THE PROBLEM WITH PRONOUNS
We all know how to use PRONOUNS. We use them every day. They replace nouns.

Anywhere you can put a NOUN, you can replace it with a PRONOUN.
The **young man** told the **manager** that the **ad** in the **newspaper** was inaccurate.

NOUNS never change. It doesn’t matter if your NOUN is a subject or an object. It doesn’t change.

The **manager** told the **young man** that the **newspaper** had made an error in the **ad**.

PRONOUNS, however, have a different form for subjects and objects.

**He** told **him** about **her**.

**Him** told **her** about **he**?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>POSSESSIVE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Person</strong></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>ME</td>
<td>MY, MINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WE</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>OUR, OURS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Person</strong></td>
<td>YOU</td>
<td>YOU</td>
<td>YOUR, YOURS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third Person</strong></td>
<td>HE</td>
<td>HIM</td>
<td>HIS, HER, HERS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SHE</td>
<td>HER</td>
<td>THEIR, THEIR</td>
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<td><strong>Relative Pronoun</strong></td>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>WHOM</td>
<td>WHOSE</td>
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<td>WHOEVER</td>
<td>WHOMEVER</td>
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Let’s not review what you already know. Let’s concentrate on the PROBLEMS WITH PRONOUNS.

**Problem #1: Pronouns in Compound Constructions**
There has always been bad blood between he and Joe (or is it him and Joe?)

**Problem #2: Pronouns in Comparison**
Trevor is older than me (or is it I?)

**Problem #3: Who or Whom?**
John is the man who (or whom) we adore.
The problem is created by the compound construction.

1. Me and my brother are leaving for Tucson this afternoon.
2. Him and me will be driving throughout the night.
3. Him and his wife took a cruise last Christmas.

The solution is to try the pronoun by itself.

Would you say me am leaving for Tucson?
No. You would say I am leaving for Tucson.
My brother and I are leaving for Tucson.

Be careful. You may have to adjust for subject and verb agreement.
Remember the solution is to try the pronoun by itself. Let’s try the next example.

Him and me will be driving throughout the night.

Would you say him will be driving throughout the night?
Would you say me will be driving throughout the night?
No. You would say he will be driving and I will be driving throughout the night.

He and I will be driving throughout the night.

When mixing a first person pronoun (I, we) with a third person pronoun (he, she, they) ALWAYS PUT THE THIRD PERSON PRONOUN FIRST.
EXERCISE
Circle the correct pronoun of the two choices given in parentheses. Remember to try the pronoun by itself to check if it is correct.

1. The committee should have contacted the negotiations officer or (me, I).

2. You and (us, we) certainly know how to build an extraordinary float for a parade.

3. Would you like the caterers and (she, her) to start packing up the remaining food now?

4. I think that you and (she, her) ought to see a counselor.

5. Just between you and (me, I), not everyone enjoys watching television all night.

6. Last weekend my father let my best friend and (I, me) take the boat out alone for the first time.

7. We are flattered that you would consider both Woody and (I, me) for chaperons for your dance.

8. I can’t tell you if (she, her) and Cal delivered the papers or not.
CHECK YOUR WORK
Circle the correct pronoun of the two choices given in parentheses. Remember to try the pronoun by itself to check if it is correct.

1. The committee should have contacted the negotiations officer or (me, I).

2. You and (us, we) certainly know how to build an extraordinary float for a parade.

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8. I can’t tell you if (she, her) and Cal delivered the papers or not.
Problem #2: Pronouns in Comparisons

The problem is created by omitting the end of the sentence.

1. Trevor is older than me.
2. No one is as smart as her.
3. John and his cousins are probably as eager to tour the caverns as us.

The solution is to imagine the rest of the sentence.

1. Trevor is older than I (am).
2. No one is as smart as she (is).
3. John and his cousins are probably as eager to tour the caverns as we (are).
Be clear about what you are comparing.

Typically, we compare complete ideas:  

Trevor is older than I am.

However, occasionally, we are comparing objects.

We respected no other candidate for city council as much as her.

Translation: We respected no other candidate for city council as much as (we respected) her.
I have been Tom’s lab partner longer than she.

**Translation:** I have been Tom’s lab partner longer than she has been Tom’s lab partner.

I have been Tom’s lab partner longer than hers.

**Translation:** I have been Tom’s lab partner longer than I have been her lab partner.

The creaking hinges annoyed her brother as much as her.

**Translation:** The creaking hinges annoyed her brother as much as they annoyed her.

The creaking hinges annoyed her brother as much as she.

**Translation:** The creaking hinges annoyed her brother as much as she did.
Problem #3: Who or Whom?

The problem is created whenever we forget that *who* is subject case and *whom* is object case.

1. Jonathan is a man who/whom I admire.
2. Peter is someone who/whom will always take the time to answer your questions.
3. Matt is the employee who/whom everyone trusts.

The solution is to isolate the adjective clause and understand which is required: subject or object case.

1. Jonathan is a man **who/whom** I admire.
2. Peter is someone **who/whom** will always take the time to answer your questions.
WHO/WHOM EXERCISE: Part One

Underline the adjective clauses in each of the following sentences. DON’T CONCERN YOURSELF WITH WHICH PRONOUN IS CORRECT. Simply start by indentifying the adjective clause.

1. She was the contestant who/whom answered every question correctly in the last round.

2. The people to who/whom tragedy is no stranger are often those who/whom have the most positive attitude toward life.

3. Ryan Kent, who/whom was our guide through Castle Danger, didn’t give away one surprising ghoul or cold, dead clammy hand.

4. Matt is the employee who/whom everybody says is the most responsible and most cheerful.

5. Outside the restaurant was my weird Aunt Farlene who/whom was leaning against a young man who/whom I did not know.

6. Patrick is one of those writers who/whom needs lots of time for inspiration.

7. Everyone who/whom had been hoping to settle this dispute before the Christmas holiday rallied to confront the director after work.

8. Our choir director thinks that Telemon is a composer who/whom everyone should respect.
CHECK YOUR WORK
Underline the adjective clauses in each of the following sentences. DON’T CONCERN YOURSELF WITH WHICH PRONOUN IS CORRECT. Simply start by indentifying the adjective clause.

1. She was the contestant who/whom answered every question correctly in the last round.
2. The people to who/whom tragedy is no stranger are often those who/whom have the most positive attitude toward life.
3. Ryan Kent, who/whom was our guide through Castle Danger, didn’t give away one surprising ghoul or cold, dead clammy hand.
4. Matt is the employee who/whom everybody says is the most responsible and most cheerful.
5. Outside the restaurant was my weird Aunt Farlene who/whom was leaning against a young man who/whom I did not know.
6. Patrick is one of those writers who/whom needs lots of time for inspiration.
7. Everyone who/whom had been hoping to settle this dispute before the Christmas holiday rallied to confront the director after work.
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WHO/WHOM EXERCISE: Part Two
Now, within the adjective clause, label subject, verb, and object (if there is one). Labeling should help you identify which pronoun is correct. Circle the correct pronoun.

1. She was the contestant who/whom answered every question correctly in the last round.

2. The people to who/whom tragedy is no stranger are often those who/whom have the most positive attitude toward life.

3. Ryan Kent, who/whom was our guide through Castle Danger, didn’t give away one surprising ghoul or cold, clammy hand.

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CHECK YOUR WORK
Now, within the adjective clause, label subject, verb, and object (if there is one). Labeling should help you identify which pronoun is correct.

1. She was the contestant who/whom answered every question correctly in the last round.

2. The people to whom tragedy is no stranger are often those who/whom have the most positive attitude toward life.

3. Ryan Kent, who/whom was our guide through Castle Danger, didn’t give away one surprising ghoul or cold, dead clammy hand.

4. Matt is the employee who/whom (everybody says) is the most responsible and most cheerful.
CHECK YOUR WORK
Now, within the adjective clause, label subject, verb, and object (if there is one). Labeling should help you identify which pronoun is correct.

5. Outside the restaurant was my weird Aunt Farlene **who/whom** was leaning against a young man **who/whom** I did not know.

6. Patrick is one of those writers **who/whom** needs lots of time for inspiration.

7. Everyone **who/whom** had been hoping to settle this dispute before the Christmas holiday rallied to confront the director after work.

8. Our choir director thinks that Telemon is a composer **who/whom** everyone should respect.
The copy-machine repair man who/whom everyone calls Charlie stops by the office regularly to check on our old copier, which is in constant need of repair.

Clara was the only person who/whom (I thought) knew the answer.
EXERCISE
Circle the correct pronoun of the two choices provide.

1. The two of us/we have to clear our consciences before we continue this trip.
2. No one is more fluent in French than she/her.
3. The steady correspondence between she/her and her favorite author began almost five years ago.
4. To who/whom do we give these expense reports?
5. The seminar was less than beneficial for both you and I/me.
6. The proposal was presented by Chadwick and she/her.
7. Who/Whom did the committee select?
8. Whoever/Whomever made the last phone call from our house owes us $28.50 for long distance charges.
9. This book is dedicated to whoever/whomever will use it to master English.
CHECK YOUR WORK
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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS?

I will complete that project **myself**.

Jones knew he had only **himself** to blame.

They sorted the applicants **themselves**.

Do you see why these are called REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS? They **REFLECT** back on the subject, right? **RIGHT!**
EXERCISE
Underline the reflexive pronoun in each sentence. Then, if the reflexive pronoun has been used correctly, circle the sentence number AND draw an arrow from the reflexive pronoun back to the subject it refers to.

1. The actors amused themselves while waiting for the play to begin.
2. Feel free to contact myself if you have any questions concerning our new computer system.
3. Visiting students should help themselves to the free college brochures and daily planners available in the lobby.
4. One chief sales consultant, either Witherspoon or myself will coordinate the meeting of the new sales staff.
5. Please direct all questions to the dean or myself.
6. I will be happy to place that order for you myself.
7. My grandfather is determined to spend as much time with my brother and myself as possible.
8. The director arranged the lighting herself.
9. Carlson caught himself daydreaming during the president’s presentation.
CHECK YOUR WORK
Underline the reflexive pronoun in each sentence. Then, if the reflexive pronoun has been used correctly, circle the sentence number AND draw an arrow from the reflexive pronoun back to the subject it refers to.

1. The ACTORS amused themselves while waiting for the play to begin. CORRECT
2. Feel free to contact myself if you have any questions concerning our new computer system. INCORRECT – no reflexive needed
3. VISITING STUDENTS should help themselves to the free college brochures and daily planners available in the lobby. CORRECT
4. One chief sales consultant, either Witherspoon or myself will coordinate the meeting of the new sales staff. INCORRECT – no reflexive needed
5. Please direct all questions to the dean or myself. INCORRECT – no reflexive needed
6. I will be happy to place that order for you myself. CORRECT
7. My grandfather is determined to spend as much time with my brother and myself as possible. INCORRECT – no reflexive needed
8. The DIRECTOR arranged the lighting herself. CORRECT
9. CARLSON caught himself daydreaming during the president's presentation. CORRECT
CHECK YOUR WORK
Circle any errors made in the use of pronouns in the following sentences. Write the correct pronoun above the error you have circled. Write C in the margin if the sentence is already correct as it stands.

1. Pauline and **she** play on our office softball team. (OR She and Pauline play on our office softball team.)

2. **Dale and I** decided to walk instead of take a taxi.

3. Andy attends every seminar by the management specialist **whom** his boss recommended.

4. **You and I** should stop eating such greasy food.

5. Gloria is a better accountant than **I** (am).

6. Are there any messages for Richard or me? **CORRECT**

7. The drop in blood pressure puzzled them and us. **CORRECT**

8. The price of the professor’s book was more than **we** student could afford.

9. **He** and Pete have many more bills to worry about than **we** when we were in college.

10. Last spring when **my brother and I** went to Mexico, we almost never slept.
CHECK YOUR WORK
Circle any errors made in the use of pronouns in the following sentences. Write the correct pronoun above the error you have circled. Write C in the margin if the sentence is already correct as it stands.

11. One day **about five of my friends and I** went parasailing over the bay.

12. The director showed MaryEllen and **me** to our new office.

13. Max is the only person whom I could trust with my diary. **CORRECT**

14. What are Carol and **he** doing when they get home from their honeymoon in France?

15. Everyone knew it was she **who** had been elected employee of the year.

16. **Who** will take charge of ticket sales?

17. Why should **he** and Fran have to do all the setting-up?

18. No one could believe that the movie star **whom** we had seen was really that tall.

19. Often during the school year, **he and I** just liked to get away from the stress for a while.

20. **Daniel and I** enjoy doing the same things.