

# Pronouns and referencing

personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns;  
avoiding repetition

# 9

## A Context listening

- 1 You are going to hear a conversation between Chi Wen, a student from Hong Kong who is studying in Australia, and her homestay host Mrs Smith. Which household chores do you think Chi Wen will have to do?



- 2 9 Listen and write

A if Mrs Smith will do this    B if Chi Wen will do this    C if both of them will do it

- |                  |                |                   |
|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 cook dinner    | 4 make lunches | 6 wash sheets     |
| 2 make breakfast | 5 wash clothes | 7 clean the house |
| 3 buy food       |                |                   |

- 3 9 Listen again and fill in the gaps.

- 1 I can introduce ..... to a friend of ....., Yi Ling.
- 2 I know ..... 's really enjoying ..... here in Australia.
- 3 Now, I have had a lot of students staying with ..... over the years and I do have a few rules.
- 4 First of all, my husband and ..... want everyone to feel at home so ..... treat everyone like ..... 're a member of our own family.
- 5 And what about other meals? Can I cook for .....?
- 6 Yes, everyone makes their own breakfast and I always make sure there is plenty of food in the fridge so ..... can prepare ..... a packed lunch if you like.
- 7 I expect everyone to wash and iron for .....
- 8 Can I use ..... to make local calls?

- 4 Put the words you wrote in Exercise 3 into four groups.

I,  
.....  
myself,  
.....

me,  
.....  
mine,  
.....

## B Grammar

### 1 Personal and possessive pronouns

Subject personal pronouns:	<i>I, you, he, she, it, we, they</i>
Object personal pronouns:	<i>me, you, him, her, it, us, them</i>
Possessive pronouns:	<i>mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs</i>

We use pronouns to replace nouns and avoid repetition of the noun:

*I can introduce you to my friend, Yi Ling. **She's** a student from Taiwan. (not ~~Yi-Ling's~~ a student)*

We use subject pronouns before verbs:

*I only arrived last month.*

and object pronouns after verbs or prepositions:

*I have had a lot of students staying **with me** over the years.*

We use possessive pronouns to replace a possessive determiner and a noun:

*I don't have a phone here. Can I use **yours**? (= your phone)*

⚠ *Its* is not used as a possessive pronoun.

### 2 Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns:	<i>myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves</i>
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We use reflexive pronouns

◆ when the subject and the object of the verb are the same:

*You can prepare **yourself** a packed lunch if you like.*

◆ to add emphasis to the subject or object:

*I clean the kitchen and the living areas **myself**. (= I do it, not anybody else)*

◆ with *by* to mean *on my own/on your own* etc.:

*I clean the kitchen and the living areas **by myself**. (= on my own)*

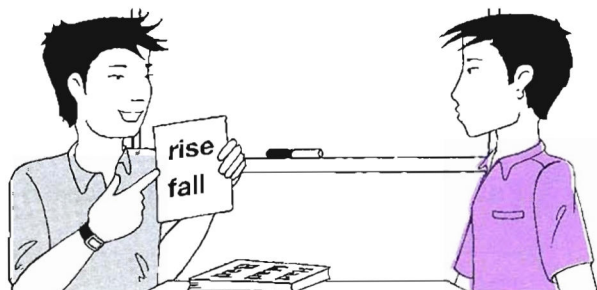
◆ after some set expressions in the imperative with *yourself/yourselves*:

*Help **yourself**. Look after **yourself**. (= be careful) Enjoy **yourselves**.*

⚠ Notice the use of *each other/one another* below:

*The boys taught **themselves** English. (= each boy taught himself English)*

*The boys taught **each other/one another** some new words. (= each boy taught the other boy some new words)*



### 3 Some special situations

#### It

We can use *it*

- ◆ as a subject to start a sentence without carrying any meaning. Often the sentences are about the weather, the time or distance:

*It didn't always rain. It's five o'clock. It's 10 km from the sea.*

- ◆ to start sentences when the real subject is an infinitive or an *-ing* form:

*It won't take long to settle in.* (= to settle in won't take long)

- ◆ to refer to phrases, whole sentences or ideas:

*I only arrived last month and I am still finding it all a bit strange, actually.* (= living in a foreign country)

▲ We use *there + be + noun phrase* to show something exists (or doesn't exist), not *it*:

*There's a good coffee shop near here.* (~~not It is a good coffee shop near here.~~)

#### You and we

To talk about everybody in general we can use

- ◆ *you*:

*In Australia you often eat sandwiches for lunch.* (= people in Australia)

- ◆ *we* (when we include ourselves in the group):

*We often eat lunch in a bit of a hurry.* (= Australian people in general, and the speaker is Australian)

#### They

We can use *they*

- ◆ to mean experts or authorities:

*They have changed the law recently.* (= the government)

*They have discovered a new kind of beetle.* (= scientists)

- ◆ when we do not know or do not need to say if the person is male or female:

*I asked a student if they liked learning English and they said no!*

#### One/ones

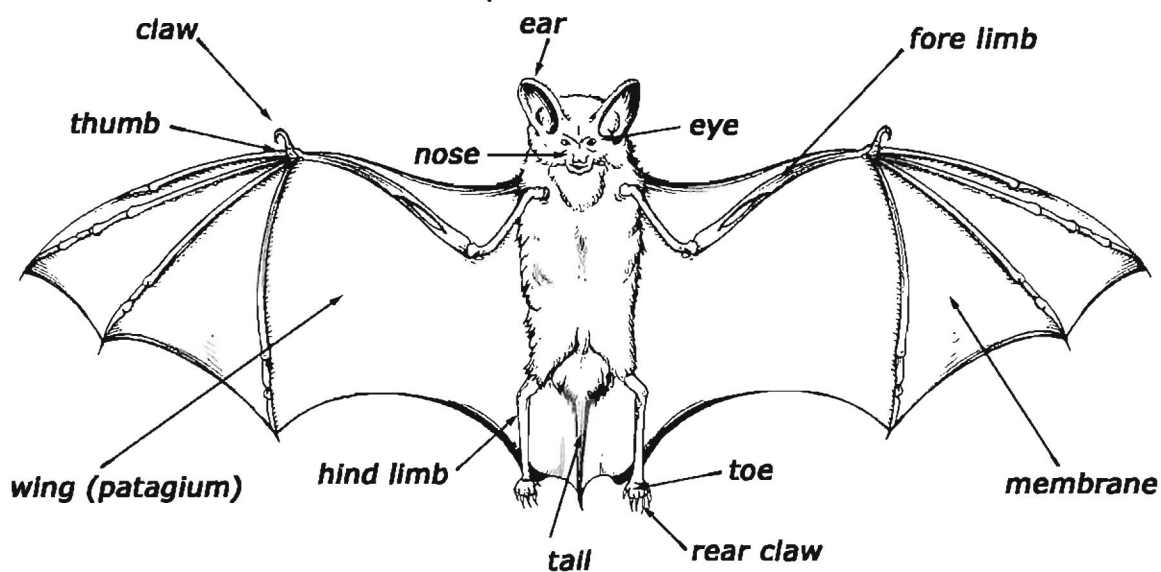
We can use *one/ones* to avoid repetition of a countable noun:

*I do have a few rules. The most important one is that I want everyone to feel at home.* (= the most important rule)

## C Grammar exercises

1 Fill in the gaps with *it, its, itself, they, their* or *themselves*.

### Anatomy of a bat



The entire wing of a bat is called the *patagium*. Many species also have a membrane between 1 ..... *their* ..... hind limbs enclosing the tail. The *patagium* is full of fine blood vessels, muscle fibres and nerves. When it is cold, these bats wrap 2 ..... up in 3 ..... wings like a coat. In warm weather 4 ..... flap 5 ..... wings in order to cool 6 ..... bodies.

The bat has claws on 7 ..... thumbs and sometimes on the toes of 8 ..... fore and hind limbs. The rear claws enable 9 ..... to hang 10 ..... on to a tree branch or ledge.

All bats are active at night or at twilight, so 11 ..... eyes are poorly developed. Instead 12 ..... use 13 ..... nose and ears to orientate 14 .....

- 2** Find and correct 13 places where nouns could be replaced with the pronouns in the box to make the email sound more natural.

He He he he he him himself it it it mine  
They us yours

The image shows a screenshot of an email client window. The header contains the following information:

To: Liz Jenkins  
From: Sandy Moore  
Subject: University life

The body of the email contains the following text:

Dear Liz

I'm sorry I haven't emailed you for a while. I'm really busy with my studies at the moment. My course is going well and I'm enjoying my course<sup>1</sup> a lot. The trouble is that my course takes up all my time. How is your course going?

I hope you will be able to visit me soon. I'd like you to meet my friends. My best friend here is Paul. Paul lives in the flat next to my flat, and I usually eat most of my meals with Paul. At the moment I'm doing most of the cooking though, because Paul had an accident last week. One of the reasons for the accident is connected to some changes at the university recently. The university authorities have decided that students shouldn't be allowed to bring cars up to the campus, so more and more of the students are cycling. Because of this new rule, Paul was riding his bicycle to the university. While he was cycling along a car driver drove into the back of his bike. The car driver didn't stop and check if he was okay. Luckily Paul was not badly hurt and managed to pick up his bike and get to the doctor's surgery. The doctor said his finger was probably broken and strapped his finger up, so he can't hold anything in his right hand at the moment and Paul can't really cook for Paul.

Anyway, he'd like to meet you, so we must arrange a time for you to come here.

Get in touch soon.  
Love, Sandy

**3** Fill in the gaps with a suitable pronoun or *there*.

**Teacher:** Do you think that governments spend too much on space exploration nowadays?

**Student:** Well, I think that 1 there are a lot of different factors to take into consideration. For example some countries want to show the rest of the world that 2 ..... are successful and 3 ..... can do this with a space exploration program. 4 ..... seems that 5 ..... is more important for these countries to impress the world than to look after their own people. Sometimes 6 ..... is difficult to understand this because every country in the world has 7 ..... problems and has poor people that need to be looked after because they can't look after 8 ..... . So, yes, I do think that these countries should look after people first before 9 ..... start trying to send men to the moon! 10 ..... are too many other problems here on earth that we need to sort out.

**4** Underline the correct words.

There are many reasons why 1 we / they should recycle household waste. The main reason is to avoid using up valuable resources making new things when 2 it is / we are not necessary. However, I do not think the government should make 3 it / the law compulsory for people to recycle their waste.

If the government makes a law that all households must recycle 4 their / its rubbish, 5 the law / it could lead to more problems. For example, how can 6 you / people check that people are recycling everything? 7 It is not practical to do this. / To do this is not practical. In addition, there is the argument that individuals should be allowed to decide for 8 each other / themselves whether to throw something away or to recycle 9 it / something.

I believe the most sensible approach is for the government to put more money into recycling schemes. The most successful are 10 the ones / them where the government gives each household special boxes to put different kinds of waste in, and 11 the government / they provide a regular collection service. 12 They / There are separate boxes for plastic, metal, glass etc. This makes 13 to recycle easier for people / it easier for people to recycle and 14 they / there are therefore less likely to throw things in the rubbish bin.