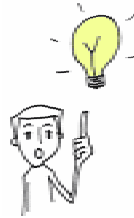


Mr. Taylor's Language Arts Class



Notes on Pronouns

What are Pronouns?

Pronouns take the place of nouns. The word or phrase replaced by a pronoun is called an antecedent.

Example 1:

Halloween is one of America's holidays. It is celebrated in October.
(*Halloween* is a noun. *It* is a pronoun that refers to the antecedent, *Halloween*.)

Example 2:

When Sarah was fixing the car, she cut her hand.
(*Sarah* is a noun. *She* is a pronoun that refers to the antecedent, *Sarah*.)

Types of Pronouns

Personal Pronouns:

- Refer to people or things
- **Include:** I, me, my, mine, you, your, yours, he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its, they, them, their, theirs, we, us, our, ours.

Indefinite Pronouns:

- Refer to nonspecific persons or things
- **Include pronouns listed in the following charts:**

Singular pronouns:

anything	anyone	anybody
something	someone	somebody
nothing	no one	nobody
each	one	another
either	neither	much

Plural pronouns:

both	few	many	several
------	-----	------	---------

Either singular or plural: (depends on whether the object of the preposition is singular or plural)

all	none	some	any	most
-----	------	------	-----	------

Using Pronouns Clearly

Because a pronoun REFERS BACK to a noun or TAKES THE PLACE OF that noun, you have to use the correct pronoun so that your reader clearly understands which noun your pronoun is referring to.

Therefore, pronouns should:

1. AGREE in NUMBER

If the pronoun takes the place of a singular noun, you have to use a singular pronoun.

If a student parks a car on campus, he or she has to buy a parking sticker.

(NOT: If a student parks a car on campus, they have to buy a parking sticker.)

REMEMBER: The words EVERYBODY, ANYBODY, ANYONE, EACH, NEITHER, NOBODY, SOMEONE, A PERSON, etc. are singular and take singular pronouns. Everybody ought to do his or her best. (NOT: their best)

Neither of the girls brought her umbrella. (NOT: their umbrellas)

NOTE: Many people find the construction "his or her" wordy, so if it is possible to use a plural noun as your antecedent so that you can use "they" as your pronoun, it may be wise to do so. If you do use a singular noun and the context makes the gender clear, then it is permissible to use just "his" or "her" rather than "his or her."

2. AGREE in PERSON

If you are writing in the "first person" (I), don't confuse your reader by switching to the "second person" (you) or "third person" (he, she, they, it, etc.). Similarly, if you are using the "second person," don't switch to "first" or "third."

When a person comes to class, he or she should have his or her homework ready. (NOT: When a person comes to class, you should have your homework ready.)

3. REFER CLEARLY to a specific noun.

Here are examples that would confuse your readers:

Although the motorcycle hit the tree, it was not damaged. (Is "it" the motorcycle or the tree?)

I don't think they should show violence on TV. (Who are "they"?)

Vacation is coming soon, which is nice. (What is nice, the vacation or the fact that it is coming soon?)

If you put this sheet in your notebook, you can refer to it. (What does "it" refer to, the sheet or your notebook?)