Pronoun - Antecedent Agreement Notes

REMEMBER:

A PRONOUN is used IN PLACE OF a NOUN.

An ANTECEDENT is the NOUN that is being replaced.

Mary ate all **her** vegetables. (Mary is the antecedent; her is the pronoun).

Rules of Pronoun – Antecedent Agreement

1. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in GENDER (male or female).

   Wrong: Each of the girls put his stuff into the car.
   Right: Each of the girls put her stuff into the car.

2. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in PERSON.

   First person: I, WE; **Second person**: YOU; **Third person**: SHE, HE, IT, THEY

   Wrong: If students refuse to learn the rules of proper writing, you can forget a good grade in this class.
   Right: If students refuse to learn the rules of proper writing, they can forget a good grade in this class.

3. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in NUMBER (singular or plural).

   Wrong: Each girl wants to look beautiful on their prom night.
   Right: Each girl wants to look beautiful on her prom night.

SINGULAR PERSONAL PRONOUNS

subject pronouns	object pronouns	possessive pronouns
I	me	my, mine
you	you	your, yours
he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its

PLURAL PERSONAL PRONOUNS

subject pronouns	object pronouns	possessive pronouns
we	us	our, ours
you	you	your, yours
they	them	their, theirs

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Pronoun Practice: Replace the *italicized* word with a pronoun that agrees with the antecedent.

1. Chris lost *Chris's* notebook in history class last night.

2. The teacher and her students left *the teacher's and student's* belongings in the classroom during the fire drill.

3. Rufus Xavier Sasparillas found a kangaroo, and then took *the kangaroo* to *Rufus Xavier Sasparillas*'s house.

4. Whitman notes that *Whitman's* ancestors include *Whitman's* parents and *Whitman's parents* parents.

5. I saw many astronomers at the convention, and *the astronomers* all brought *the astronomer's* wives with *the astronomers*.

Special Cases

1. When two or more SINGULAR noun antecedents are joined by AND, they make a PLURAL antecedent. (1+1=2)

   Example: The bride and groom say **their** vows.

2. When two or more singular noun antecedents are joined by OR or NOR, choose a pronoun to agree with the antecedent CLOSEST to the **verb**.

   Examples: Either May or Lois will bring **her** husband.

   Neither the women nor the men brought **their** money.

3. As antecedents, the indefinite pronouns below ALWAYS take a SINGULAR pronoun. Look at them closely:

These should be easy to remember.

either	anybody	somebody	everybody	nobody	each
neither	anyone	someone	everyone	no one	one
other	anything	something	everything	nothing	

Wrong: Somebody left **their** umbrella.
Right: Somebody left **his or her** umbrella.

EXAMPLES:

One of the women left _____ umbrella.

Everyone needs to bring _____ homework.

Each doctor is responsible for _____ patients.

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4. The following indefinite pronouns ___LWAYS_____ take __PLURAL_____ pronoun referents.

both	few	many	several	others

Wrong: Few students turned in **his or her** assignment.
Right: Few students turned in **their** assignments.

EXAMPLES:

The police asked both of the witnesses if _____ had any information.

Several men left _____ wives at home.

Many NFL players miss _____ families during the season.

5. However, the following indefinite pronoun antecedents may be _____EITHER_____ *singular* or *plural*, depending upon how they are _____USED_____ in the sentence.

all	most	some	any	none

Generally speaking, if one of these indefinite pronouns is used to designate something that ___CAN___ be counted, then the pronoun is ____PLURAL_____.

If one of these indefinite pronouns is used to designate something that _____CANNOT_____ be counted, then the pronoun is _____SINGULAR_____.

Wrong: All of the sugar is still in **their** wrapper.
Right: All of the sugar is still in **its** wrapper.

EXAMPLES:

Most of the voters casted _____ ballots on Tuesday.

None of the class studied for _____ test.

Some of the rice spilled out of _____ bag.

Pronoun Review: Underline the pronoun and highlight the antecedent. Then decide if they agree or disagree. If they disagree, write the correct pronoun above the incorrect one.

1. Everybody loves their mother.

2. Every player on the team played their best.

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3. Either Larry of Ted might lend me their bike.
4. If a man wants to stay healthy, they need to watch what his eat.
5. Some of the girls bought her shoes at the mall.
6. President Lincoln gave its famous speech at Gettysburg.
7. Each of the Boy Scouts is trying to sell more popcorn than his neighbor.
8. Neither Susan nor her friends drove her car to the party.
9. My copy of *Twilight* has a tear on my cover.
10. The South lost the civil war; they also faced financial hardships.
11. No one can know if they will get a job in June.
12. The growing complexity of economics has not lessened their appeal to students.
13. The teachers' union lost their right to bargain.
14. Anyone who turned in a late paper had their grade reduced.
15. Does everybody know where they're going now?
16. Neither Herbert nor his brothers could find their book bags.
17. Bettors tend to follow his or her own whims at the racetrack.
18. Every dog on the block barded themselves hoarse last night.
19. The College of Arts and Sciences changed their entrance requirements.
20. Neither of the two cars is know for their fuel economy.
21. Every police officer anticipated the danger they would encounter.
22. The manager or the employees will get their raises, but not both.
23. No one could see where they were going because of the fog.
24. Each of the employees got a raise on his or her anniversary with the company.
25. Someone had left his shoes in my locker.