Pronoun Detective Sort

Find references readers can follow.

6.L.GC.1.45 "Usage: Recognize and correct vague pronoun references. (Master)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

CLEAR REFERENCE

A clear pronoun points to one specific noun. Readers know exactly who or what the pronoun means.

The dolphin splashed its tail beside the boat.

VAGUE REFERENCE

A vague pronoun could point to more than one noun or to no noun. Readers cannot tell exactly who or what it means.

When Leah greeted Devon, he waved.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each sentence and circle CLEAR or VAGUE.

1. The turtle pulled its head into its shell. CLEAR VAGUE
2. When Aisha spoke to Nora, she smiled. CLEAR VAGUE
3. The seedlings needed water, so Mr. Bell gave it to them. CLEAR VAGUE
4. They decided to cancel the game. CLEAR VAGUE
5. Marcus put the lantern beside the gate because it was broken. CLEAR VAGUE
6. The painter cleaned her brushes after the lesson. CLEAR VAGUE
7. The club held meetings on Fridays before the twins joined it. CLEAR VAGUE
8. The astronauts checked their helmets before they entered the capsule. 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

Write one sentence with a CLEAR pronoun reference and one sentence with a VAGUE pronoun reference. Label each sentence.

CLEAR _____

VAGUE _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite this sentence so it clearly shows that Kai sent the message and Kai deleted the message: When Kai texted Rowan, he said the schedule had changed. Then he deleted it.

ANSWER KEY

Pronoun Detective Sort

GRADE 6 · 6.L.GC.1.45

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The turtle pulled its head into its shell.	**CLEAR**	Both uses of its clearly refer to the turtle.
2	When Aisha spoke to Nora, she smiled.	**VAGUE**	She could refer to Aisha or Nora.
3	The seedlings needed water, so Mr. Bell gave it to them.	**CLEAR**	It refers to water, and them refers to the seedlings.
4	They decided to cancel the game.	**VAGUE**	They has no named antecedent.
5	Marcus put the lantern beside the gate because it was broken.	**VAGUE**	It could refer to the lantern or the gate.
6	The painter cleaned her brushes after the lesson.	**CLEAR**	Her refers to the painter.
7	The club held meetings on Fridays before the twins joined it.	**CLEAR**	It refers to the club.
8	The astronauts checked their helmets before they entered the capsule.	**CLEAR**	Their and they both refer to the astronauts.

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**: The violinist tuned her instrument before she performed.
- **VAGUE**: When Omar met Luis at the library, he was carrying a backpack.

Challenge: Kai sent Rowan a message saying that the schedule had changed. Then Kai deleted the message.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, students should name the antecedent for a CLEAR sentence or identify the possible antecedents or missing antecedent for a VAGUE sentence. Accept varied Part 3 sentences when each category is correctly shown.