

## Tóm lược (Summary)

Ms. Weaver gives Anna and Pete a new assignment: make a show about single parents. But first, she wants them to try out parenting for themselves...

Ms. Weaver giao cho Anna và Pete một nhiệm vụ mới: sản xuất một chương trình về cha mẹ đơn thân. Nhưng trước tiên, bà muốn họ tự mình thử làm cha mẹ trước.

## Hội thoại (Conversation)

Ms. Weaver: Anna, Pete, I have a new assignment for you -- a show on **single** parents! What is it like for a mother or a father to raise a child by herself or himself?

Anna: We can interview single parents. They can share their **experiences** themselves.

Ms. Weaver: Yes, but you need to experience **parenthood** yourselves.

Anna: Ourselves?

Peter: Yeah, how do we do that? We're not parents.

Ms. Weaver: I asked myself the same question. I said, "Caty, how are they **gonna** do that?" Then an idea came to me. I will give you the babies!

Professor Bot: You may be asking yourself the same thing that I'm asking myself: what is Ms. Weaver talking about!? I am sure we will find out shortly.

This lesson teaches reflexive pronouns.

Reflexive pronouns **refer** back to the subject of a sentence or clause. We use them when the subject and the object are the same person or thing.

For example, Ms. Weaver says, “I asked myself the same question.”

“I” is the subject and “myself” refers back to it. Here, she would not use the pronoun “me.” You need to use the reflexive pronoun “myself.”

Reflexive pronouns are easy to find: they end in “self” or “selves.” I have a feeling we are going to see a lot of reflexive pronouns. Listen for them!

*(Pete and Anna continue their meeting with Ms. Weaver. She puts two bags of flour on the table. Pete and Anna still look confused.)*

Ms. Weaver: Here are your babies!

Pete: Those are bags of flour.

Ms. Weaver: No, Pete, for the next six days, this is your baby. Here are your **instructions**. Do not leave your babies alone. A baby cannot take care of itself. And you two must do everything by yourselves.

We will meet next Friday. Oh, and the person who does the best research will get an extra day of vacation. Help yourself to a baby.

Anna: Pete, look, my baby is organic and whole grain. Your baby is **ordinary**.

*(Pete pushes her flour baby off desk.)*

Anna: *(to Pete)* **Monster!** *(to Caty)* This is a great idea, Ms. Weaver!

*(Pete and Anna are now outside.)*

Pete: This is a **terrible** idea.

Anna: **Speak for yourself**, Pete! We need to **throw ourselves into** the research! I'm starting right now!

*(She leaves but forgets her Flour Baby.)*

Pete: Hey Anna, you forgot your baby!

*(She turns and looks at Pete.)*

Anna: Come to mama!

*(The bag of flour flies at her. She catches it.)*

Anna: Good girl! Good girl!

Professor Bot: Singular reflexive pronouns end in "self." Plural ones end in "selves."

Anna says, "We need to throw ourselves into the research!" The subject "we" is plural. So, we must use the plural reflexive pronoun "ourselves."

*(The parenting research begins. Anna tries to open a baby **stroller** but can't. A man walking by helps her. She pushes Flour Baby in the stroller but it falls out. On another day, she jogs with it. After several days, she is tired!)*

Anna: This is hard! I hope Pete is not doing well. I really need that vacation day!

Professor Bot: We will all see how Pete is doing in the next episode. We'll also learn when *not* to use reflexive pronouns.

## Từ ngữ mới (New Words)

**experience** – *n.* the process of doing and seeing things and of having things happen to you

**gonna** – *informal.* In casual conversation, most Americans change “going to” to “gonna.”

**instructions** – *n.* statements that describe how to do something

**ordinary** – *adj.* normal or usual

**monster** – *n.* an extremely cruel or evil person

**parenthood** – *n.* the state of being a mother or father

**refer** – *v.* to have a direct connection or relationship to something

**single** – *adj.* not married or not having a serious romantic relationship with someone

**speak for yourself** - *expression.* something you say to someone to say that the opinion that they have just expressed is not the same as your opinion

**stroller** - *n.* a small carriage with four wheels that a baby or small child can ride in while someone pushes it

**terrible** – *adj.* very shocking and upsetting

**throw (reflexive pronoun) into** – *expression.* to begin to do something with great energy and determination

## Practice (Thực hành)

Now, practice the grammar you just learned!

Use the Comments section below to tell us about taking care of a baby (real or not), or maybe an animal. You can talk about yourself, or maybe a friend or family member/s. What happened? How did it go?

## Using Reflexive Pronouns

We use reflexive pronouns when the subject and object of the sentence or clause are the same person or thing.

*Ex: I asked myself the same question.*

Subjects and their reflexive pronouns:

I...myself  
You...yourself  
He...himself  
Her...herself  
One...oneself  
It...itself  
We...ourselves  
You...yourselves  
They...themselves

A reflexive pronoun can be a *direct object*, *indirect object* or an *object of the preposition*.

**Direct Object:**

*Ex: A baby cannot take care of itself.*

**Indirect Object:**

*Ex: I asked myself the same question.*

**Object of the Preposition:**

*Ex: Anna and Pete are experiencing parenthood for themselves.*

**To show emphasis:**

Sometimes, we use reflexive pronouns simply to emphasize the person or thing in the sentence or clause. In this case, the reflexive pronoun often appears at the end of the sentence:

*Ex: Anna took care of the baby herself.*

## **We do NOT use reflexive pronouns:**

After prepositions of place

*Ex: Anna found the flour baby in the kitchen ~~herself~~. (wrong)*  
*Anna found the flour baby in the kitchen. (right)*

After these verbs: meet, feel, relax, concentrate

*Ex: They will meet ~~themselves~~ at The Studio next Friday. (wrong)*  
*They will meet at The Studio next Friday. (right)*

After verbs that describe things we normally do for ourselves, such as dress, shave and wash

*Ex: Anna got dressed ~~herself~~ for a day with her new flour baby. (wrong)*  
*Anna got dressed for a day with her new flour baby. (right)*

Don't miss the next episode when we'll talk more about when not to use reflexive pronouns!