

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Clear Antecedents or Chaos? The 8th Grade Pronoun Duel

Navigate through complex sentence structures to resolve ambiguous references and maintain grammatical precision in this high-stakes syntax challenge.

1. In the sentence, 'The committee debated the resolution until it was finally passed,' what is the grammatical function of 'it'?

Answer: B) A personal pronoun acting as the subject of a subordinate clause

In this complex sentence, 'it' refers back to 'the resolution' and serves as the subject for the passive verb phrase 'was finally passed' within the dependent clause.

2. Choose the correct pronoun to maintain agreement with the compound antecedent: 'Neither the lead actor nor the stagehands had finished _____ preparations before the curtain rose.'

Answer: C) their

When using 'neither/nor' with a compound antecedent, the pronoun should agree with the noun closest to it. Since 'stagehands' is plural, the plural pronoun 'their' is required.

3. True or False: In the sentence 'The scientist performed the experiment herself,' the word 'herself' is an intensive pronoun used for emphasis.

Answer: A) True

Intensive pronouns add emphasis to a noun or another pronoun. Unlike reflexive pronouns, the sentence remains grammatically complete even if 'herself' is removed.

4. Identify the sentence that contains a vague or ambiguous pronoun reference.

Answer: A) After the architects met with the contractors, they decided to change the foundation.

In option A, the pronoun 'they' is ambiguous because it could refer to either the 'architects' or the 'contractors,' leaving the reader unsure of who made the decision.

5. Select the correct relative pronoun to complete the sentence: 'The diplomat, _____ the president appointed last month, has already secured a new treaty.'

Answer: B) whom

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'Whom' is the objective case pronoun required here because the diplomat is the recipient of the action (the president appointed him/her), not the subject performing it.

6. True or False: Indefinite pronouns like 'everyone,' 'each,' and 'anybody' are always treated as plural nouns in formal writing.

Answer: B) False

In formal English, these indefinite pronouns are singular. They require singular verbs (e.g., 'Everyone is') and singular possessive pronouns (e.g., 'Everyone has his or her own copy').

7. Which of the following sentences correctly utilizes a reflexive pronoun?

Answer: B) The stray cat dragged the heavy bag of food all by itself.

Reflexive pronouns must refer back to a subject in the same sentence. In 'The stray cat dragged... itself,' the pronoun correctly refers back to the subject 'cat'. Options A and C misuse 'myself' as a substitute for 'me'.

8. Complete the following with the appropriate possessive pronoun: 'While the neighboring city upgraded its infrastructure, our city decided to delay ____.'

Answer: C) its

'Its' is the possessive form of 'it'. This sentence compares the infrastructure of one city to 'its' (our city's) own infrastructure. 'It's' is a contraction for 'it is'.

9. Identify the type of pronoun used in the following sentence: 'Few understood the socioeconomic implications of the new policy.'

Answer: C) Indefinite

'Few' is an indefinite pronoun because it refers to a non-specific number of people without identifying them individually.

10. True or False: In the sentence 'Those are the most ancient ruins in the valley,' the word 'Those' functions as a demonstrative adjective.

Answer: B) False

False. In this sentence, 'Those' stands alone as the subject, making it a demonstrative pronoun. It would only be an adjective if it modified a noun directly, such as 'Those ruins are ancient.'