

LANGUAGE
ARTS

EXPLORER
JUNIOR



Pronouns

these

his

he

her



those

by Katie Marsico

Page intentionally blank



Pronouns



by Katie Marsico



A note on the text:
Certain words
are highlighted
as examples of
pronouns.

Bold, colorful
words are
vocabulary words
and can be found
in the glossary.

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Are They Here Yet?



Have you ever rolled out dough to make cookies?

Sam was thrilled that his cousins were coming to visit. He helped his mom bake cookies while he waited for them to arrive.

“Gosh, are they here yet?” Sam wondered aloud. He looked out the window. “I feel like I have not spent time with them in forever!”

“That is true,” said his mom. “Their schedules have been crazy. You have not seen each other in a while.”

“What should we do when they arrive, Mom?” Sam asked.

“Whatever you and your cousins want,” she answered. “I think you should decide for yourselves. For starters, I hope you eat these delicious cookies. Would you like to try some now?”

Sam and his mom used **pronouns** to discuss his cousins’ visit. Pronouns are words that substitute, or take the place of, a noun or noun **phrase**. Nouns and noun phrases identify a person, place, object, quality, or action.

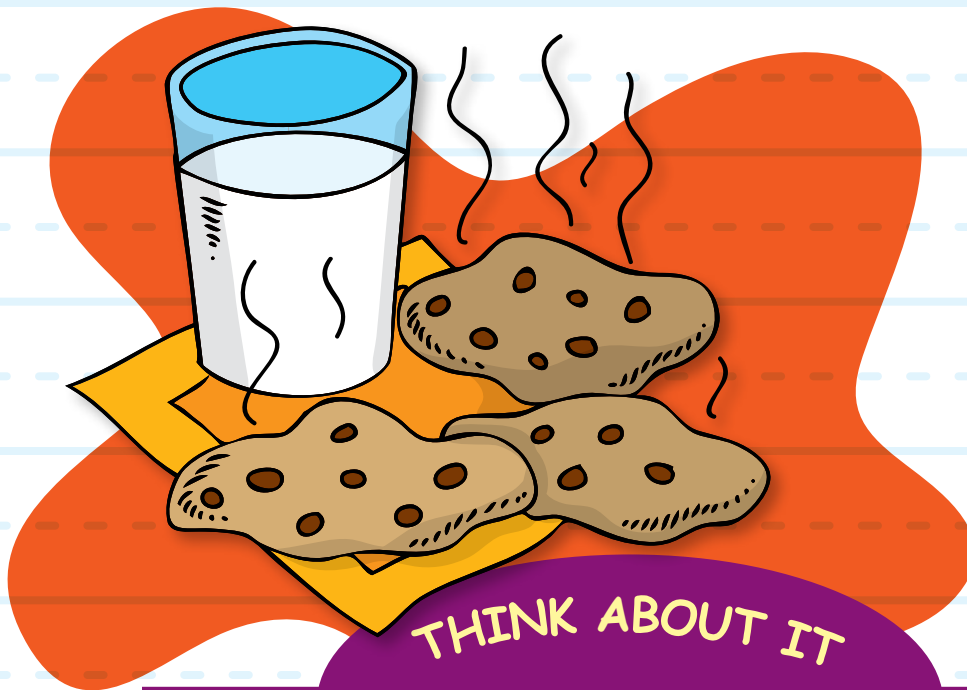


The noun or noun phrase that a pronoun replaces is called the antecedent. The antecedent usually comes at some point before the pronoun in a text or conversation. Otherwise, it would not be clear what exactly a pronoun identified!

“Jim is my favorite cousin,” said Sam. “He loves soccer just like me!” Here the pronoun *he* refers to the antecedent *Jim*.

Imagine if Sam never mentioned anyone’s name: “He is my favorite cousin,” said Sam. “He loves soccer just like me!” Without an antecedent, it is not clear to whom the pronoun *he* refers.





THINK ABOUT IT

Extra Examples

Sam took a cookie. It was still hot.

Pronoun: it

Antecedent: cookie

Sam ate the cookie. Then he was full.

Pronoun: he

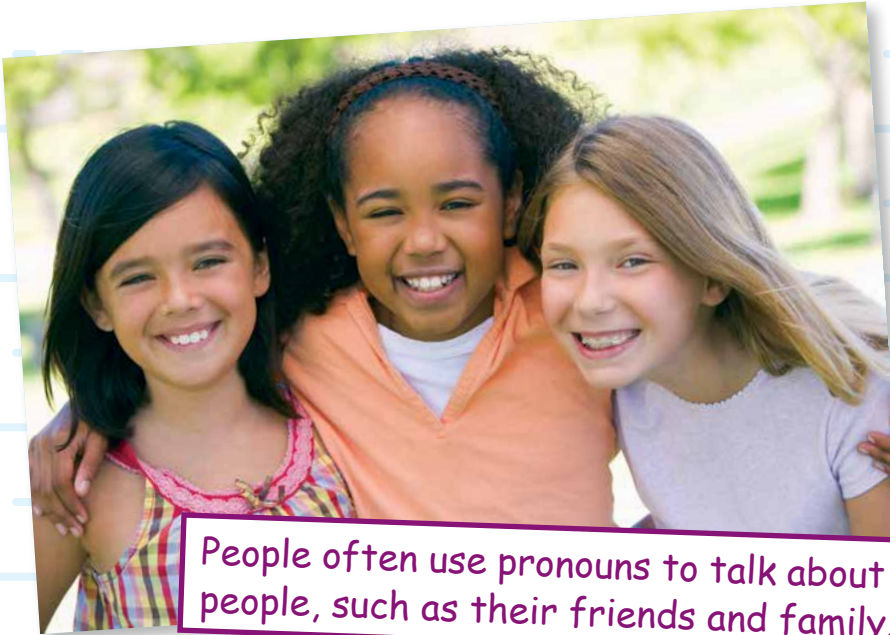
Antecedent: Sam

Sam's mom untied her apron.

Pronoun: her

Antecedent: Sam's mom

A Look at Pronouns



People often use pronouns to talk about other people, such as their friends and family.

"**They** are at the door!" yelled Sam. "Mom, I see **them**!"

"Go ahead and let **your** cousins in, Sam," **his** mom answered. "Please take **their** coats, too."

"Sam, how great to see **you**," **his** cousin Anna said. **She** gave Sam a big hug. Jim followed **her** inside.

"Hey, Sam," **he** shouted. "Do **you** have a hug for **your** other cousin?"

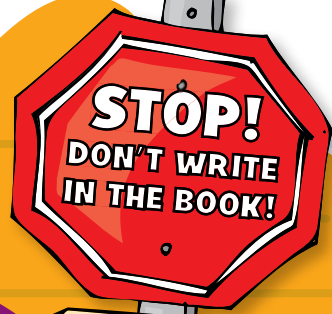


Many pronouns refer to a person, an **object**, or a group of people or objects. *I, me, we, us, you, he, she, him, her, it, they,* and *them* are personal pronouns. So are the words *mine, ours, yours, his, hers, its,* and *theirs*.

"**This** is going to be an awesome visit," said Anna. "What smells so good?"

"**Those** are cookies Mom and I made," replied Sam. Some pronouns point out the antecedent. *This* and *those* are two examples. For example, in Sam's sentence, *those* is the pronoun. *Cookies* is the antecedent. *That* and *these* are also used in this way.

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ACTIVITY

Locate and List!

Locate and list all the pronouns in the following sentences:

"We ate lunch but are still starving," said Jim.

"That was hours ago," added Anna. "Besides, I always have room for Aunt Sara's desserts!"

"Those look delicious," Jim agreed. He stared at the cookies.

Answers: we, that, I, those, he

"The batch **that** we baked today is chocolate chip," said Sam's mom.

"I do not know anyone **who** turned down Aunt Sara's cookies," said Jim. Sometimes a pronoun begins a **clause**, or phrase, *that* gives more information about its antecedent. For example, the pronoun *that* refers to the

noun *batch*. The pronoun leads a clause explaining what kind of cookie the batch is.

“I will help **myself** to a little snack,” said Anna. Some pronouns refer back to a sentence’s **subject**. The subject of a sentence is what performs the action in a sentence. Here, the subject is *I* and the action is *will help*. The pronoun *myself* refers back to the subject, *I*. Such pronouns are called reflexive. They show a subject is doing something to itself.



Pronouns are used to begin clauses that give extra details about something, including delicious cookies!



Reflexive pronouns end in *-self* or *-selves*.

They include *myself*, *ourselves*, *yourself*, *yourselves*, *himself*, *herself*, *itself*, and *themselves*. Removing reflexive pronouns changes a sentence's meaning or causes the sentence to no longer make sense. "I'll just help **myself** to some of those cookies" would become "I'll just help to some of those cookies."

"I **myself** love baking sugar cookies," announced Jim. Here, the pronoun *myself* is intensive. Intensive pronouns look like reflexive pronouns but have a different job. They add special importance to their antecedents. They are not necessary to the text. For example, try

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STOP!
DON'T WRITE
IN THE BOOK!

ACTIVITY

Read and Rethink!

Read the following conversation. Pay attention to the pronouns in **red**. Label each one as reflexive or intensive. (Remember, you can remove an *intensive* pronoun without changing a sentence's meaning!):

"You **yourselves** would be able to make this recipe," said Sam's mom.

"We are not allowed to cook by **ourselves**," replied Anna.

"I do not bake by **myself** either," said Sam.

"But these directions are simple enough for kids **themselves** to follow."

Answers: yourselves, intensive; ourselves, reflexive; myself, reflexive; themselves, intensive

removing the pronoun *myself* from Jim's statement above. The sentence becomes "I love baking cookies," which has the same meaning.



Everyone had finished eating. "What do you guys want to do now?" Sam asked. "Which game should we play?" Pronouns such as *what* and *which* ask a question. Other examples include *who*, *whom*, and *whose*.

"Let's kick the soccer ball to each other," Jim said to Sam. *Each other* refers to a shared action or **relationship**.

One another is another pronoun that works this way.

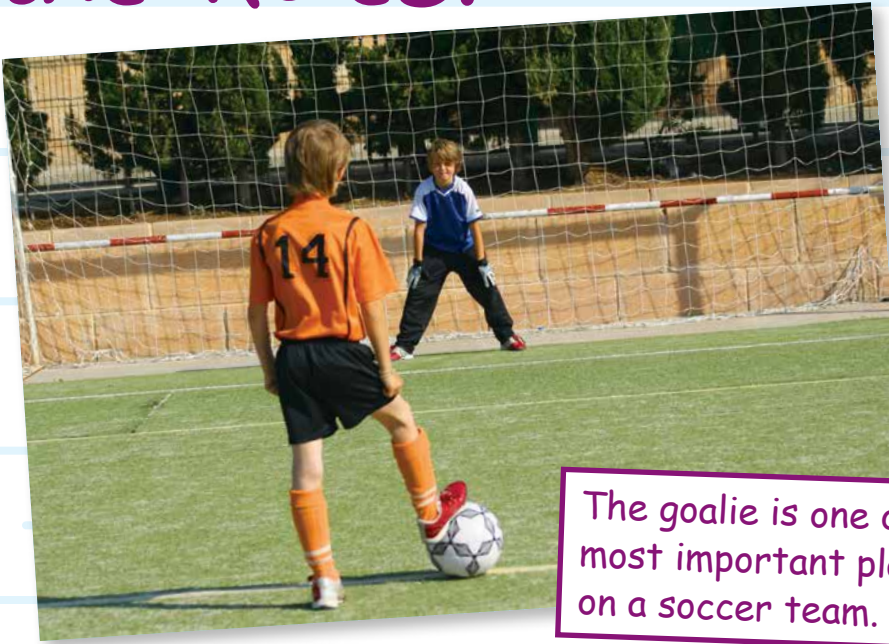


“Does **anyone** else want to play?” asked Sam. “**Everyone** is welcome to join the game!”

Some pronouns do not replace a specific antecedent listed nearby. *Anyone* and *everyone* are two examples. Sam was probably using *everyone* to refer to Anna and his mom. Yet he never mentioned their names when speaking. Other such pronouns include *all*, *each*, *fewer*, *many*, *none*, *one*, *some*, and *someone*.



Recognize the Rules!



The goalie is one of the most important players on a soccer team.

"I was hoping **you** would say **that!**" remarked Anna. "Sam, do **you** want to know an interesting fact about **me**? **I** love soccer as much as Jim and **you!**"

"**She** is a great goalie," said Jim. "**Her** coach told **me** Anna is the best on **her** team, **which** is true!" Pronouns take different kinds of

THINK ABOUT IT

Extra Example

"**Anna** is such an awesome player because **she** practices a lot," Jim added.

Here, both the antecedent (*Anna*) and the pronoun (*she*) are singular and female. Imagine how funny it would sound if the pronoun and antecedent did not agree. Would it make sense to say, "Anna is such an awesome player because **they** practices a lot"? Or "Anna is such an awesome player because **he** practices a lot"?

punctuation. They might come before or after commas. They can be followed by exclamation marks, question marks, and periods.

Yet people pay attention to more than punctuation when using pronouns. One important rule is that pronouns and their antecedents must "agree." They must match in qualities such as number and **gender**.

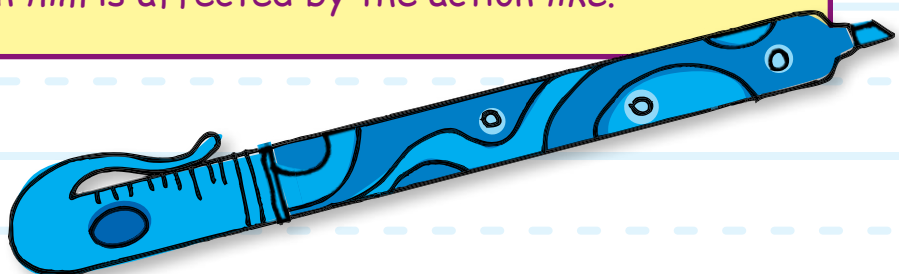
Another rule involves subject pronouns and object pronouns. People use subject pronouns when the pronoun is the subject of the sentence. The pronoun might also rename the subject of the sentence. Subject pronouns include *I, we, you, he, she, it,* and *they*. An object pronoun receives or is affected by the action of a verb. *Me, us, you, him, her, it,* and *them* are object pronouns.

THINK ABOUT IT

Extra Examples

"My soccer coach is amazing," said Anna. "**He** is so helpful!" Anna used the subject pronoun *he* because it is the subject of her second sentence.

"I like **him**, too," agreed Jim. Here, the object pronoun *him* is affected by the action *like*.





Playing sports is a great way to spend time with friends.

“We should start our soccer game soon,” said Sam. “Anna and Jim, your parents are coming in about an hour. What do you want to do when we finish playing?”

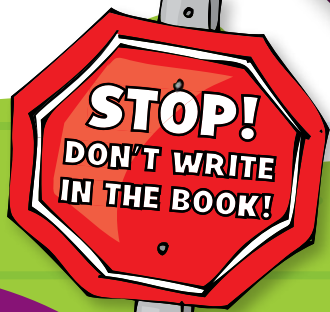
“I think I know an activity everyone will enjoy,” answered Anna. “How about treating ourselves to more cookies?”



Even though friends and relatives have to go home, you can look forward to the next time they visit.

Pronouns are not only useful when talking about soccer and cookies. People use pronouns every day to replace nouns and noun phrases. These substitutes play a huge role in how people communicate!

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ACTIVITY



Read and Rethink!

Read the conversation below. Then choose which pronoun best fills the blank:

"Anna and Jim's parents are here," said Sam's mom. "I will let they/them in. Hang on while I/me grab your coats."

"Mine/ours has a pink collar," Anna announced. "Jim, don't forget your coat. His/Hers is blue and brown, Aunt Sara."

"Shoot," said Sam. "We/Us never got to finish our soccer game."

"That/Those is too bad," answered Sam's mom. "At least your cousins got a chance to see we/us. I hope you liked the cookies, Jim and Anna. "Take some/none home!"

"I think there are a few other people who/which would enjoy tasting them," said Jim. "Yes, we/us should let Mom and Dad taste those cookies for ourselves/themselves," added Anna.

Answers: them, I, Mine, His, We, That, us, some, who, we, themselves

Glossary

clause (KLAWZ) a group of words that contains a subject and a verb but is not a complete sentence

gender (JEN-dur) either of two groups consisting of male and female

object (AHB-jekt) a word or group of words that is affected by a verb

phrase (FRAYZ) a group of words that has a meaning but is not a sentence

pronouns (PRO-nownz) words that replace a noun or a noun phrase

punctuation (puhnk-chuh-WAY-shuhn) the marks used to separate words and sentences and help make their meaning clear

relationship (ri-LAY-shuhn-ship) the way in which two or more things are connected

subject (SUHB-jikt) a word or group of words in a sentence that tells who or what performs the action expressed by the verb

For More Information

BOOK

Doyle, Sheri. *What Is a Pronoun?* North Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2013.

WEB SITE

Iowa Public Television (IPTV)—Pronouns

www.iptv.org/kids/story.cfm/video/pbskids_20111111_pronouns/video

Check out a music video to learn more about pronouns!



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About the Author

Katie Marsico is the author of many children's and young-adult reference books.

She lives outside of Chicago, Illinois, with her husband and children.

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