

Grammar and Style Tips: Problematic Pronouns

Subject pronouns: I, we, he, she, they, you, it

Object pronouns: me, us, him, her, them, you, it

Remember that subjects, along with verbs, perform the main action of the sentence. Often they come before the verb. Objects are acted upon by verbs or prepositions.

The commonest pronoun error occurs with compound (multiple) subjects and objects. Kids tend to misuse subject pronouns (“Me and Elisabeth walked to the Sno-Cone stand”—*wrong*), while adults tend to misuse object pronouns (“The evaluation should go to the director and I”—*wrong*). The best and quickest pronoun test is to leave out the other noun and imagine which pronoun you would choose if it were standing alone.

Whether subject or object, the pronoun should come last in the phrase.

My mother, my aunt, and I went to the store.

Oh, can you get tickets to the concert for my sister and me?

Practice:

The Doldrums have made an offer on a house just up the street from Ted and _____.

Ted and _____ are not excited about having the Doldrums as neighbors.

John acts arrogant every time he’s around Bob and _____.

Bob and _____ find that John is arrogant.

Between you and _____, this reporter hasn’t done her homework.

Susie and _____ have been very happy in Little Rock. (her husband)

It never occurred to Susie and _____ to leave Little Rock. (her husband)

The boys and _____ went to Sports Academy to look for some cleats. (their grandmother)

It's hilarious to go shoe shopping with the boys and _____. (their grandmother)

Every six months the accountant, the financial officer, and _____ sit down to go over expenses. (the person who's speaking)

Every six months Ms. Guardpenny sits down with the account manager and _____ to go over expenses. (the person who's speaking)

From Todd

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