)	PERSONAL (OBJECTIVE)	POSSESSIVE	REFLEXIVE
I You He She It We They	You Me Him Her It Us Them	My/mine Your/yours His Her/hers Its Our/ours Their/theirs	Myself Yourself Himself Herself Itself Ourselves Themselves

### Intensive pronouns

Intensive pronouns are only used to place emphasis on the subject and are not important *per se* to the meaning of the sentence. They may look similar to reflexive pronouns but have different usage and are also used immediately next to the subject that they are emphasising.

#### For example:

**You yourself must complete the work.**

**She herself must inform the authorities.**

**They themselves should approach me regarding this.**

**We ourselves must achieve this task.**

#### Some intensive pronouns:

Myself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, themselves

### Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns are used to identify nouns and answer the question “which?”.

#### For example:

**These are the people that we selected for the play.**

**They are the participants.**

**She is the girl Ray was talking about.**

**These are the pens I could find.**

#### Some demonstrative pronouns:

This, that, these, those

### Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns are pronouns that are used only in reference to a question regarding who, which, whose, what, whom.

#### For example:

**Which one of the notebooks is hers?**

**Who is that person?**

**Which one of these phones is yours?**

**Who is that boy?**

#### Some relative pronouns:

Who, what, which, Whom, whose

### Relative pronouns

Relative pronouns are used to connect clarifying information to nouns or other pronouns in a sentence.

#### For example:

**Who wrote this letter? (‘who’ is used for a subject)**

**Who went to the store without telling me?**

**With whom did you do this project? (‘whom’ is used for a subject)**

**This notice should be addressed to whom?**

**Jennie, who choreographed the play, has received a contract offer from Hollywood.**

**The things that I bought from the market were not helpful to me. (‘that’ is used when referring to things)**

**The community gymnasium that is down the street is very clean.**

**Our luggage was stolen, which really upset my mother. (‘which’ is used in nonessential clauses)**

#### Some relative pronouns:

Who, that, which, whom, Whose, whoever, whichever, Whomever, whatever

### Indefinite pronouns

Indefinite pronouns are used while referring to a person or a thing not specific or known. They may also be used to identify a general group of people or things.

#### For example:

**Everyone has to follow the instructions sent yesterday.**

**Some were excited to go on the cruise.**

**All of the students submitted the assignment on time.**

**Most of the girls were against the proposal.**

#### Some indefinite pronouns:

both, many, several, few, one, some, none, all, most, somebody, anybody, anyone, everybody, everyone, each, every

### Reciprocal pronouns

Reciprocal pronouns are used when referring to a mutual set of people.

#### For example:

**They needed each other's addresses.**

**We have to help one other to survive.**

**You have to work with each other to complete the work before the assigned deadline.**

#### Some reciprocal pronouns:

each other, one another, each other's, one another's

### Collective nouns

In the case of collective nouns, like family, class, panel, college, society, group, school, committee, company, the pronouns referring to them are singular.

#### For example:

**The jury delivered its verdict yesterday.**

**The school told its students to submit their forms as soon as possible.**

However, when a collective noun is used to refer to a group of individuals with different goals, the pronoun would be plural.

#### For example:

**The jury discussed their verdict among themselves.**

**The class submitted their assignments.**

### TIPS TO WRITE/IDENTIFY PRONOUNS CORRECTLY

Avoid making ambiguous uses of pronouns.

#### For example:

**Jenna told Maria that she had to go to the office early.**

The sentence poses an ambiguity regarding who actually had to go to the office early, Jenna or Maria.

Therefore, you must make sure that it is clear who the pronoun refers to in a sentence.

**Jenna told Maria that she, Maria, had to go to the office early.**

The given sentence makes it clear who the pronoun refers to. Therefore, it is not ambiguous.

Use the correct form of the pronoun when comparing persons or things.

#### For example:

**Jennie is shorter than me [am]. (incorrect)**

**Jannie is shorter than I [am]. (correct)**

**I walked four miles with she. [incorrect]**

**I walked four miles with her. [correct]**

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Fill in the blanks with appropriate pronouns.**

- Each person thanked \_\_\_\_\_ parents.
- Raymond injured \_\_\_\_\_ left arm.
- Her neighbours sometimes leave \_\_\_\_\_ house door open.
- The committee works for the upliftment of \_\_\_\_\_ members.
- The council members discussed \_\_\_\_\_ views about the changing situation.



6. Sara went out with some people yesterday and \_\_\_\_\_ discussed at length about Maria.
7. The professor called Nathan and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. We have to help \_\_\_\_\_ if we wish to reach on time.
9. Mr Michaels and \_\_\_\_\_ will present in the meeting.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ wanted our results quicker than they were willing to give.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ would like my cardigan back.
12. The team's problem is that \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't have good leadership.
13. Jake, Winnie, and I submitted the work on time but \_\_\_\_\_ didn't receive any acknowledgement.
14. I don't think this is any of \_\_\_\_\_ business.
15. We aim at upliftment of all, so \_\_\_\_\_ request everyone to register accordingly.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ of us agreed to the proposal.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ of these packet's is his?
18. You \_\_\_\_\_ must come to me if something like this happens the next time.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ one of you didn't inform me?
20. \_\_\_\_\_ are the people Jay shortlisted for the auditions.

## SOLUTIONS

1. His or her/their
2. His
3. Their
4. Its
5. Their
6. They
7. Me
8. Each other/one another
9. I
10. We
11. I
12. It
13. We
14. My/our/your
15. We
16. Some/all/a few
17. Which
18. Yourself
19. Which
20. These/those