Pronoun

Definition of Pronoun

A pronoun is a grammatical term that replaces a noun, noun [clause](), or noun [phrase]() in a [sentence]() to avoid its repetition. A pronoun is a traditional part of speech that originated from the Latin word "pronomen," in which "pro" means "in place of," and "nomen" means "name." A pronoun plays all the roles of the word that it replaces.

A pronoun can work as an [object](), [subject](), or object of preposition. For instance, "I think I hear them. — Stand, ho! Who's there?" ("Hamlet" by William Shakespeare). Here, Shakespeare has used the [personal pronoun]() "I," and the interrogative pronoun "who."

Types of Pronoun

There are ten important types of pronoun in grammar. These include:

Personal Pronoun

Personal pronouns substitute nouns that represent people. These include:

I
me
you
they
we
he
she
it and
who

[Demonstrative Pronoun]()

Demonstrative pronouns demonstrate a noun or direct the reader's attention to a noun. These pronouns are:

this
that
those
these

Indefinite Pronoun

Unlike a demonstrative pronoun, an indefinite pronoun does not point out specific things. Indefinite pronouns include:

all
both
nobody
each
any
several
no one
either
one
none

Interrogative Pronoun

which
where
what
how
who

[Possessive Pronoun](#)

The purpose of possessive pronouns is to show possession. These pronouns include:

my
your
their
her
his

Reciprocal Pronoun

A reciprocal pronoun reciprocates feelings and actions and combines the ideas of the two. These pronouns include:

one another

Absolute Possessive Pronoun

Like possessive pronouns, absolute possessive pronouns also show possession but can stand by themselves, such as:

mine
theirs
hers
his (sometimes)

Absolute Possessive Pronoun

Like possessive pronouns, absolute possessive pronouns also show possession but can stand by themselves, such as:

myself
yourself
itself
ourselves
himself
themselves

Intensive Pronoun

An intensive pronoun is also known as an emphatic pronoun. This type of pronoun refers back to another pronoun or to a noun within a sentence. It is the same as a reflexive pronoun, only it is used in connection with the noun or personal pronoun that it refers to.

Relative Pronoun

A relative pronoun adds more information to a sentence. Relative pronouns include:

who
whom
which
whose
where
that

Common Uses of Pronouns

Somebody is driving the car.
Who is going to the party?

Maria likes baking cakes <u>herself</u>.
<u>This</u> bag I left in school.

Examples of Pronoun in Literature

Example #1: *Animal Farm* (by George Orwell)

> "The very next morning the attack came. The animals were at breakfast when the look-outs came racing …Boldly enough the animals sallied forth to meet them, but this time they did not have the easy victory that they had had in the Battle of the Cowshed. There were fifteen men, with half a dozen guns between them, and they opened fire as soon as they got within fifty yards."

In this excerpt, Orwell has used personal pronouns, which are underlined. These pronouns are replacing those nouns that had represented the people.

Example #2: *Lolita* (by Vladimir Nabokov)

> "<u>We</u> rolled all over the floor, in <u>each other's</u> arms, like two huge helpless children. <u>He</u> was naked and goatish under <u>his</u> robe, and <u>I</u> felt suffocated as <u>he</u> rolled over <u>him</u>. <u>We</u> rolled over me. <u>They</u> rolled over <u>him</u>. *We* rolled over *us*."

Nobokov has used three types of pronouns in this example. The personal pronouns used were "we," "he," "I," and "they." He also used the reciprocal pronoun "each other" and the possessive pronouns "his" and "him."

Example #3: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (by Maya Angelou)

> "Occasionally Mother, <u>whom</u> we seldom saw in the house, had us meet <u>her</u> at Louie's. <u>It</u> was a long dark tavern at the end of the bridge near our school."

In the above lines, the author has skillfully employed the personal pronoun "it," the possessive pronoun "her," and the relative pronoun "whom," all of which provide more information about the mother to the reader.

Example #4: *Charlotte's Web* (by E.B White)

> "Mr. Zuckerman did not allow <u>her</u> to take Wilbur out, and <u>he</u> did
> not allow <u>her</u> to get into the pigpen. But <u>he</u> told Fern
> that <u>she</u> could sit on the stool and watch Wilbur as long
> as <u>she</u> wanted to."

Here, White has used two types of pronouns: the personal pronouns "he" and "she," the and possessive pronoun "her," which works as an [adjective](#) within that sentence.

Function

Pronouns perform a number of functions in a sentence. They can add information and point out particular items, things, or persons. They can work as subjects or adjectives. When they work as subjects, they appear before the main verb. They also function as objects of the verb, where they come after verb. In addition, they serve as a complement of the verb, where they come after auxiliary verbs. The major function of pronouns is to save a person from repeating a noun in the same text or within the same sentence.