Pronoun Match Hunt

Sort sentences by pronoun agreement.

8.LU.1.B "Recognize and use pronoun-antecedent agreement, including indefinite, reflexive, and relative pronouns, when speaking and writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

PRONOUNS AGREE

A pronoun agrees with its actual antecedent, which need not be the sentence subject. A possessive pronoun identifies the possessor; a reflexive pronoun refers back to the same person or thing. A relative-clause verb must agree with its antecedent.

One squirrel hides its acorns.

PRONOUNS DO NOT AGREE

Check the intended reference before judging agreement. A pronoun may need changing if it does not match its antecedent; a relative-clause verb may need changing if it does not agree.

The sailors raised himself onto the dock.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each sentence, then circle MATCHES or MISMATCHES.

1.	Each musician tuned his or her instrument.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
2.	The cousins blamed themselves for the mess.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
3.	The folders that was on the desk belong to Mia.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
4.	Neither dog shook itself dry.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
5.	Every camper packed our flashlight. (The writer means each camper packed that camper's own flashlight; our is intended to refer to every camper.)	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
6.	The robot repaired themselves.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
7.	The poems that were displayed won prizes.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES
8.	Each painter cleaned ourselves after class.	MATCHES	MISMATCHES

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 new sentence that MATCHES and one new sentence that MISMATCHES.

MATCHES _____

MISMATCHES _____

CHALLENGE

Intended meaning: each librarian placed that librarian's own book on the cart. Revise "Every librarian placed our book on the cart" to express that meaning, then explain the reference. Also explain when the original wording could be grammatical.

ANSWER KEY

Pronoun Match Hunt

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Each musician tuned his or her instrument.	**MATCHES**	Each is singular, so his or her correctly refers to each musician.
2	The cousins blamed themselves for the mess.	**MATCHES**	Cousins is plural, and themselves is the matching plural reflexive pronoun.
3	The folders that was on the desk belong to Mia.	**MISMATCHES**	That refers to the plural noun folders, so the verb should be were, not was.
4	Neither dog shook itself dry.	**MATCHES**	Neither dog is singular, and itself is singular.
5	Every camper packed our flashlight. (The writer means each camper packed that camper's own flashlight; our is intended to refer to every camper.)	**MISMATCHES**	Under the stated intended reference, our incorrectly introduces a first-person group. Use his or her flashlight, their own flashlight, or each camper's own flashlight. Without that context, our could grammatically identify another group of owners.
6	The robot repaired themselves.	**MISMATCHES**	Robot is singular, so the reflexive pronoun should be itself.
7	The poems that were displayed won prizes.	**MATCHES**	That refers to the plural noun poems, so were is correct.
8	Each painter cleaned ourselves after class.	**MISMATCHES**	Each painter is singular, but ourselves is plural.

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)

- **MATCHES**: Neither kitten found its toy.
- **MISMATCHES**: The dancers congratulated himself after the show.

Challenge: Every librarian placed their own book on the cart. Singular their refers to each librarian. His or her own book is also acceptable. The original wording could be grammatical if our refers to a separate group of people whose book the librarians handled; it does not express the stated intended ownership.

Items 1, 2, 4, and 7 are MATCHES. Items 3, 5, 6, and 8 are MISMATCHES; accept varied correct revisions in Parts 2 and 3. Judge possessives by their intended possessor, not the grammatical subject alone. Accept justified coherent reference and standard singular they/their. Rule/sample reflexive errors are unambiguous: sailors/dancers require themselves, not himself. Under the explicit ownership context, item 5 requires revision; without it, external group ownership is grammatical.