

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement A

A pronoun usually refers to a noun or another pronoun called its *antecedent*.

17p. A pronoun should agree in number and gender with its antecedent.

EXAMPLES Dolores lost **her** scarf.
 The **snake** shed **its** skin.
Shoppers filled **their** baskets with food.
 Each **one** of the teenagers paid for **his or her** ticket.

EXERCISE A In each sentence, underline the pronoun or pronouns in parentheses that agree in number and gender with the antecedent.

Example 1. High in the tree's branches, the bird built (*their, its*) nest.

- Billy loaned (*their, his*) bike to Phillip.
- The captain of the girls' softball team accepted (*her, his or her*) award.
- In the evening the chickens return to (*its, their*) roost.
- The cats sunned (*itself, themselves*) contentedly in the grassy yard.
- The microscopes in the science lab still have (*its, their*) price tags attached.
- The workers at the pizza parlor were wearing (*its, their*) new uniforms.
- On Father's Day, the children performed a one-act play for (*his or her, their*) dad.
- Carpenter ants sometimes make (*its, their*) home in your home.
- The puppy entertained (*itself, themselves*) with an old tennis ball.
- The hamster slept in (*its, their*) empty food dish.

EXERCISE B On each of the lines provided, write a pronoun or a pair of pronouns that will correctly complete the sentence.

Example 1. The river overflowed its banks.

- The siblings planned a surprise party for _____ parents' anniversary.
- The pig raised _____ voice in a surprised squeal.
- The captains of each team accepted _____ award.
- Julie was proud of _____ older sister.
- The young boy told _____ not to be afraid of the dark.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement B

- 17q.** Use a singular pronoun to refer to *anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, somebody, someone, or something*.
- 17r.** Use a plural pronoun to refer to *both, few, many, or several*.
- 17s.** The indefinite pronouns *all, any, more, most, none, and some* may be singular or plural, depending on how they are used in a sentence.

EXAMPLES **Everybody** in the group wanted **his or her** own map.
Few of the photographers developed **their** own film.
Some of the bread **was** eaten, and **some** of the bananas **were** eaten, too.

EXERCISE Underline the pronoun or pronouns in parentheses that correctly complete each sentence.

Example 1. During a fire drill, no one is allowed to remain in (*their, his or her*) classroom.

- Many of the mice are sleeping in (*their, its*) cage.
- Someone with muddy shoes didn't wipe (*his or her, their*) feet on the mat.
- At my grandmother's deli, few ordered the daily special for (*his or her, their*) meal.
- Any of the jewelry found should be returned to (*its, their*) owner.
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- Everything in the rooms was in (*their, its*) proper place.
- Most of the desks have had (*their, its*) wooden surfaces revarnished.
- Both of my sisters are successful in (*her, their*) careers.
- Each of the teachers voted for (*his or her, their*) choice for student council.
- Contrary to expectation, none of the treasure was worth (*their, its*) weight in gold.
- This year most of the girls are bringing (*her, their*) lunch from home.
- All of the boys helped clean (*his, their*) locker room.
- In my opinion, either of the candidates would represent (*their, his or her*) district well.
- Several of the chess players displayed (*their, his or her*) trophies in the case at school.
- Is anybody finished with (*their, his or her*) assignment yet?
- Anyone would enjoy riding (*their, his or her*) bike on a beautiful day like today.
- None of the children could fit into (*their, his or her*) coats this year.
- Both of the girls needed new shoes for (*her, their*) PE classes.
- All of my family wants to eat dinner at (*our, its*) grandparents' house.
- When the sun rose, several of the hikers packed (*his or her, their*) gear and started up the trail.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement C

17t. Use a singular pronoun to refer to two or more singular antecedents joined by *or* or *nor*.

EXAMPLE **Bill or Buddy** will lend **his** microscope to the class.

17u. Use a plural pronoun to refer to two or more antecedents joined by *and*.

EXAMPLE **Bill and Buddy** will lend **their** microscope to the class.

EXERCISE A In each sentence, underline the pronoun or pronouns in parentheses that agree in number and gender with its antecedent.

Example 1. Neither Mr. Smith nor Ms. Macelli reached (*their, his or her*) classroom on time.

1. Ants and flies found (*its, their*) way to our picnic.
2. Either Shari or April will give (*their, her*) oral report next.
3. Both Shelley and Stella promised to bring (*her, their*) cameras.
4. Did Martin or Jorge volunteer (*their, his*) time to the tutoring program?
5. Neither Paul nor Bonnie was surprised by (*their, his or her*) exam grades.
6. Mom and Dad called and said (*he, they*) are picking up pizza for us.
7. A squirrel or a bird must have found (*its, their*) way into my berry patch.
8. The band members and the fans cheered (*his or her, their*) team.
9. Will Thea or Sandra bring (*their, her*) flute?
10. Neither Jared nor Jill wants (*their, his or her*) picture on the poster.

EXERCISE B On each of the lines provided, write a pronoun or a pair of pronouns that will correctly complete the sentence.

Example 1. Either Grandma or Mom will loan _____ *her* _____ coat to me.

11. Patricia and Parker took _____ younger brother to the park.
12. Neither Cheryl nor Kristen finished _____ sculpture.
13. Monty and Ty promised that _____ would lead the discussion.
14. Natalie or Tabitha will tell _____ concerns to the principal.
15. Leo and Penny said that _____ will be here by noon.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement D

17v. A pronoun that refers to a collective noun has the same number as the noun.

A collective noun is singular when it refers to the group as a unit and plural when it refers to the individual members of the group.

SINGULAR The **committee** held **its** meeting in Mr. Park's classroom.

PLURAL The **committee** took **their** seats promptly.

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, underline the pronoun in parentheses that agrees in number with the collective noun.

Example 1. The valuable collection resides in (its, their) fireproof case.

- The brood followed closely behind (*its*, *their*) mother.
- Inside the tent, the family chose positions for (*its*, *their*) sleeping bags.
- The new set was placed on (*its*, *their*) shelf in the china cabinet.
- The jury argued among (*itself*, *themselves*).
- Before the show the chorus warmed up (*its*, *their*) voices.
- This cluster, said the jeweler, has value in (*its*, *their*) antiquity.
- The litter occupied (*itself*, *themselves*) by running, jumping, and barking.
- The jury went (*its*, *their*) separate ways for lunch.
- During the holidays, her family decorates (*its*, *their*) house together.
- The emergency crew congratulated (*itself*, *themselves*) on the rescue.

EXERCISE B On each of the lines provided, write a pronoun that will correctly complete the sentence.

Example 1. The cleaning crew signed _____ *their* _____ time sheets.

- Once out of the harbor, the fleet adjusted _____ speed.
- The audience took _____ seats.
- In winter the pack foraged for food near _____ den.
- The pack hunted on _____ own occasionally.
- The salary committee gave _____ raises.