

Pronoun and Antecedent Agreement

- Pronouns take the place of a noun.
- The noun that a pronoun replaces is called its **antecedent**.

Example. The driver totaled his car. The pronoun is *his* and the antecedent is *driver*.

Sally loves sushi. It is her favorite. One pronoun is *it* and the antecedent is *sushi*
Another pronoun is *her* and the antecedent is *Sally*.

- Pronouns and their antecedents must agree in **number**: singular or plural

Example: The dog lost its toy. (the pronoun *its* is singular and the antecedent *dog* is singular)

The girls waved their arms. (the pronoun *their* is plural to agree with the plural antecedent *girls*)

Bob and Sue asked Jo to give them directions. (the pronoun *them* is plural to agree with the antecedent *Bob and Sue*.)

Either Jack or Sam gives his speech next. (the pronoun *his* is singular to agree with the antecedent *Jack OR Sam* – not both!)

- Pronouns and their antecedents must agree in **gender**: male, female, or neutral.

The boy ate his pie. (the pronoun *his* is male and the antecedent *boy* is male)

The lady read her book. (the pronoun *her* is female and the antecedent *lady* is female)

The table was missing its legs. (the pronoun *its* is neutral and the antecedent *table* is neutral)

Practice: Draw an arrow to the antecedent for the underlined pronoun in each sentence.


Example: The boy wore his yellow raincoat.

1. The car has a leak in its transmission.
2. My aunt asked Tom to catch her dog.
3. The children clapped their hands.
4. The actress was beautiful. The audience applauded her performance.
5. The girl used her pen to write in her notebook; then she put it away.
6. Bill left this morning; he will go on the Washington trip next week.
7. During winter snowstorms, the sparrows depend on our feeder for their food.
8. The rain continued to fall, and the mud grew deeper until it finally stopped.

Select a personal pronoun that agrees with its antecedent in each of these sentences. Write your answer on the lines to the right.

Example: The group has ___ meeting here. its

1. The girl cut ___ thumb while peeling carrots. _____
2. The fire engine had _____ siren blaring. _____
3. My uncle showed off ___ stamp collection. _____
4. Tom was late because ___ got lost. _____
5. Children never realize how loud ___ can be. _____
6. My mother and her sister took ___ vacation together. _____
7. Either Mike or John wears a patch over ___ eye. _____
8. San Diego and San Jose get ___ names from Spanish. _____
9. My dress doesn't fit so _____ must be altered. _____
10. Any of the candidates could win; ___ are very much alike. _____

Correct the pronoun antecedent error(s) in the following sentences.

Example: Sally and Kurt made ~~her~~ parents a scrap book. their

1. My little sister played with its stuffed animal. _____
2. Dad bakes bread and they are delicious. _____
3. The pilots said she could only fly the plane. _____
4. Either Paul or Fred takes their turn next. _____
5. Adam was absent. It was at the doctor. _____