

**PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT**

Okay, it's time to think WAY back to our grammar notes. Do you remember learning about pronouns? If you've forgotten a little, now is a good time to go and review your notes on pronouns. Be sure to read over everything including what an antecedent is. It's okay ... I'll wait ...

Alright, ready?

We need to be aware of what the antecedent for a pronoun is because those two things need to agree. That means that they match in NUMBER, GENDER, and PERSON. It doesn't matter if the pronoun is doing a job (subject, direct object, etc.) or acting as a modifier. It still needs to match the antecedent.

A. NUMBER refers to whether a pronoun is singular or plural.

1. The following pronouns are singular (they refer to a single thing or person)

each	one	everybody	someone
either	anybody	everyone	nobody
neither	anyone	somebody	no one

EXAMPLES:      EACH of the boys had HIS bat and ball.  
                      EVERYONE needs to put HIS coat on.  
                      SOMEONE had left HIS OR HER coat at church.

2. The following pronouns can be singular or plural depending on the antecedent.

all	any	some	none
-----	-----	------	------

EXAMPLES:      SOME of the STUDENTS looked funny in THEIR costumes.  
                      SOME of the MILK spilled when IT was poured.

3. Two or more singular antecedents joined by OR or NOR are treated as singular.

EXAMPLES:      Either Bill OR Ted will bring HIS camera.  
                      Neither Jessica NOR Julie would repeat what SHE said.

B. GENDER refers to whether the pronoun is MASCULINE, FEMININE, or NEUTER. To put it simply -- is it a boy pronoun, a girl pronoun, or can we not tell?

EXAMPLES:     The wagon lost one of ITS wheels. (neuter gender)  
                  The waitress said HER feet were tired. (feminine gender)  
                  The postman took HIS time. (masculine gender)

When an antecedent is meant to indicate both masculine and feminine, it is correct to use masculine pronouns. However, to be "politically correct," it is often best to use the phrase "his or her." Using "they" isn't correct. Here's an example:

SOMEONE has left THEIR books under the tree. (this is incorrect)  
SOMEONE has left HIS OR HER books under the tree. (this is correct)

C. PERSON refers to the following:

I, me, my, mine, we, us, ourselves, ours, our- FIRST PERSON  
you, your, yours - SECOND PERSON  
he, she, him, her, his, hers, one, it, its, they, them, theirs - THIRD PERSON

EXAMPLES:     (WRONG) ONE should never let YOUR sadness show.

*This sentence starts off in third person and switches to second.*

(RIGHT) ONE should never let ONE'S (or HIS) sadness show.

(WRONG) I find that reading in low light is hard on YOUR eyes.

*This sentence starts off in first person and switches to second.*

(RIGHT) I find that reading in low light is hard on MY eyes.

The buzzword for this rule is "*pronoun-antecedent agreement*" or "*pro-antec agmt.*"



**PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT: EXERCISE #1**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT TO DO:** In the sentences below circle the correct pronoun so that it agrees with its antecedent. Sentences #1 and #2 will concentrate on pronouns that agree with their antecedents in **NUMBER**.

1. Someone in my family needs to put (his, their) toys away.
2. Each of the toys on the family room floor belongs to (him, them).

Sentences #3 and #4 will concentrate on pronouns that agree with their antecedents in **GENDER**.

3. My little brother picked up his Teddy bear by (its, his, her) head.
4. I put my American Girl doll away in (its, her, his) box.

Sentences #5 and #6 will concentrate on pronouns that agree with their antecedents in **PERSON**.

5. One should always put away (one's, your) toys.
6. If we try hard enough, (you, we) can keep our play area neat.

**WHAT TO DO:** Copy-edit the errors in the following sentences. There are **SEVEN** errors.

Neither Mikey nor Lucas seems able to pick up after themselves. My mom decided to make us, a list of our daily chores. I'll check off each chore you do," she said. Mikeys list wasn't very long because he is, the youngest. Mom says that lucas, on the other hand needs to be reminded the most often.

(over)

**WHAT TO DO:** In each sentence below there is a comma split. In the spaces below each sentence are the numbers of all the other punctuation in the sentence. Find the comma split and write its number in the space at the left. Write what it is splitting beside that comma's number below the sentence. Next to the other numbers, write the buzzword of the rule for that punctuation. Remember that each set of quotation marks counts as one thing. We will only put a number under the open quote (") mark, not the close quote (") mark.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mom and Dad, try to keep our house at 615 Oak  
1 Avenue, Dayton, Ohio, as neat as possible. 2  
3

#1

#2

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

2. "Lucas," she said, "please read, the chart which  
1 2 3  
lists your chores, Mikey's chores, and mine."  
4

#1

#2

#3

#4

3. Everybody in our family needs to do his chores every day, and then we have a neat home.

#1

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3

**PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT: EXERCISE #2**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT TO DO:** In the sentences below circle the correct pronoun so that it agrees with its antecedent. Sentences #1 and #2 will concentrate on pronouns that agree with their antecedents in **NUMBER**.

1. Each family has (its, their) own set of rules about chores.
2. Two of the families in our neighborhood changes (its, their) list each week.

Sentences #3 and #4 will concentrate on pronouns that agree with their antecedents in **GENDER**.

3. Sometimes it's Dad who decides what (he, she, it) wants.
4. I like it when my mom tells (you, me) what to do.

Sentences #5 and #6 will concentrate on pronouns that agree with their antecedents in **PERSON**.

5. A person shouldn't just tell other families what (he, they) thinks they should do.
6. Once you make a plan, however, (one, you) should stick to it.

**WHAT TO DO:** Copy-edit the errors in the following sentences. There are **SEVEN** errors.

Our neat beautiful house had just been cleaned. We were, ready for a visit from my uncle, Mr. Ray Johnson Jr. He is the well-known author of the book A Boys Guide to Housework. My famous uncle, firmly believes that housework is everyone's responsibility. Nobody in our house plans to forget their chores when Uncle Ray is here!

*(over)*



**WHAT TO DO:** In each sentence below there is a comma split. In the spaces below each sentence are the numbers of all the other punctuation in the sentence. Find the comma split and write its number in the space at the left. Write what it is splitting beside that comma's number below the sentence. Next to the other numbers, write the buzzword of the rule for that punctuation. Remember that each set of quotation marks counts as one thing. We will only put a number under the open quote (") mark, not the close quote (") mark.

1. Uncle Ray thoroughly approves of my mom's clever, chart.

#1

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3

2. As a matter of fact, he has, a chapter in his book  
called "The Magic of Charts."

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3

3. Sometimes one of us forgets his chores for the day,  
but Uncle Ray is, a believer in making each  
morning a fresh, new start.

#1

#2

#3

**PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT: EXERCISE #3**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT TO DO:** In the sentences below circle the correct pronoun so that it agrees with its antecedent in NUMBER, GENDER, and PERSON.

1. Both of my brothers have (his, their) rooms to clean.
2. Only one of them is able to make (their, his) own bed.
3. "Mikey, one should always make (your, his) bed," I tell him.
4. He tries his best, but his comforter always slips out of (its, his) place.
5. Neither Mikey nor Lucas is really good at making (his, their) bed.
6. I believe that making your bed is one of (my, your) most important chores.

**WHAT TO DO:** Copy-edit the errors in the following sentences. There are **SEVEN** errors.

In Uncle rays book he teaches boys a song to sing to help him learn to make their beds. This great little song, is called "Sheets and Pillows, Spread 'Em Up! Putting something to music, after all helps you remember what to do more easily. Mikey may not be able to make his bed perfectly, but he sure can sing, that song!

(over)

**WHAT TO DO:** In each sentence below there is a comma split. In the spaces below each sentence are the numbers of all the other punctuation in the sentence. Find the comma split and write its number in the space at the left. Write what it is splitting beside that comma's number below the sentence. Next to the other numbers, write the buzzword of the rule for that punctuation. Remember that each set of quotation marks counts as one thing. We will only put a number under the open quote (") mark, not the close quote (") mark.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. "Have you ever noticed," asked Mom, " how easy it is  
1 2  
to remember things when they are in a lively, tune?"  
3

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. "Sheets and Pillows, Spread 'Em Up" is, a great  
1 2  
little song, and it'll result in a neat, beautiful bed.  
3 4

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

#4 \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Yes, my uncle Ray, is a firm believer in learning  
1 2  
to make one's bed properly.  
3

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_



**TEST: PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

POINTS EARNED: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 28 LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT TO DO:** In the sentences below circle the correct pronoun so that it agrees with its antecedent in NUMBER, GENDER, and PERSON.

1. My mom has two brothers, and each of them is an expert in (his, their) field.
2. Each of my Uncle Bill's books has (its, their) own subject.
3. If anybody wants to know something, (he, they) usually ask Uncle Bill.
4. One of his books is on engine repair, and each type of engine has (his, its) own chapter.
5. I believe that each driver should learn to keep (his, their) engine in good order.
6. Each of my uncles has certainly made (his, their) parents proud!

**WHAT TO DO:** Copy-edit the errors in the following sentences. There are **SEVEN** errors.

My favorite of Uncle bill's books is called Training Service Dogs. This fantastic book, teaches people how to train dogs for the blind the elderly, and the disabled. There is, after all a great need for these wonderful dogs. One of his readers has trained a French poodle and he is now a service dog for a disabled man. Everyone who is disabled, should have a great companion like Rocket!

(over)

**WHAT TO DO:** In each sentence below there is a comma split. In the spaces below each sentence are the numbers of all the other punctuation in the sentence. Find the comma split and write its number in the space at the left. Write what it is splitting beside that comma's number below the sentence. Next to the other numbers, write the buzzword of the rule for that punctuation. Remember that each set of quotation marks counts as one thing. We will only put a number under the open quote (") mark, not the close quote (") mark.

1. "Service dogs perform, a great service, " says my uncle Bill.

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

### #3

2. Each dog does its job to help the blind and the disabled, and each dog becomes, a great companion.

# #1

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

3. As a matter of fact, I would love to learn to train  
these wonderful, magnificent dogs when I, grow  
up.

# #1

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

**PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT: EXERCISE #1**

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1

1. Mom and Dad, try to keep our house at 615 Oak Avenue, Dayton, Ohio, as neat as possible.

#1 splits subject and verb

#2 capitalize

### #3 names, dates, & places

3

2. "Lucas," she said, "please read, the chart which  
1 2 3  
lists your chores, Mikey's chores, and mine."  
4

#1 quotation marks

#2 gear change comma

#3 splits verb and direct object

#4 items in a series

3

3. Everybody in our family needs to do his chores  
every day, and then we have a neat, home.

#1 pro-antec agmt

#2 compound sentence

### #3 splits modifier and its noun

**PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT: EXERCISE #2**

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3

1. Uncle Ray thoroughly approves of my mom's clever,  
1 2 3  
chart.

#1 capitalize

#2 possessives

#3 splits modifier and its noun

2

2. As a matter of fact, he has, a chapter in his book  
1 2  
called "The Magic of Charts."  
3

#1 expressions

#2 splits verb and direct object

#3 titles

2

3. Sometimes one of us forgets his chores for the day,  
1  
but Uncle Ray is, a believer in making each  
2  
morning a fresh, new start.  
3

#1 compound sentence

#2 splits linking verb and complement

#3 two adjectives "and" test



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2

2

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1

2

3

#1 quotation marks

1

#2 splits verb and direct object

1

#3 capitalize

3

2

2. Each dog does its job to help the blind and the disabled, and each dog becomes, a great companion.

1

2

3

#1 pro-antec agmt

1

#2 compound sentence

1

#3 splits linking verb and complement

3

2

3. As a matter of fact, I would love to learn to train these wonderful, magnificent dogs when I, grow up.

1

2

3

#1 expressions

1

#2 two adjectives "and" test

1

#3 splits subject and verb

Score Range		Result
28 - 25	=	Mastery
24 - 22	=	Superiority
21 - 19	=	Competency
18 - 16	=	Probationary
16 and below	=	Repeat

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3

1. "Have you ever noticed," asked Mom, " how easy it is  
1 2  
to remember things when they are in a lively, tune?"  
3

#1 quotation marks

#2 gear change comma

#3 splits modifier and its noun

2

2. "Sheets and Pillows, Spread 'Em Up" is, a great  
1 2  
little song, and it'll result in a neat, beautiful bed.  
3 4

#1 titles

#2 splits linking verb and complement

#3 compound sentence

#4 two adjectives "and" test

2

3. Yes, my uncle Ray, is a firm believer in learning  
1 2  
to make one's bed properly.  
3

#1 introductory single word

#2 splits subject and verb

#3 possessives