

Pronouns and Antecedents

A **pronoun** takes the place of one or more nouns in a sentence. Just like nouns, pronouns can be used to refer to a person, place, or thing. They are very useful because they allow us to talk about something or someone without always repeating the same noun.

The word that a pronoun stands for or replaces is called its **antecedent**.

Example: Karen said that **she** would bring the potato chips to the party.

- The pronoun **she** replaces the noun **Karen**.
- **Karen** is the antecedent of **she**.

Example: At the yard sale, **Tim** bought several hockey cards to add to **his** collection.

- The pronoun **his** replaces the noun **Tim**.
- **Tim** is the antecedent of **his**.

Confusion happens when it is unclear to which antecedent the pronoun refers. Pronouns and antecedents always have to agree. That means if the noun is singular, the antecedent must be singular. If the noun is plural, the antecedent must be plural.

Example: The **runners** took **their** places.
(Runners - plural, so their - plural)

Practice: The pronouns in these sentences are italicized. Find the antecedent of each pronoun and circle it.

1. One of the boys had a cast on *his* arm.
2. You usually bring *your* own towel to the pool.
3. The box isn't pretty, but the paper around *it* is.
4. Everyone thinks *you* can do the job, Sarah.
5. The members of the cast took *their* places.

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Remember:

Pronoun – takes the place of one or more nouns in a sentence

Antecedent – the word (noun) that the pronoun replaces.

Practice: Underline the pronoun or pronouns in each sentence. Circle the antecedent. Connect the pronoun and antecedent with a line.

1. The President was overjoyed because she was re-elected for the second time.
2. Be sure to put enough postage on the package before mailing it.
3. The trees that were planted in the sun doubled their growth.
4. Paul left the magazines exactly as they were when he first saw them.
5. The space shuttle fired its booster rockets.
6. The woman convinced herself that the news could not be true.
7. The teenagers ate the food knowing it was not good for them.
8. The doctor was pleased that the patient remembered her.
9. Simone checked the email and then printed it.
10. Jack and I aren't sure when we will arrive in Vancouver.
11. The police officer told the children they should be home by dark.
12. The tennis player was surprised when she won the match.
13. The teacher told the boy to get himself organized.
14. The two waiters spilled food when they bumped into the chef.
15. The crooks left the scene before they could get caught.

Name: _____

16. Mom and Dad have their tickets for the school concert.
17. Mary, have you found your umbrella?
18. Bill looked for his books but couldn't find them.
19. The sun had sundogs, circles of bright rainbow spots, around it. They are formed from ice particles.
20. Did Pam and Mary find the packages they had wrapped?

Practice: Underline the pronoun in brackets that agrees with the antecedent. Circle the antecedent and connect to the pronoun with a line.

1. Aaron and Alice helped Howie because (he, they) had been sick for a week.
2. The student had to leave (her, its) school when the power failed.
3. Bob and Andrea brought the posters to (them, their) office.
4. My sister collected baskets on (her, their) trip to Mexico.
5. The charity collected donations and gave (it, them) to the homeless.
6. Most of the cans had lost (its, their) labels.
7. Each of the students explained (his or her, their) project to the class.
8. Has everyone taken (his, their) turn?
9. The manager gave Ann and (me, I) tickets to the movie.
10. Does this copy belong to (he, him)?