



## Pronouns

Used in place of object or person words

There are many types of pronoun, each serving a different purpose. *Some* common pronouns are:

he / she / you / me / they / it / him / her

In conversation or written work, if we did not use pronouns, we would have to keep repeating the same nouns, for example:

### **Without pronouns**

“The girl is eating cake and the girl is enjoying the cake”

### **With pronouns**

“The girl is eating cake and **she** is enjoying **it**”

Some children can have difficulty with pronouns, for example they may refer to all people as “he” or all people as “she” regardless of their gender. Some children mix “him” and “her” and others do not use pronouns at all.

## How can adults teach pronouns?

### Model and emphasise

- As you are out and about and talking to your child, emphasise pronouns e.g. “SHE is pushing the trolley” / “I can see a boy... HE is riding a bike” / “I am having a lovely walk with YOU” / “Oooh! THEY are having a picnic”.
- Whilst looking in books, magazines or at posters, model pronouns to your child e.g. “Look at HIM...HE has brown hair” / “SHE is jumping on the bed” / “Look at HER...SHE is smiling”.
- If your child uses the wrong pronoun, simply model the correct one emphasising where possible e.g. “Yes. HE is drinking water”.
- Look at photos or videos of family members and talk about them e.g. “Grandad is watering the plants. HE got wet”.

### Try a structured activity

Focus structured tasks using only a few pronouns at a time. For example, start with; HE, SHE, THEY.

Please find attached:

- Action pictures

These pictures can be used during a 1:1 or small group activity. Whilst playing a tabletop game, each player could choose a picture, in turn and comment on it.

Adults should first model a sentence or phrase using one of the pictures, emphasising the pronoun e.g. “SHE is riding a bike” / “THEY are playing football”.

You could also spread the action pictures across the table or floor. Try asking your child e.g. “Show me HE is running” / “Show me SHE is reading”. See if your child points to the correct person.

Please also find attached:

- Picture of boy and girl (he, she)
  - Pictures of everyday items
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- Begin by ensuring your child knows the difference between boy and girl. Look at pictures in books or magazines and talk about family members. Keep it simple and tell your child who is a boy and who is a girl.
  - Place the 'boy and girl' picture in front of your child. Point to the boy and remind your child the boy is a HE. Then point to the girl and remind your child the girl is a SHE.
  - Use the pictures of 'everyday items' – cut them out and start by telling your child you are going to share the items between the boy and the girl. Encourage your child to respond by saying 'HE does' or 'SHE does' before giving the item to the correct person e.g. ask your child "who wants the cake?" / "who wants the cup" – let your child decide and place the item next to the HE/SHE picture.
  - Try later using the same resources in a different way. Use the pictures of 'everyday items' and take it in turns with your child to give the boy or girl an object followed by a short phrase such as "SHE has the grapes" / "HE has the book".
  - You could later model longer phrases and sentences such as "I am giving cake to the girl...SHE has the cake" / "This is the boy... HE has the pen".



Making up stories and characters can also be fun. Suggest your child makes up a short story and draws or describes some of the characters from their story.

Check that your child is using the correct pronouns and ask questions if your child can cope with this. As your child talks in longer sentences, he/she is likely to make occasional errors. Continue to support by modelling the correct language as appropriate.

You can also find attached:

- Picture of boy *with* girl (they)
- Point to the boy and girl and tell your child that THEY are together.
- Use the 'everyday items' pictures again to place next to They (boy and girl.) Model language again emphasising the pronoun e.g. "THEY have the banana" / "THEY have the book and the pen".
- You could later add in and include the He/She pictures previously used to check that your child can correctly use he, she or they. The adult should place one of the everyday items on either he, she or they and ask your child to tell you who has the item.



## Other ideas

To teach pronouns to a large group or as a whole class activity:

- The adult could first sit on a chair in front of the group and say, “I am sitting on MY chair”.
- The adult could then choose a boy to sit on the chair and ask the group – “Who is sitting on IT now?”
- The children are likely to respond with a name, to which the adult could then repeat but with the pronoun e.g. “Yes, it’s Tom. HE is sitting on the chair”. Try again, this time asking a girl to sit on the chair.
- Next introduce more chairs, ask 3 or 4 children to sit on them. This time, if the children respond by naming each person on the chair, the adult could say “Yes you are right. When there are lots of people, it is easier to say THEY”.



Try using puppets (bought or made from socks):

- Be clear that one puppet is a girl and the other is a boy as you present to your child(ren).
- Adults should have a basket of play food to hand. Choose a piece of food and ask e.g. “Who is going to eat the banana?”.

- As the child(ren) point to a puppet, the adult would model “HE is” / “SHE is”.



- Some children may enjoy feeding the puppets. The adult could then say “HE/SHE is eating the banana”.

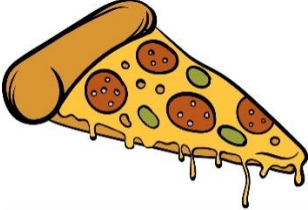








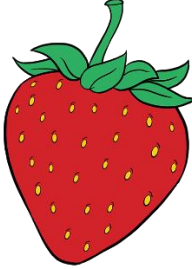
## **Supporting your child to generalise pronouns**

**Remember;** even when your child has worked hard to use pronouns correctly within activities, it will still take a while for him/her to use them correctly, at *all* times, in conversation. Consider the following tips:

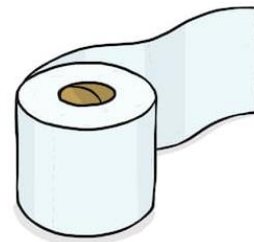
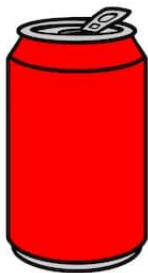
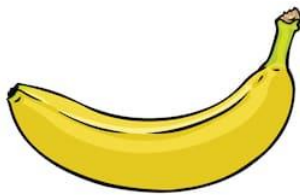
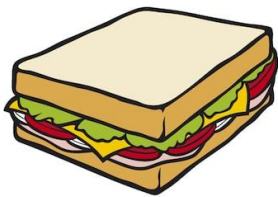
- Choose a specific time that you will focus on pronouns in conversation. This way, you will not *constantly* be drawing attention to the errors your child makes. As your child practises over time and starts to use pronouns correctly more often, you can increase this to 2 or 3 times per day.
- Try initially correcting your child by emphasising (repeat what your child said but with the correct pronoun).
- You could later move on to question your child e.g. “HE is eating?” This will prompt your child to think again and restate.
- Praise your child every time you notice the correct pronoun is used to build confidence and awareness. Some children are motivated by reward charts. They can then visually see the progress made.
- You could later go back and try the same activities, but with ‘Lady’ (she) and ‘Man’ (he).



Everyday items

Everyday items





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Action pictures

THEY



HE



SHE



THEY

HE

SHE



THEY

HE

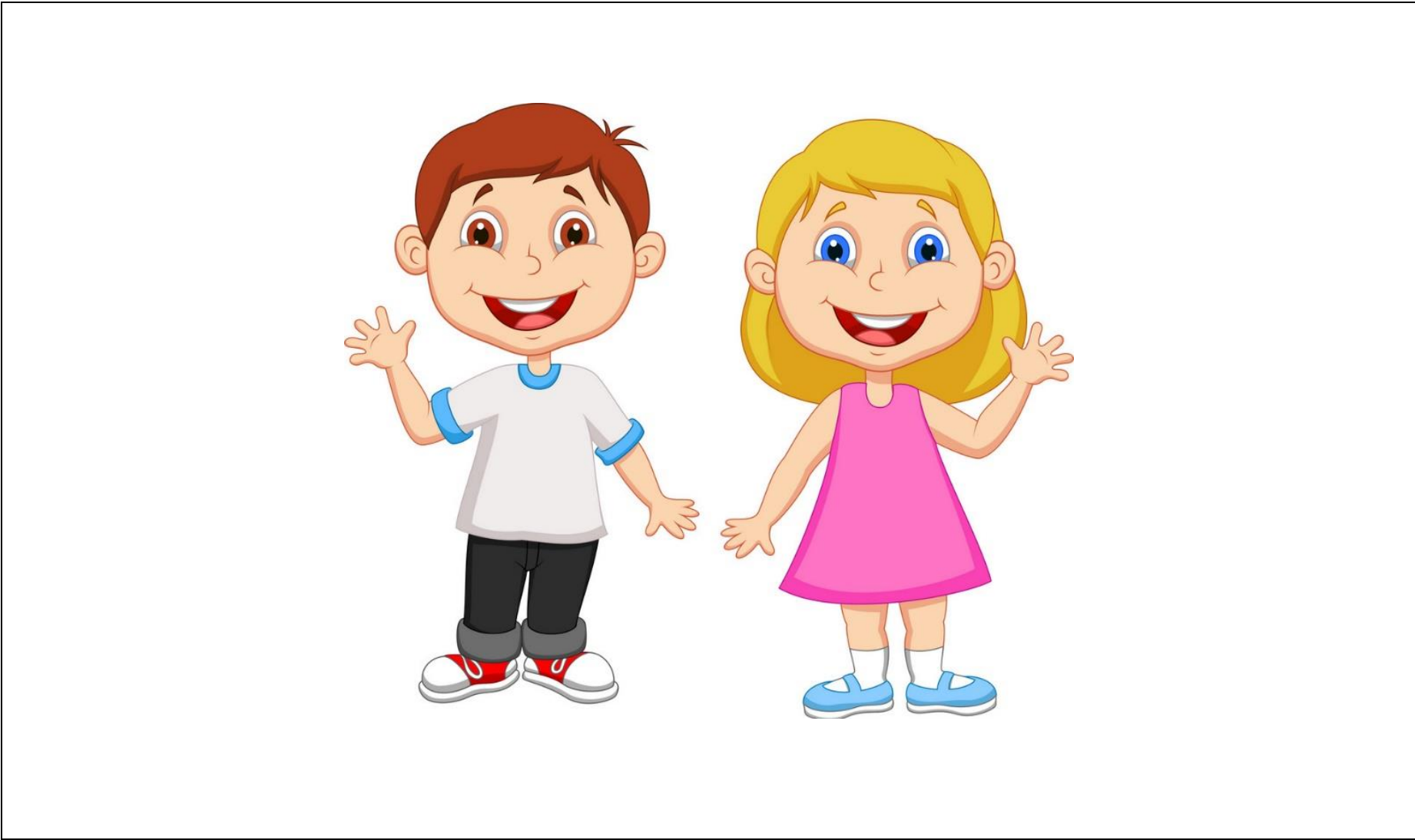
SHE



He / She (boy and girl)



They



He / She (Man and Lady)

