

11.1

Personal Pronouns

- A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun and is used to avoid repetition.
- Personal pronouns are used to refer to people and things.

Personal pronouns are singular or plural. Some personal pronouns are used as the subjects of sentences. Others are used as the objects of verbs or prepositions.

- A pronoun can be used as the subject of a sentence.

Rita likes books. **She** particularly likes novels.

In the example above, the pronoun *She* replaces the noun *Rita* as the subject of the sentence.

- A pronoun can be used as the object of a verb or preposition.

The novel amuses Rita. The novel amuses **her**. [direct object of the verb *amuses*]

For Raul's birthday Rita gave **him** a novel. [indirect object of the verb *gave*]

Rita presented a biography of Mark Twain to **us**. [object of the preposition *to*]

Personal Pronouns		
	Singular	Plural
Used as Subjects	I you he, she, it	we you they
Used as Objects	me you him, her, it	us you them

Pronouns

Exercise 1**Identifying Personal Pronouns**

Write each pronoun and identify it as a *subject* pronoun in the nominative case or an *object* pronoun in the objective case.

1. Gwendolyn Brooks writes poems; they are about everyday life.
2. Slang and the rhythms of jazz and the blues are important to her.
3. She was born in Topeka, Kansas, but grew up in Chicago.
4. The poet Langston Hughes gave her literary advice.
5. Brooks always loved poetry; she wrote it from the age of seven.
6. Brooks taught poetry to students; she was a role model for them.
7. In 1949 she wrote a poetry collection called *Annie Allen*.
8. It made Brooks the first black poet to receive a Pulitzer Prize.
9. I have read the book, and the poems fascinate me.
10. The combination of street talk and American verse will amuse you.

Exercise 2**Using Personal Pronouns**

Write the pronoun you could use in place of each underlined word or words.

1. Sarah Orne Jewett was an American writer of the nineteenth century.
2. The *Atlantic Monthly* first published Jewett.
3. This author wrote the stories at age nineteen.
4. These stories are about history and tradition.
5. The Jewetts lived amid Maine's many villages.
6. Sarah's father was a doctor with an interest in books and people.
7. Sarah studied books and people with her father.
8. Young Sarah observed people's ways of life.
9. She described the people in her stories.
10. She wrote stories about her experiences.
11. Readers learned about life in New England.
12. Bob wrote a research report on Sarah Jewett.
13. "A White Heron" is Sarah Jewett's best-known story.
14. The heron catches a young girl's attention.
15. The young girl approaches the nest.
16. The wild bird avoids the young girl.
17. "A White Heron" appeals to Robert.
18. Our class had difficulty with the story.
19. Luisa pointed out the theme to our class.
20. Rosa said, "Let Rosa help you."

11.2

Pronouns and Antecedents

Read the following sentences. Can you tell to whom the pronoun *She* refers?

Louisa May Alcott wrote a novel about a young woman.
She has three sisters.

The sentence is not clear because *She* could refer either to the *young woman* or to *Louisa May Alcott*. Sometimes you must repeat a noun or rewrite a sentence to avoid confusion.

Louisa May Alcott wrote a novel about a young woman.
The young woman has three sisters.

- The noun or group of words that a pronoun refers to is called its antecedent.

When you use a pronoun, you should be sure that it refers to its antecedent clearly. Be especially careful when you use the pronoun *they*. Notice this pronoun in the following sentence.

WRONG: **They** have two books by Alcott at the school library.

To whom does *They* refer? Its meaning is unclear. The sentence might be corrected in the following way.

RIGHT: The school library has two books by Alcott.

Be sure every pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number (singular or plural) and gender. The gender of a noun or pronoun may be masculine, feminine, or neuter (referring to things). Notice the pronoun-antecedent agreement below.

The Marches must face a death in their family. **They** face **it** with courage.

Exercise 3 Using Pronouns and Antecedents Correctly

Write the correct pronoun for the second sentence in each pair. Then write the antecedent the pronoun refers to.

1. Louisa May Alcott lived near Boston, Massachusetts. _____ had many famous neighbors.
2. Alcott came from a poor family. _____ wanted to help earn money.
3. Alcott worked as a teacher. Students learned history from _____.
4. But that job was not enough. _____ did not pay well.
5. Alcott also made dresses. Women paid Alcott money for _____.
6. The writer also tried housekeeping. That job didn't suit _____.
7. Alcott then tried writing. Finally _____ had found a career!
8. Alcott's first book contained stories for young children. _____ was called *Flower Fables*.
9. Two more books by Alcott appeared quickly. _____ describe her hospital work and her teaching days.
10. An editor asked Alcott to write a book for girls. The editor finally persuaded _____.
11. In 1868 Alcott published the first part of *Little Women*. _____ was a success.
12. The full-length edition of *Little Women* was very popular. _____ changed people's ideas about women's role in society.
13. In the novel, Jo March is the main character. _____ eventually becomes a writer.
14. The father is a chaplain in the Civil War. _____ is away.
15. The girls and mother have little money. Life is hard for _____.
16. The March sisters attend school. _____ also earn money for their family.
17. Women had difficulty finding suitable work. _____ were not paid well.
18. Jo has an independent spirit. _____ is the most independent girl.
19. Jo turns down marriage to the boy next door. Jo says no to _____.
20. She tells her sisters. _____ are shocked.
21. Then Jo meets Fritz Bhaer. She ultimately falls in love with _____.
22. Beth is a musician. _____ dies of a terrible illness.
23. Alcott relied on incidents from her own childhood. _____ seem realistic.
24. At the library, I found Alcott's *An Old-Fashioned Girl*. _____ was published in 1870.
25. We have *Little Men* and *Jo's Boys*. I have read _____.

36 copies

11.3

Using Pronouns Correctly

Subject pronouns in the nominative case are used in compound subjects, and object pronouns in the objective case are used in compound objects.

Tina and Sam recently read *Heidi*. **She** and **he** recently read *Heidi*. [*She* and *he* form the compound subject.]
Heidi appealed to Sam and Tina. *Heidi* appealed to **him** and **her**. [*Him* and *her* form the compound object.]

Whenever the subject pronoun *I* or the object pronoun *me* is part of the compound subject or object, *I* or *me* should come last.

Tina and **I** liked the book. [not *I* and *Tina*]

Sometimes a pronoun and a noun are used together for emphasis. The form of the pronoun depends on its function in the sentence.

We students read the book. [*We* is the subject.]
The book delighted **us** readers. [*Us* is the direct object.]

Some sentences make incomplete comparisons. The form of the pronoun can affect the meaning of such sentences. In any incomplete comparison, use the pronoun that would be correct if the comparison were complete.

Heidi liked Peter more than **she** [did]. [Heidi and Klara liked Peter, but Heidi liked him more than Klara did.]
Heidi liked Peter more than [she liked] **her**. [Heidi liked Peter and Klara, but Heidi liked Peter more than she liked Klara.]

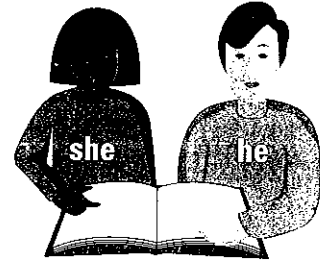
In formal writing, use a subject pronoun after a linking verb.

Heidi's closest friend is **he**.

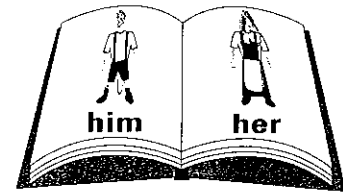
SUBJECT



Tina and Sam



read about



Peter and Heidi.



OBJECT

Exercise 4**Identifying Pronouns in the Nominative and Objective Cases**

Write the correct pronoun for each underlined noun. Then write whether each one is a *subject* pronoun in the nominative case or an *object* pronoun in the objective case.

1. Eudora Welty and William Faulkner are famous writers from Mississippi.
2. Works by Welty and Faulkner are intimately connected to the atmosphere of the South.
3. Faulkner wrote in a more serious tone than Welty.
4. Faulkner demands much of us readers.
5. Important prizes were awarded to both Welty and Faulkner.

Exercise 5**Using Pronouns in the Nominative and Objective Cases Correctly**

Write the correct word or words in parentheses. Then write whether each pronoun is a *subject* pronoun in the nominative case or an *object* pronoun in the objective case.

1. *Heidi* entertained (we, us) readers.
2. Steffi and (me, I) read the story last weekend.
3. Heidi is an orphan; Grandfather takes care of (she, her).
4. (She, Her) and Grandfather live in the Swiss Alps.
5. Heidi and (he, him) tend goats together.
6. Peter and (her, she) love the mountains.
7. Peter becomes a friend to Heidi's grandfather and (she, her).
8. Grandfather is stern, although no one is kinder than (he, him).
9. (We, Us) readers grow fond of Grandfather.
10. My favorite character is (he, him).
11. Grandfather became almost real to (Juan and I, Juan and me).
12. (She, Her) and Peter tend goats.
13. Heidi says good-bye to (Peter and he, Peter and him).
14. (We, Us) readers feel very sympathetic toward Heidi.
15. In fact, I felt almost as sad as (she, her).
16. Between Peter and (she, her), they help Klara toward recovery.
17. Klara and (she, her) become friends in the city.
18. Heidi's dearest friends are Grandfather and (he, him).
19. Klara cannot walk, so Heidi aids the family and (she, her).
20. (Tom and I, Me and Tom) guessed the ending.

and Objective

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Objective Cases

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object pronoun in

11.4 Possessive Pronouns

You often use pronouns to replace nouns that are subjects and nouns that are objects in sentences. You can use pronouns in place of possessive nouns too.

- A possessive pronoun is a pronoun that shows ownership. It can be used to replace a possessive noun. For example, "The car is **hers**." "Hers" is a possessive pronoun that replaces "her car."

Read the following sentences. Notice the possessive nouns and the possessive pronouns that replace them.

Lisa's class put on a play. **Her** class put on a play.
The idea was Lisa's. The idea was **hers**.

Possessive pronouns have two forms. One form is used before a noun. The other form is used alone. The chart below shows the two forms of possessive pronouns.

Possessive Pronouns		
	Singular	Plural
Used Before Nouns	my your her, his, its	our your their
Used Alone	mine yours hers, his, its	ours yours theirs

Unlike possessive nouns, such as *Mei's* or *cats'*, possessive pronouns do not contain an apostrophe.

Do not confuse the possessive pronoun *its* with the word *it's*. *It's* is a contraction, or shortened form, of the words *it is*.

Its subject is William Shakespeare. [possessive pronoun]

It's a famous play by Shakespeare. [contraction of *it is*]

Pronouns

Exercise 6 Identifying Possessive Pronouns

Write each possessive pronoun. Then write *N* if the pronoun *comes before a noun* or *A* if it *stands alone*.

1. Our class is putting on a play by Shakespeare.
2. He wrote centuries ago, but his plays still thrill audiences.
3. *Hamlet* is Lian's favorite, but *Romeo and Juliet* is mine.
4. Have you seen your favorite play yet?
5. Gina was in *Hamlet*, but it's not a favorite of hers.
6. I know my part in the play, but some students have trouble with theirs.
7. The language of Shakespeare sounds strange to their ears.
8. To Shakespeare our English would seem like a foreign language.
9. Some of his words look odd in print; the spellings are unfamiliar.
10. The spoken words of Shakespeare are more eloquent than mine.

Exercise 7 Using Pronouns in the Possessive Case

Write the correct possessive pronoun for each underlined word or group of words.

1. The play's setting is the city of Verona.
2. Romeo was an uninvited guest at the feast of Romeo's enemy.
3. When Romeo and Juliet meet, Romeo and Juliet's love story begins.
4. Later Romeo sees Juliet and hears Juliet's confession of love for him.
5. A friar performs Romeo and Juliet's secret marriage the next day.
6. Mercutio, a friend of the bridegroom's, meets Tybalt, an enemy of Mercutio's.
7. Mercutio and Tybalt fight; Romeo stops Mercutio and Tybalt's fight.
8. Romeo draws his sword and kills Romeo's friend's murderer.
9. Romeo's sentence is banishment.
10. Romeo visits Juliet secretly; the meeting was Romeo and Juliet's alone.
11. Juliet refuses to marry Count Paris, but Juliet's father insists.
12. The night before the wedding, Juliet drinks a sleeping potion of Juliet's.
13. The potion's effects will render her apparently lifeless for forty hours.
14. The friar's message to Romeo is, "Rescue Romeo's wife; she is awake."
15. The friar's message gets mixed up; Romeo hears that Juliet is dead.
16. Romeo buys poison, goes to Juliet, and says, "Death is Romeo and Juliet's."
17. Thinking that Juliet is dead, Romeo drinks Romeo's poison and dies.
18. Juliet awakes and finds Romeo's body and the cup by her side.
19. Juliet guesses what has happened; she stabs Juliet's chest.
20. This story is a favorite of our class's.

Indefinite Pronouns

- An indefinite pronoun is a word that refers to a person or thing without naming it.

Each thinks about the plot.

Most indefinite pronouns are either singular or plural.

Some Indefinite Pronouns

Singular			Plural
another	everybody	no one	both
anybody	everyone	nothing	few
anyone	everything	one	many
anything	much	somebody	others
each	neither	someone	several
either	nobody	something	

In addition, the indefinite pronouns *all*, *any*, *most*, *none*, and *some* are singular or plural, depending on the phrase that follows.

When an indefinite pronoun is used as the subject of a sentence, the verb must agree with it in number.

Everyone reads part of the novel. [singular]

Several enjoy it very much. [plural]

Most of the story **takes** place in England. [singular]

Most of the characters **are** memorable. [plural]

Possessive pronouns often have indefinite pronouns as their antecedents. In such cases, the pronouns must agree in number. Note that the intervening prepositional phrase does not affect the agreement.

Several are presenting **their** interpretations of the novel.

Each of the students has **his** or **her** ideas about its meaning.

Exercise 8**Choosing Indefinite Pronouns**

Write the indefinite pronoun that agrees with the verb or possessive pronoun.

1. (Neither, All) of Robert Frost's poems are enjoyed by their readers.
2. (One, Many) of the poems have New England as their setting.
3. (Much, Many) of their narrators are people living close to nature.
4. (Much, Others) of the poetry has rhythm, and its lines rhyme.
5. (Both, Each) of these poems has its own rhyme.
6. (Somebody, Several) in this poem narrates his or her own tale.
7. (Most, Everyone) have their own interpretations of Frost's metaphors.
8. (All, One) of the guests have read their poems at the bookstore.
9. (Both, One) of the guests has read her own poem about Frost.
10. (Each, Several) of the readers of Frost's poems has his or her favorite.

Exercise 9**Using Indefinite Pronouns**

Write each sentence, using the correct verb or possessive pronoun in parentheses. Then underline the indefinite pronoun and write whether the pronoun is *singular* or *plural*.

1. Everyone studies (his or her, their) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.
2. Most of the characters (is, are) animals.
3. Some of them (attends, attend) a comical tea party.
4. Nothing (makes, make) sense in Wonderland.
5. Everything in Wonderland (confuses, confuse) Alice.
6. No one (answers, answer) her questions.
7. Many of the characters (talks, talk) peculiarly.
8. Some of them even (speaks, speak) in riddles.
9. The Cheshire cat disappears; nothing (is, are) left but its smile.
10. Few really (believes, believe) in disappearing cats.
11. None of the characters (looks, look) more bizarre than the Mock Turtle.
12. Several offer Alice (his or her, their) advice.
13. Each has (their, his or her) point of view.
14. Nothing predictable (happens, happen) in Wonderland.
15. Most of the story (occurs, occur) down a rabbit hole.
16. Everyone (know, knows) the story's author—British writer Lewis Carroll.
17. Much (has, have) been written about *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.
18. All of the critics (praises, praise) it.
19. None of them (gives, give) a bad review.
20. Everyone in class enjoys (his or her, their) reading the book.