Pronoun Detective

Find references that are clear or vague.

5.L.GC.1.45 "Usage: Recognize and correct vague pronoun references. (Continue)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

CLEAR REFERENCE

A pronoun has a clear reference when you can tell exactly which noun it names. One noun makes sense as the pronoun's match.

Nora tuned the violin, then she played it.

VAGUE REFERENCE

A pronoun has a vague reference when it could name more than one noun, or when its match is unclear. The reader cannot tell exactly what the pronoun means.

The lantern stood near the backpack until it fell.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle CLEAR or VAGUE for each sentence; for Part 2, pick two items and explain what noun each pronoun names or why the pronoun could name more than one noun.

1. Darius packed the helmets after he cleaned them. CLEAR VAGUE

2. The squirrel watched the rabbit as it ran under the fence. CLEAR VAGUE

3. Ava handed Lily the paintbrush because she needed it. CLEAR VAGUE

4. The campers loaded the canoe, and they tied it to the dock. CLEAR VAGUE

5. Omar solved the puzzle, and Ms. Chen thanked him. CLEAR VAGUE

6. The scientist labeled the jars before she stored them. CLEAR VAGUE

7. Ben told Carlos that he had won the contest. CLEAR VAGUE

8. The eagle flew over the cliffs until it reached its nest. CLEAR VAGUE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

For Part 3, write one new sentence with a CLEAR pronoun reference and one new sentence with a VAGUE pronoun reference.

CLEAR _____

VAGUE _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite this sentence so the pronoun reference is clear: After Maya called Zoe, she sent the photo.

ANSWER KEY

Pronoun Detective

GRADE 5 · 5.L.GC.1.45

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Darius packed the helmets after he cleaned them.	**CLEAR**	He refers to Darius, and them refers to the helmets.
2	The squirrel watched the rabbit as it ran under the fence.	**VAGUE**	It could refer to the squirrel or the rabbit.
3	Ava handed Lily the paintbrush because she needed it.	**VAGUE**	She could refer to Ava or Lily.
4	The campers loaded the canoe, and they tied it to the dock.	**CLEAR**	They refers to the campers, and it refers to the canoe.
5	Omar solved the puzzle, and Ms. Chen thanked him.	**CLEAR**	Him clearly refers to Omar.
6	The scientist labeled the jars before she stored them.	**CLEAR**	She refers to the scientist, and them refers to the jars.
7	Ben told Carlos that he had won the contest.	**VAGUE**	He could refer to Ben or Carlos.
8	The eagle flew over the cliffs until it reached its nest.	**CLEAR**	It refers to the eagle, and its refers to the eagle.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **CLEAR**: Tanya washed the bicycle, then she parked it in the garage.
- **VAGUE**: The baker spoke to the cashier before she opened the store.

Challenge: After Maya called Zoe, Maya sent the photo.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, students should name the noun each pronoun refers to in a CLEAR item or name both possible nouns in a VAGUE item. Accept varied Part 3 sentences when the references match the chosen categories.