

The image shows the cover of a spiral-bound notebook. The cover is a light tan or beige color with a subtle, repeating pattern of faint, stylized floral or geometric motifs. The spiral binding is visible on the left side, consisting of a series of metal rings. The text is centered on the cover in a serif font.

The Book of Grammar
Lesson Six

Sophomore Honors English
Mr. McBride

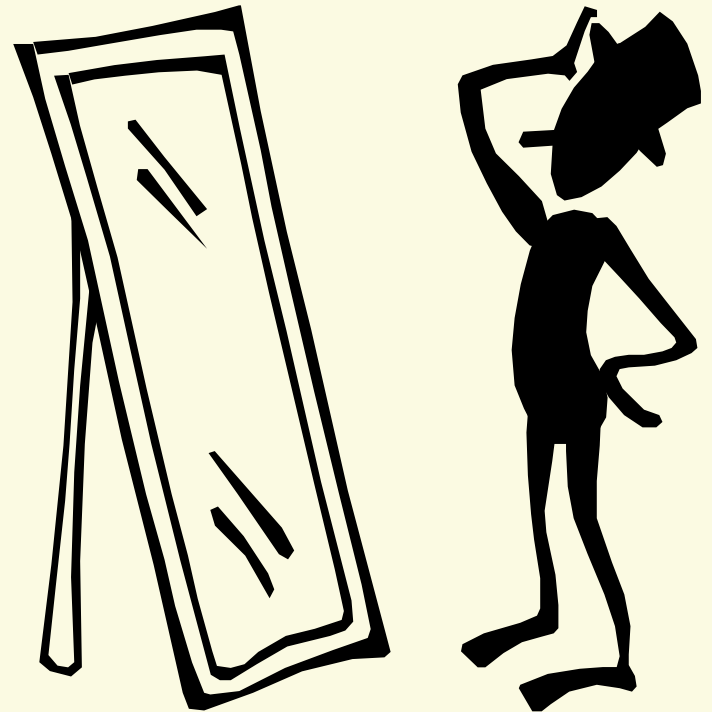
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But, after lesson five, don't I now know everything about pronouns?

- Did each of the planes keep *its* place in the formation or did each of the planes *their* place in the formation?



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What you should know by the end of Lesson Six:

- When to use the *plural* and when to use the *singular* case of a pronoun

Note

Remember that the “antecedent” of a pronoun is the word that the pronoun is replacing or referring back to.



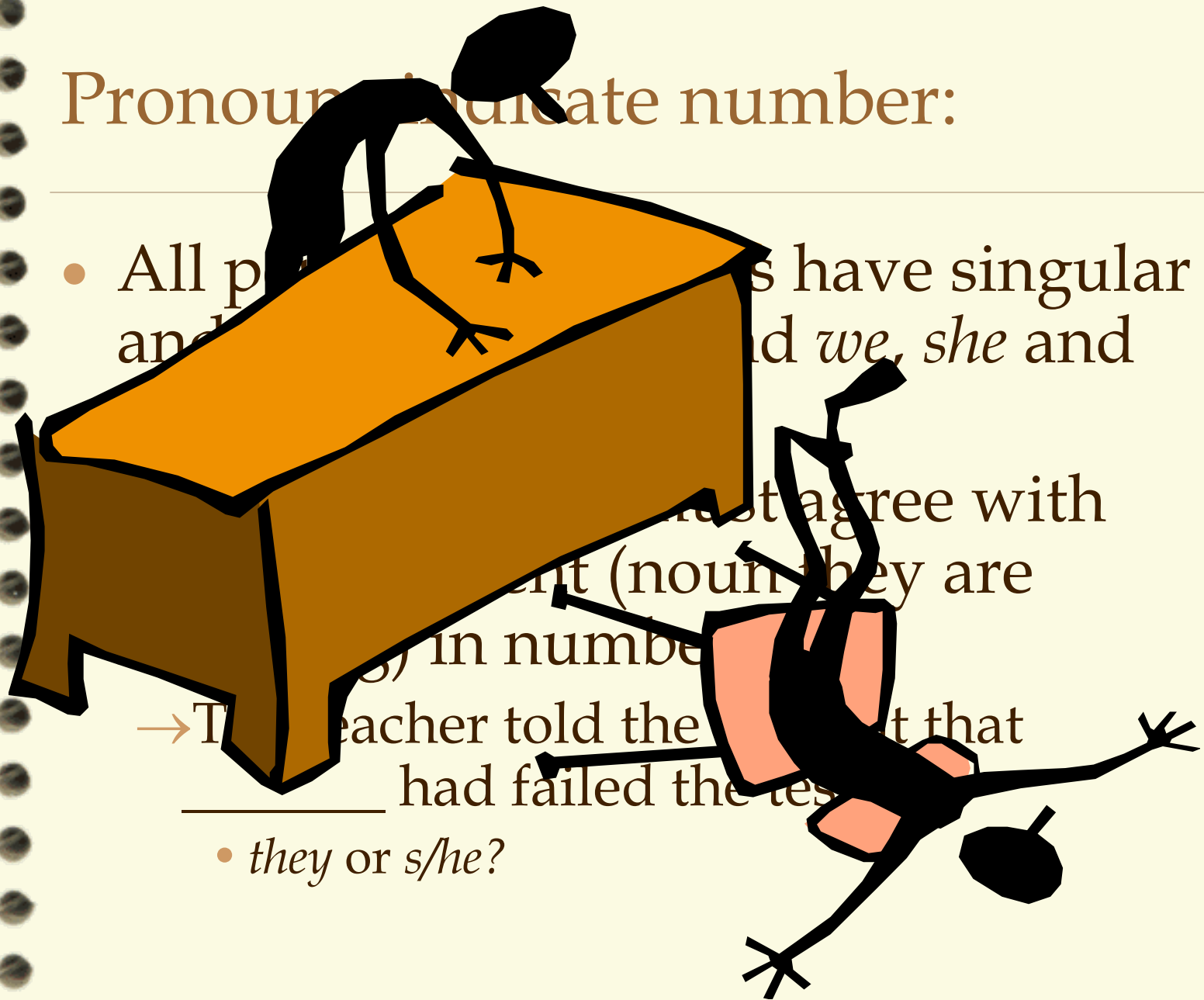
Pronoun indicate number:

- All pronouns have singular and plural forms. *we, she* and

They must agree with the subject (noun they are referring to) in number.

→ The teacher told the student that _____ had failed the test.

- *they* or *s/he*?



Gender Ambiguity

- English lacks a third person singular personal pronoun that is not gender-specific. In speech, people often make up for this by using “their” when the gender is not clear – “Who left *their* backpack?”
- You must be careful not to do this in formal writing – “Who left *his or her* backpack?”

Examples of personal pronoun problems: Agreement in Number

- Does *their* or *her* go in the following blanks?
- The student forgot _____ homework.
 - Student, the antecedent, is a singular noun, and must be referred to with a singular possessive pronoun: *her*.
- Who left _____ backpack?
 - Only one student could have left her backpack.



Examples of pronoun problems: Agreement in Number

- “Everybody in the class forgot _____ homework.”
 - *their* or *his* or *her*?
 - *Everybody* is singular, and must be referred to with a singular possessive pronoun.




Singular and Plural Antecedents

- Singular: the following words are singular
 - another, anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, little, much, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, other, somebody, someone, something
 - “*Little* was known about the affair, but it was enough to ruin his reputation.”
- Plural: the following words are plural
 - both, few, many, others, several
 - “*Few* of the students were ready to take their test.”

Ambiguously Numbered Antecedents

- The following words can be either singular or plural:
 - all, any, more, most, none, some
- For words that can be singular or plural, look at what they refer to:
 - Some of the cows escaped, and they crossed the road.
 - *Some* refers to cows, which is plural.
 - Some of the milk spilled, and it stained the tablecloth.
 - *Some* refers to milk, which is singular.

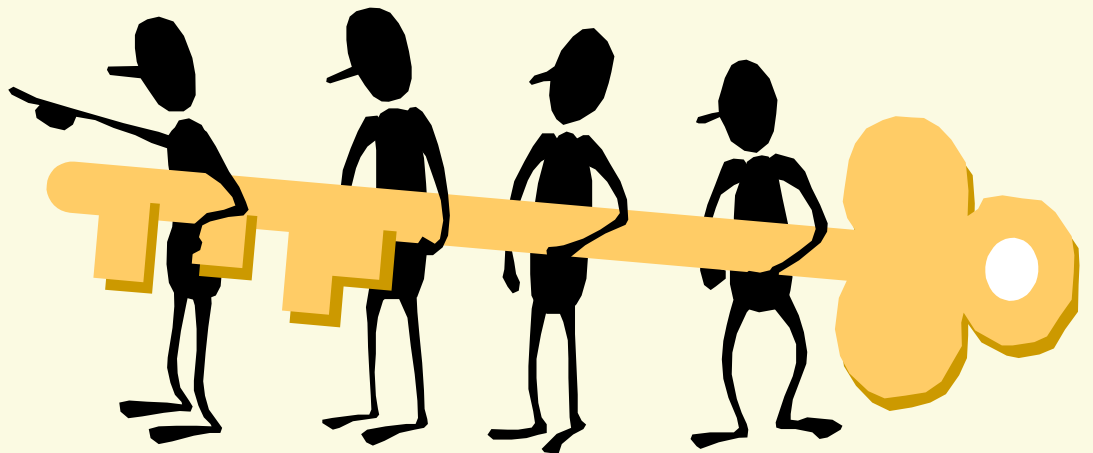


What you should know by the end of this lesson:

- When to use the *plural* and when to use the *singular* case of a pronoun

So do you know the answer to these questions now?

- Did everyone do *his* homework or did everyone do *their* homework?



A spiral-bound notebook with a light beige, textured cover. The spiral binding is on the left side. The text is centered on the page.

The end of Lesson Six

Quiz on Friday, February 15