



## Notes – Pronouns

- I. General
  - a. Pronouns substitute for noun phrases (not just nouns!)
  - b. The noun phrase for which a pronoun substitutes is called its antecedent.
- II. Personal Pronouns
  - a. More complicated than perhaps expected since we use pronouns so naturally.
  - b. Markings
    - i. Person (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>)
    - ii. Number (singular, plural)
    - iii. Case (nominative when the subject, objective, possessive)
      - 1. First Possessive needs to attach to a noun (it's also a determiner)
      - 2. Second possessive stands alone and is not a determiner (eg: "mine")
    - iv. Gender
  - c. Note that there's no second possessive for third person neuter ("the book was its" doesn't make sense.)
  - d. Exercise
    - i. May I offer you my sympathy?
      - 1. I: 1<sup>st</sup> Person Singular, Nominative, Antecedent = the Speaker
      - 2. You: 2<sup>nd</sup> Person (singular/plural), objective, antecedent = listener
      - 3. My: 1<sup>st</sup> Person Singular, 1<sup>st</sup> Possessive, antecedent = I
    - ii. You may offer it but I won't take it.
      - 1. You: 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Singular, Nominative, antecedent = listener
      - 2. It: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Singular, Objective, antecedent = sympathy
      - 3. I: 1<sup>st</sup> Person Singular Nominative, antecedent = speaker
      - 4. It: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Singular, Objective, antecedent = sympathy
- III. Indefinite Pronouns
  - a. These act just like personal pronouns, but we don't know to whom they refer.
  - b. That is, they have no particular "referent"
- IV. Relative Pronouns
  - a. These are definitely pronouns, but they're hard to understand without knowing what a relative clause is.
  - b. who, whom, what, which, that, \_ever
- V. Demonstrative Pronouns
  - a. Demonstrate things!
  - b. this, that, these, those
  - c. "Bring *that* to the front of the room."
  - d. These are only pronouns when standing alone, not when they're used before another noun.
- VI. Reciprocal Pronouns
  - a. each other – used when exactly two entities involved
  - b. one another – used when more than two entities are involved
  - c. These must occur in phrases, not alone ("each other," not just "other")
  - d. Those are the only two reciprocal pronouns!
- VII. Reflexive Pronouns
  - a. *Must* refer to the subject
  - b. End with -self
  - c. Used in two ways
    - i. Follow the subject immediately
      - 1. "I myself believe..."
      - 2. "The Grinch himself carved the roast beef."
      - 3. Emphatic
    - ii. More commonly these occur later in the sentence
      - 1. "I did it myself."
      - 2. "They gave themselves a pay raise."

3. Again, they *must* refer to the subject!
4. Bad: "See Sean or myself."
5. The antecedent must be in the same sentence as the reflexive pronoun.

VIII. Expletive Pronouns

- a. These act as a "dummy" subject.
- b. it, there
- c. "It's sunny outside."
- d. "There are three boys in the class."
- e. Refers to absolutely nothing!
- f. Takes the place of the subject when there is no particular subject.