

THE ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER

PARTS OF SPEECH

PRONOUNS

Pronoun: Pro (for or in place of) + noun (name)

Pronouns take the place of nouns in order to make sentences streamlined.

I—Joseph you—Beth he—man it—dog we—team they—students

Pronouns keep sentences and paragraphs from being repetitive.

A sentence that uses only nouns is awkward.

John wants John's supper to be ready exactly when John wants it, even if John gives no advance notice.

Pronouns can be singular or plural just like nouns.

- Singular

I me my mine you your yours he him his she her hers it its

- Plural

we us our ours you (all) your yours they them their theirs

Pronouns have 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person point of view.

- First person point of view pronouns

I we us mine ours

I am glad that we are making progress in this project.

- Second person point of view pronouns

you yours yourself

You look nice.

- Third person point of view pronouns

he she it they them theirs
his her its themselves itself

He sings well.

Pronouns must agree with their noun antecedents in number and person (point of view).

Incorrect: John went home to their house after you got through all the paperwork.
number person

Correct: John went home to his house after he got through all the paperwork.
number person

Pronouns must agree with verbs in number (singular = one, plural = two or more).

Incorrect: We is working overtime to finish this project on time.
number

Correct: We are working overtime to finish this project on time.
number

Pronouns must clearly refer to a specific noun in the sentence or passage.

Confusing: Mike asked Joe where his keys were. Then he went to find them.
Who went to look for them?

Better: Mike asked Joe where his keys were and then continued to search for them.

Confusing: Squirrels can learn to crawl into trash cans which have covers with swinging doors. Small children learn to stack their toys to reach things sitting on top of furniture. They are quite ingenious.

Who is ingenious?

Better: These animals can be quite ingenious, just like small children.

Pronouns can be used differently.

- **Pronouns can be subjects or objects.**

Subject Pronouns:	I	you	he	she	it	we	they
Object Pronouns:	me	you	him	her	it	us	them

Music is wonderful. I love it.
subject object subject object

- **Pronouns can be demonstrative (point to a person or thing).**

Close to the speaker
this these

Farther away from the speaker
that those

- Pronouns can be indefinite (refer to people, places, or things in general).

Singular:	anybody anyone anything either none each	nobody everyone everything neither one another	everybody someone nothing some enough	somebody no one something other
Plural:	all both few many more most others several some			

- Pronouns can be possessive (show ownership).

Singular Possessive Pronouns: my mine your yours his her hers its Plural Possessive Pronouns: our ours your yours their theirs

Our garden isn't designed like theirs.

- Pronouns can be reciprocal (signal a mutual relationship between nouns).

each other one another

- Pronouns can be reflexive (indicate that the subject acts upon itself).

Singular:	myself	yourself	himself	herself	itself
Plural:	ourselves	yourselves	themselves		

The chef cut himself with the knife.
 The woman spoke loudly to herself.
 We went to the store by ourselves.

Note: Themselves is not a word.

- Pronouns can be relative (often used in questions).

<u>Used as Subjects:</u>	<u>Used as Objects</u>
Refer to people: who whoever that	who whomever that whose
Refer to things: that what whatever which	that what whatever which

As Subject: This is the house that had a great Holiday decoration.
 As Object: The woman to whom you have just spoken is my aunt.