

2. PRONOUNS

Read the following sentences:

1. The canary is fierce. It ate the cat.
2. My mother is talented. She is an artist.
3. Cars produce exhaust. They cause pollution.

To what or whom do the words *it*, *she*, and *they* refer? If you think about it, you'll soon see that *it* must refer to *canary*. Then you'll probably figure out that *she* refers to *mother* and that *they* refers to *cars*.

Definition

A **pronoun** is a word that takes the place of a noun.

As you've just seen, the words *it*, *she*, and *they* in the above sentences take the place of the words *canary*, *mother*, and *cars*. The words that pronouns refer to or take the place of are called **antecedents**. An antecedent is something that *goes before* something else.

There are several different kinds of pronouns, but the most commonly used kind is the **personal pronoun**. A personal pronoun can refer to one or more persons or things:

1. Frank is fast. He is a runner.
2. Jan and Liz live next door. They are my friends.
3. The skate needs sharpening. It is too dull.

Personal pronouns also have different forms, depending on whether they are subjects (I, you, he, she, it, we, they) or objects (me, you, him, her, it, us, them). You'll be learning more about subjects and objects in later lessons.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Some personal pronouns show possession or ownership and act like adjectives. These pronouns are sometimes referred to as **possessive pronouns**. For instance, in the sentence, "Joe is your uncle," the pronoun *your* shows possession and therefore is a possessive pronoun. Other possessive pronouns are: *my*, *mine*, *yours*, *his*, *her*, *hers*, *its*, *our*, *ours*, *their*, *theirs*.

Now read the following sentences and fill in the blanks with the appropriate pronoun:

1. Alice bought a murder mystery. _____ was scary.
2. The teacher is here, Ramon. _____ had better be quiet.
3. My parents' oldest child is a boy. He is _____ brother.
4. Ms. Casey won the election. _____ celebrated with friends.
5. My guests arrived early. I gave _____ something to eat.
6. The people next door never lock their back door. A burglar got into _____ house and stole _____ camera.

HINT

If you have trouble with any of the sentences above, look at the following chart for help.

SINGULAR

	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Objects</i>	<i>Possessives</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I	me	my, mine
<i>2nd person</i>	you	you	your, yours
<i>3rd person</i>	he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its

PLURAL

	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Objects</i>	<i>Possessives</i>
<i>1st person</i>	we	us	our, ours
<i>2nd person</i>	you	you	your, yours
<i>3rd person</i>	they	them	their, theirs

PRONOUN EXERCISES

A. *Directions:* Circle the pronouns in the following sentences. Underline the nouns.

EXAMPLE: (He) stole my cookie and ate (it).

1. Aunt Emily bought her a book for Christmas.
2. They packed their bags and left town quickly.
3. Do you think you could find his name in the phone book?
4. Please save us from her ferocious hamsters!
5. I think she likes me better than your brother.
6. She hoped that she would see them on the way to the park.
7. Sue saw him cheating when she raised her head.
8. We did not want to hurt its wings.
9. Those funny-looking slippers you saw are mine.
10. How did he know their friends would not get there on time?

B. *Directions:* In the spaces at the end of each sentence, write the pronouns you would use to replace the italicized nouns.

EXAMPLE: *Ralph* gave the *dog* a bone. He it

1. *Gillian* bought *Trevor* a pet gorilla. _____
2. The *hikers* stopped to watch an *eagle* catch a mouse. _____

3. *Mrs. Rodriguez* confiscated *Billy's* hat during the concert.

4. The *girls* did not like the *novel's* ending. _____
5. The *family's* house disappeared when the *witch* cast a spell.

6. The *lion* watched the *gazelles* with great interest. _____

7. The *rabbit* grabbed the *hunter's* gun and ran away. _____

8. The *audience* applauded when the *movie* ended. _____

9. Joe borrowed the *car* from the *Parkers'* garage. _____

10. *Mr. McGiver* baked the *girl* a carrot cake. _____

C. *Directions:* Circle the pronouns in the list below that show possession.

EXAMPLE: her I us

our	you	his
he	mine	me
your	their	she
hers	it	its
we	they	my

D. *Directions:* Rewrite the following sentences, replacing the italicized pronouns with nouns.

EXAMPLE: *He* wrote *her* a letter.

Biff wrote Minnie a letter.

1. *He* wished that *her* father were a nicer person.

2. *She* watched *them* jump out of the water.

3. The reason *they* left *it* behind is not clear.

4. *Their* faces fell when they saw *her* coming.

5. *It* was the last place *he* wanted to be.
