Lesson 7

L1: Applying pronouns for clarity

What is a pronoun?

A word that can replace a noun in a sentence.

Name some personal and possessive pronouns.

I you she he mine his hers yours ours theirs his him us we me my they them it

Read this text and think about why using pronouns are important.

Tommy sat on the bench and ate Tommy's apple. Tommy liked the apple. Tommy thought is was crunchy though Tommy preffered it when Tommy's mum gave Tommy an orange for break time. Tommy's friend Beth came and sat next to Tommy. Beth had an orange as it was also Beth's favourite fruit. Beth offered some to Tommy so Tommy said thank you.

What's wrong with this text? Can we improve it?

As you can see the proper noun 'Tommy' has been overused.

Tommy sat on the bench and ate Tommy's apple. Tommy liked the apple. Tommy thought is was crunchy though Tommy preffered it when Tommy's mum gave Tommy an orange for break time. Tommy's friend Beth came and sat next to Tommy. Beth had an orange as it was also Beth's favourite fruit. Beth offered some to Tommy so Tommy said thank you.

By replacing some of the proper nouns with pronouns will improve the text.

Pronouns help to provide clarity and flow to a piece of writing. However, it is important not not overuse them.

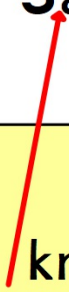
He climbed in the rocket. His friend started the engine and he pressed the button. In a flash they had left the Earth. He looked for his telescope everywhere but couldn't find it. He found it and passed it over to him. They could see the Earth far in the distance. Suddenly, the radio blarred out and she told them they were on course to hit a meteor shower. She told him how to divert the rocket towards the moon.

What happens to the clarity of a text if pronouns are overused?

To use pronouns accurately they must initially be linked to a proper noun or noun.

Dan climbed in his rocket. His friend, Sam, started the engines.

Now we know who climbed in the rocket.



Now we know who Dan's friend is.

It's important that the subject of the sentence is introduced. It can then be replaced with a pronoun in some places.

Dan climbed in his rocket. His friend, Sam, started the engines while Dan pressed the button. In a flash, they had left Earth. Sam looked for his telescope everywhere but couldn't find it. Dan found it and passed it to him. Suddenly, the radio blarred out and the operator said to them that they were on course to hit a meteor shower. She told them how to divert the rocket towards the moon.

Why are all of the pronouns acceptable in this text? Because the subject has been introduced beforehand.

Every pronoun must be linked to another type of noun. Usually a proper noun or common noun.

Look at these sentences and write down the proper or common noun and the pronoun it is linked to.

The bird flew to his nest.

'his' is linked to the bird.

The chair was rather sturdy. It's legs were solid oak.

Even though Dan could swim, he was scared of the water.

I can choose nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition.

Put a circle around all of the **pronouns** in this box. Underline all of the **nouns**.

me	crying	Ash	dominoes
costume	Hassan	it	they
yours	leggings	classroom	her
mine	them	singing	him

For each sentence, underline the noun and circle the pronoun that it has been replaced with. Look at the example:

I tried to tie my laces, but (they) ended up looking like balls of spaghetti.

1. Hassan dislikes anything to do with music and drama almost as much as he dislikes running in PE.
2. He fished my cap from underneath the art trolley and plonked it back on my head.
3. I tried to balance my feathered cap on my head, but somehow it fell off and rolled under the art trolley.
4. I put my hands over my face to stop it twitching.
5. "Just a minor Velcro mishap. I'll sort you out, don't worry," said Hassan. He tugged at my costume for a while and patted my back reassuringly.

You don't need to print this sheet.

Simply copy the words into 2 lists, headed, nouns and pronouns.

Write the sentences into your book, then underline or cirlce the words.