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Section 1 – Pronouns

Part A: Subject and Object Pronouns

Pronouns are words which can be used instead of a noun. We use them so we don't have to keep repeating a noun over and over.

Example: John is a student, and **John** is going to university soon.

Instead: John is a student, and **he** is going to university soon.

Using the pronoun **he** instead of the noun **John** makes the sentence less repetitive.

Pronouns, such as **I/me, you, he/him, she/her, it, we/us and they/them**, are words used in place of a noun. These can be divided into either subject or object pronouns depending upon their placement or use in a sentence. **Subject** pronouns do the action of the sentence and **object** pronouns have the action done to them.

Subject pronoun "I" – I ate a sandwich.

Object pronoun "me" – The sandwich was eaten by **me**.

Use the following table of subject pronouns and object pronouns to guide you through the following activity:

| | Subject Pronouns | Object Pronouns |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| First Person (singular) | I | me |
| First Person (plural) | we | us |
| Second Person (singular and plural) | you | you |
| Third Person (singular) | he, she, it | him, her, it |
| Third Person (plural) | they | them |
| | who | whom |

Practice Exercises

Insert appropriate pronouns in place of at least one noun in each of the following sentences. (1 mark each)

- Amie is engaged and Amie is planning to get married in the Spring.
- Turkey is a healthy meat. I'm lucky turkey is my favourite meal.
- Gina and Terry were very late and Gina and Terry apologized profusely.

4. There were jelly beans everywhere. It was impossible to find all of the jelly beans.
5. Dogs are great! Who doesn't love dogs?
6. Rosa and I will attend. Thank you for inviting me and Rosa!
7. Where is my cell phone? I can't find my cell phone.

Part B: Personal Pronouns after *than* and *as*

There are many kinds of pronouns and each serves a different purpose. In this lesson, you will learn about personal pronouns which refer to a person. Like nouns, personal pronouns have singular and plural forms. However, a common pronoun mistake occurs in sentences where you use the words “than” or “as” to compare people or things.

Example: Sharon is taller than I. (am tall)

Example: Ellie is smarter than she. (is smart)

Example: Dogs are as smart as they. (are smart)

In these sentences you really want to use “me”, “her” and “them”, right? If you did, it might sound correct, but it is not right. Since the subject form of a pronoun always comes after “than” or “as”, there is an understood verb in the sentence construction.

Example: Sharron is taller than I (am).

Example: Ellie is smarter than she (is).

Example: Dogs are as smart as they (are).

Upon closer inspection and when you complete the sentence, you can see why the object form does not work because you would get phrases like: “me am”, “her is”, and “them are”. They just sound wrong!

Practice Exercises

Complete the following sentences with he/she/they/I

1. Tina is faster than **I** .
2. Bob is smart, but the kids are just as smart as **he** .
3. You more than **I** need to spend more time studying for tests.
4. I am sick of being less successful than **she** .
5. When his family vacationed in Disneyland, Gary had just as much fun as **they** .

Part C: Who and whom

“Who” and “whom” can be difficult. So, here’s the hint: use the pronoun “who” when referring to the subject of the sentence and “whom” when it is an object in the sentence.

Example: Who has run the washing machine? (subject of has run)

As well, use “who” in questions when using the forms of “be” like is, am, are, was, were, be and been.

Example: Who is washing the floor?

“Whom” is used for a direct object or object of a preposition

Example: Whom did you hear? (direct object of hear)

Example: To whom did you refer? (object of the preposition to)

Practice Exercises

Choose the correct word from the pair in the brackets after each sentence below. (1 mark each)

1. To whom was the letter written? (who/whom)
2. Who has the best salsa recipe? (who/whom)
3. I'm not sure who got there first. (who/whom)
4. Jasminder, to whom Raj addressed his comments, was a bit embarrassed. (who/whom)
5. Reba had extra people attending for whom she didn't have seats. (who/whom)

Part D: Who, Which, and That

There are three rules for using who, which, and that:

“Who”, in all its forms (whom and whose), is used when you are referring ONLY to people or bodies treated as people (gods). There is, however, one exception to this rule. “Whose” can be used as a possessive.

Example: That is the trophy whose history has inspired many young men to play hockey.

“That” is used to refer to people, animals or things. While “who” is usually used for people, the word “that” is still acceptable IF the relative clause is restrictive.

Example: This is the girl that made the speech which had a powerful effect on the crowd.

“Which” is only used to refer to things and animals, NEVER people.

Practice Exercises

Fill in the blanks in the sentences below, with who/which/that (1 mark each)

1. That was the rabbit that Tony wanted for his birthday.
2. The castle, which rose above the town, was four hundred years old.

- Emily was the person who finished the cake.
- The beach in front of her house was the only place that Mindy liked.
- Parlov employed a magician who entertained the kids while their parents had dinner.

Part E: This, That, These, Those, Then and Than

This and **that** refer to a single person, place or thing. The difference is that the word “this” refers to something that is close to the speaker, while “that” refers to something with more distance.

Example: **This** book was easy to read.

Example: **That** woman over there is related to my mother.

The words **these** and **those** are plurals of this and that.

Example: **These** cans belong in the cupboard. (this)

Example: **Those** players were all drafted by the Buffalo Sabres. (that)

If you are comparing one thing with another, use the word “**than**”.

Example: Oranges taste sweeter **than** apples.

But if you looking at time, **then** choose the word “then”.

Example: First unlock the bank vault, **then** open the safety deposit box.

Practice Exercises

Select the correct word in each sentence. (1 mark each)

- Do you like these types of snacks? (this, these)
- Those are the kids that broke the windows at the community centre. (Those, Them)
- That kind of movie always makes me cry. (That, Those)
- Can you really see Mars with this telescope? (this, those)
- If I went there first could I then go to the store tonight? (then, than)
- I would rather do this than eat liver. (then, than)

Section 2 – Verb Agreement

Part A: Subject/Verb agreement

In subject-verb agreement, the verb must agree in number (how many) with its subject. A singular subject must have a singular verb. If a word refers to a plural subject then the verb must be plural. The following chart shows this:

| Singular Subject | Singular Verb | Plural Subject | Plural Verb |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| I | met | we | meet |
| the dog | watches | the dogs | watch |
| he | works | they | work |
| it | leaves | us | were |

Sometimes there are problems when a noun rather than a pronoun is the subject of the verb. The table below outlines some examples:

| Incorrect | Correct |
|---|--|
| The church <u>group meet</u> at noon every Sunday. | The church <u>group meets</u> at noon every Sunday. |
| The <u>girls</u> in the choir <u>sings</u> a capella on five new songs. | The <u>girls</u> in the choir <u>sing</u> a capella on five new songs. |

Practice Exercises

Choose the correct verb from the pair in brackets at the end of each sentence and write it in the space provided in the sentence. (1 mark each)

1. You were the person who suggested that the fair be moved. (was, were)
2. I was not there to agree to the idea. (were, was)
3. Allison, one of my best friends, is not coming over for dinner. (is, are)
4. Does anyone know when the pageant is going to be held? (know, knows)
5. All of the tires on the bikes need to be filled with air. (need, needs)
6. The boys think that the new movie isn't very scary. (think, thought)
7. The dogs bark at every little movement past the window. (bark, barks)