

**First...Pronouns!**

- What is a pronoun?
  - A noun that takes the place of a previously mentioned noun or noun phrase
  - Example #1: Dan said **he** will have the report done by Friday.
  - Example #2: They bought the old, decrepit house because they thought **it** had charm.
- Also, keep in mind that the pronoun and its antecedent (noun or other pronoun to which it refers) must ALWAYS agree!

**Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement**

- Pronouns and their antecedents agree...
  - In the singular and plural
    - A **wolf** has **its** own language (“Wolf” and “its” agree)
    - **Wolves** have **their** own language. (“Wolves” and “their” agree)
  - In gender (and other instances)
    - the **boy** and **his** sister
    - the **girl** and **her** brother
    - the **garden** and **its** weeds

**\*\*Keep in mind that words like *his, her, its, their, my, our* and *your* are possessive pronouns\*\***

- Also, agreement must occur when...
  - The antecedent is a generic noun
    - Everybody has to live with **himself or herself**./People have to live with **themselves**.
- Special Cases for Agreement:
  - The pronoun agrees with the nearer of two antecedents joined by *or* or *nor*.
    - Did **Mark or Gordon** lose **his** enthusiasm?
    - Neither the **president nor** the **senators** had announced **their** decision.

- Agreement with collective nouns as antecedents can be tricky.
  - The choir is writing **its** own music. (choir=a working unit=singular)
  - The group of students disagree on methods, but **they** unite on basic aims. (students=group behaving as individuals=plural)

### **Pronoun Clarity**

- It is also important to make sure that your reader knows what antecedent the pronoun is being connected to.
  - Example #1: The weight of the pack was manageable, once I became used to **it**. (“it” refers to the weight)
  - Example #2: Large corporations may seem to be more trustworthy than individuals, but **that** is not true. (“that” refers to the sense of the whole first clause)
  - Example #3: Losing weight has become more than a national occupation; **it** is a national obsession. (“it” refers to losing weight)