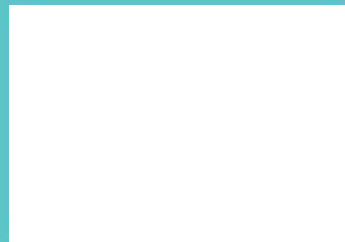


Personal Pronouns



What Are Pronouns?

Don't worry - this isn't an English lesson all about pronouns!

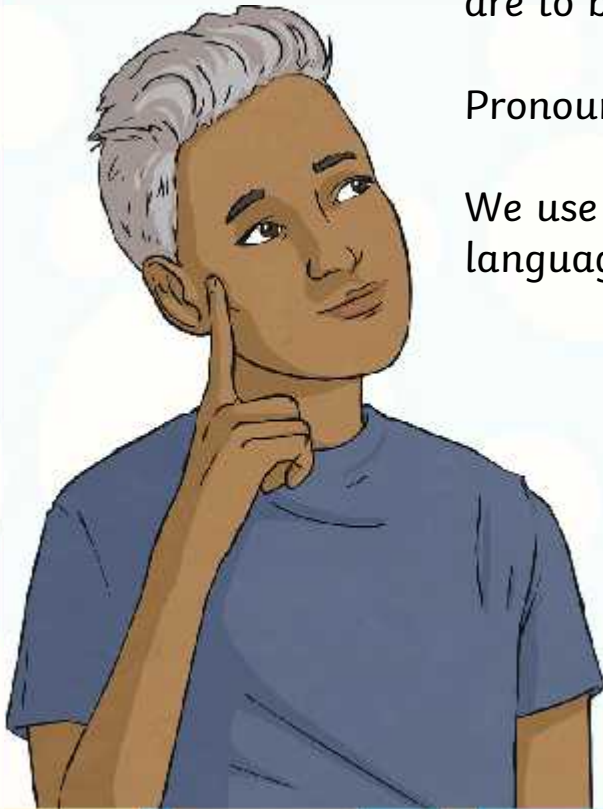
However, we do need to remind ourselves about what pronouns are to be able to discuss them a bit more in this session.

Pronouns replace nouns (that's people, places and things).

We use them every single day, in our spoken and written language, without really thinking much about it.

They help our speech or writing to flow better and if we didn't use them, we'd really notice how odd our language sounded.

Let's take a look at this school report and see how it would read without the use of any pronouns.



Using Pronouns

If Callie is a girl, we would expect this report to use the pronouns 'her' and 'she' instead of using her name throughout the entire report - and it would sound a lot better!

Pronouns and Gender

In the English language (and many other languages), we have gendered pronouns and gender-neutral pronouns. Can you sort these pronouns into two groups?

mine us its
 they he we
 her you their
 your him
 my I theirs
 them she hers

Gendered Pronouns (male or female pronouns)	Gender-Neutral Pronouns (can be used with any gender)
her	mine
him	they
he	its
she	us
hers	we
	you
	your
	my
	I
	theirs
	their
	them

How We Think and Feel about Ourselves

As human beings, we are all different.

We can choose what we wear, what sort of music we listen to and which sports we enjoy playing.

Who we are, our likes and dislikes, our hobbies and our personalities all make up our **identity**, which is how we think and feel about ourselves.

As individuals, we all have our own identity - and the right to identify in a way that feels right for us - and that can include our gender identity.

**How do you identify?
What are you like?
What makes you, you?**

I'm an animal-loving football fan, whose favourite food is mashed potato.

I'm a girl and like to wear sports clothes and trainers. My favourite colour is orange.



Our Identities

Some people identify as male.

Some people identify as female.

Some people identify as **non-binary** - that means they don't see themselves as either male or female; they identify as gender-neutral.

Some people identify as **gender-fluid** - that means their gender identity isn't fixed and may change over time.



The word **fluid** means having no fixed shape and can easily flow. So gender-fluid means flowing, moving or changing between genders.

The word **binary** means two.

Traditionally, people have been grouped into two gender groups - male or female.

So non-binary means not belonging to one of those two groups.

Pronoun Problems

People who identify as **male** can comfortably use the male pronouns - he, him and his.

People who identify as **female** can comfortably use the female pronouns - she, her and hers.

But what about people who are **non-binary** or **gender-fluid**?

As you can imagine, pronouns cause difficulties.

The great news is though, that people who don't feel comfortable using male or female pronouns can use the gender-neutral pronouns - they, them, their and theirs.



Which Pronoun?

Just as we all have the right to choose what we wear, what we eat and what we do for fun, we have the right to choose how we identify and which pronouns we prefer to use.

Sometimes when we meet someone for the first time, we might not know how they identify. We can't always know from looking at someone if they identify as male, female or something else.

If we receive an email from someone - or we're playing an online game with someone - and all we know is their name, we might not be able to tell which gender they identify with.

So what can we do?



My Pronouns

A lot of people introduce themselves with their **name** and then the **pronouns** they use.

Many people sign their emails or letters with their name and then their pronouns.

This is a great way to make sure that everyone can show **respect** for each other by knowing and using other people's preferred pronouns.

After all, we wouldn't meet someone, learn their name and then call them by another name - that would be strange and, quite frankly, pretty rude!

If we get someone's gender or pronouns wrong it can make them - and us - feel bad.

However, it's just a mistake. The best thing to do - like with all mistakes - is apologise, correct ourselves and move on with the conversation. Then, try our best not to make the mistake again.

Introduce Yourself!

Why don't we play a quick game right now.

Let's take turns to introduce ourselves, sharing our **names**, the **pronouns** we use and a **random fact** about ourselves.

Your random fact can be as wonderful and wacky as you like!

Even if you think you know everyone pretty well, you might learn something new about them today.

Have fun!



