

3. A dead chief was carried through his fishing village by friends and relatives bearing his body in a large pink wooden replica of a fish.
4. The family of a wealthy man who greatly admired cars buried him in a coffin shaped like a Mercedes car.
5. Although a few of these fantasy coffins have been displayed in museums, most of them end up buried in the ground.

CHAPTER 9

Pronouns: Case and Reference

PRONOUN CASE

9a What does “case” mean?

Case applies in different ways to PRONOUNS and to NOUNS. For pronouns, case refers to three pronoun forms: the **subjective** (pronoun as a SUBJECT), the **objective** (pronoun as an OBJECT), and the **possessive** (pronouns used in possessive constructions). For nouns, case refers to only one noun form: the possessive. (For help in using apostrophes in the possessive case, see Chapter 26.)

9b What are personal pronouns?

Personal pronouns refer to persons or things. Box 9-1 shows the case forms of personal pronouns (subjective, objective, and possessive), in both the singular and the plural.

Many of the most difficult questions about pronoun case concern *who/whom* and *whoever/whomever*. For a full discussion of how to choose between them, see 9g.

BOX 9-1 SUMMARY



Case forms of personal pronouns

	Subjective	Objective	Possessive
SINGULAR	I, you, he, she, it	me, you, him, her, it	mine, yours, his, hers, its
PLURAL	we, you, they	us, you, them	ours, yours, theirs

9c How do pronouns work with case?

In the subjective case, pronouns function as SUBJECTS.

We were going to get married. [*We* is the subject.]

John and **I** wanted an inexpensive band for our wedding. [*I* is part of the compound subject *John and I*.]

He and I found an affordable one-person band. [*He and I* is the compound subject.]

In the objective case, pronouns function as OBJECTS.

We saw **him** perform in a public park. [*Him* is the direct object.]

We showed **him** our budget. [*Him* is the indirect object.]

He wrote down what we wanted and shook hands with **us**. [*Us* is the object of the preposition *with*.]

In the possessive case, nouns and pronouns usually indicate ownership or imply a relationship.

The **musician's contract** was very fair. [The possessive noun *musician's* implies a type of ownership.]

His contract was very fair. [The possessive pronoun *his* implies a type of ownership.]

The **musicians' problems** stem from playing cheap instruments. [The possessive noun *musicians'* implies a type of relationship.]

Their problems stem from playing with cheap instruments. [The possessive pronoun *their* implies a type of relationship.]

Sometimes, however, the notion of ownership or relationship calls for a major stretch of the imagination in possessive constructions. In such cases, look for the following pattern: noun + the *s* sound + noun. This means that two nouns work together, one of which does the possessing and the other of which is possessed.

The **musician's arrival** was eagerly anticipated. [The musician neither owns the arrival nor has a relationship with the arrival. Instead, the pattern noun + the *s* sound + noun is operating.]



ALERT: Never use an apostrophe in personal pronouns: *ours*, *yours*, *its*, *his*, *hers*, *theirs* (26c). 

9d Which case is correct when *and* connects pronouns?

When *and* connects pronouns, or nouns and pronouns, the result is a **compound construction**. Compounding, which means “putting parts together in a whole,” has no effect on case. Always use pronouns in the subjective case when they serve as the subjects of a sentence; also, always use pronouns in the objective case when they serve as objects in a sentence. Never mix cases.

COMPOUND PRONOUN SUBJECT **He and I** saw the solar eclipse. [*He and I* is a compound subject.]

COMPOUND PRONOUN OBJECT That eclipse astonished **him and me**. [*Him and me* is a compound object.]

When you're unsure of the case of a pronoun, use the "Troyka test for case" in Box 9-2. In this four-step test, you drop some of the words from your sentence so that you can tell which case sounds correct.

When pronouns are in a **PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE**, they are always in the objective case. (That is, a pronoun is always the **OBJECT** of the preposition.) This rule holds whether the pronouns are singular or plural. You can also use the test in Box 9-2 to check what is correct.

NO Ms. Lester gave an assignment **to Sam and I**. [The prepositional phrase, which starts with the preposition *to*, cannot use the subjective-case pronoun *I*.]

YES Ms. Lester gave an assignment **to Sam and me**. [The prepositional phrase, which starts with the preposition *to*, calls for the objective-case pronoun *me*.]

Be especially careful when one or more pronouns follow the preposition *between*.

NO The dispute is **between Thomas and I**. [The prepositional phrase, which starts with the preposition *between*, cannot use the subjective-case pronoun *I*.]

YES The dispute is **between Thomas and me**. [The prepositional phrase, which starts with the preposition *between*, calls for the objective-case pronoun *me*.]

EXERCISE 9-1 Underline the correct pronoun from each pair in parentheses. For help, consult 9c and 9d.

EXAMPLE Bill and (I, me) noticed two young swimmers being pulled out to sea.

(1) The two teenagers caught in the rip current waved and hollered at Bill and (I, me). (2) The harder (they, them) both swam toward shore, the further away the undercurrent pulled them from the beach. (3) The yellow banners had warned Bill and (I, me) that a dangerous rip current ran beneath the water. (4) I yelled at Bill, "Between you and (I, me), (we, us) have to save them!" (5) (He and I, Him and me) both ran and dove into the crashing waves.

9e How do I match cases with appositives?

You can match cases with **APPPOSITIVES** by putting pronouns and nouns in the same case as the word or words the appositive is renaming. Whenever you're unsure about whether to use the subjective or objective case, use the "Troyka test for case" in Box 9-2 to get the answer.

BOX 9-2 SUMMARY



Troyka test for case

Subjective Case

STEP 1: Write the sentence twice, once using the subjective case, and once using the objective case.

STEP 2: Cross out enough words to isolate the element you are questioning.

~~Janet and me~~ learned about the moon.
~~Janet and I~~ learned about the moon.

STEP 3: Omit the crossed-out words and read each sentence aloud to determine which one sounds right.

NO **Me** learned about the moon. [This doesn't sound right.]

YES **I** learned about the moon. [This sounds right, so the subjective case is correct.]

STEP 4: Select the correct version and restore the words you crossed out.

Janet and I learned about the moon.

Objective Case

STEP 1: Write the sentence twice, once using the subjective case, and once using the objective case.

STEP 2: Cross out enough words to isolate the element you are questioning.

The astronomer taught ~~Janet and I~~ about the moon.
 The astronomer taught ~~Janet and me~~ about the moon.

STEP 3: Omit the crossed-out words and read each sentence aloud to determine which one sounds right.

NO The astronomer taught **I** about the moon. [This doesn't sound right.]

YES The astronomer taught **me** about the moon. [This sounds right, so the objective case is correct.]

STEP 4: Select the correct version and restore the words you crossed out.

The astronomer taught **Janet and me** about the moon.

- **We** (not *Us*) tennis players practice hard. [Here, the subjective-case pronoun *we* matches the noun *tennis players*, which is the subject of this sentence.]
- The winners, **she and I** (not *her and me*), advanced to the finals. [The subjective-case pronouns *she and I* match the noun *winners*, which is the subject of this sentence.]

- The coach tells **us** (not *we*) tennis players to practice hard. [The objective-case pronoun *us* matches the noun *tennis players*, which is the object in this sentence.]
- The crowd cheered the winners, **her and me** (not *she and I*). [The objective-case pronouns *her and me* match the noun *winners*, which is the object in this sentence.]

9f How does case work after linking verbs?

A pronoun that comes after a LINKING VERB either renames the SUBJECT or shows possession. In both constructions, always use a pronoun in the subjective case.

- The contest winner was **I** (not *me*). [*Was* is a linking verb. *I* renames the subject, which is the noun *contest winner*, so the subjective-case pronoun *I* is correct.]
- The prize is **mine**. [*Is* is a linking verb. *Mine* shows possession, so the possessive-case pronoun *mine* is correct.]

EXERCISE 9-2 Underline the correct pronoun of each pair in parentheses. For help, consult 9c through 9f.

EXAMPLE Dad, because your wedding anniversary is next week, (we, us) sisters decided to get you and Mother a memorable gift.

(1) Anne and (me, I) have given this a great deal of thought, especially in light of the conversations you and Mom have had with us about stress at work. (2) You and Mom have always insisted that (we, us) children save money for special occasions, and Anne asked (me, I) if she and I could use our savings for a weekend getaway for you as the perfect anniversary gift. (3) It is (she and I, she and me) who most worry about how (you and her, you and she) are doing, so Anne and (I, me) think this trip will benefit everyone. (4) In fact, Dad, Mom mentioned to Anne last week how much she'd love for you and (she, her) to spend more time together. (5) It would make Anne and (me, I) feel great to do something nice for you two.

9g When should I use *who*, *whoever*, *whom*, and *whomever*?

The pronouns *who* and *whoever* are in the SUBJECTIVE CASE. The pronouns *whom* and *whomever* are in the OBJECTIVE CASE.

Informal spoken English tends to blur distinctions between *who* and *whom*, so with these words some people can't rely entirely on what "sounds right." Whenever you're unsure of whether to use *who* or *whoever* or to use *whom* or *whomever*, apply the "Troyka test for case." If you see *who* or

whoever, test by temporarily substituting *he*, *she*, or *they*. If you see *whom* or *whomever*, test by temporarily substituting *him*, *her*, or *them*.

- My father tells the same story to **whoever/whomever** he meets.
- My father tells the same story to **she/her**. [Note: When substituting, stop at *she/her*. The objective case *whomever* is correct because the sentence works when you substitute **her** for *whoever/whomever*. In contrast, the subjective case *whoever* is wrong because the sentence doesn't work when you substitute **she** for *whoever/whomever*.]
- My father tells the same story to **whomever** he meets.

The most reliable variation of the test for *who*, *whom*, *whoever*, *whomever* calls for you to add a word before the substituted word set. In this example, the word *if* is added:

- I wondered **who/whom** would vote for Ms. Wallace.
- I wondered if **he/if him** would vote for Ms. Wallace. [The subjective case *who* is correct because the sentence works when you substitute **if he** for *who/whom*. In contrast, the objective case *whom* is wrong because the sentence doesn't work when you substitute **if him** for *who/whom*.]
- I wondered **who** would vote for Ms. Wallace.

Another variation of the test for *who*, *whom*, *whoever*, *whomever* calls for you to invert the word order in the test sentence.

- Babies **who/whom** mothers cuddle grow faster and feel happier.
- Mothers cuddle **they/them**. [Note: When substituting, stop at *they/them*. By inverting the word order in the sentence—that is, by temporarily using mothers as the subject of the sentence—and substituting *they/them* for *who/whom*, you see that *them* is correct. Therefore, the objective case *whom* is correct.]
- Babies **whom** mothers cuddle grow faster and feel happier.

At the beginning or end of a question, use *who* if the question is about the subject and *whom* if the question is about the object. To determine which case to use, recast the question into a statement, substituting *he* or *him* (or *she* or *her*).

- **Who** watched the space shuttle liftoff? [*He* (not *Him*) *watched the space shuttle liftoff* uses the subjective case, so *who* is correct.]
- Ted admires **whom**? [*Ted admires him* (not *he*) uses the objective case, so *whom* is correct.]
- **Whom** does Ted admire? [*Ted admires him* (not *he*) uses the objective case, so *whom* is correct.]
- To **whom** does Ted speak about becoming an astronaut? [*Ted speaks to them* (not *they*) uses the objective case, so *whom* is correct.]

EXERCISE 9-3 Underline the correct pronoun of each pair in parentheses. For help, consult 9g.

(1) Women (who, whom) raise a family do as much work at home as at their jobs. (2) In North American society, it is still women (who, whom) cook dinner, clean the house, check the children's homework, read to them, and put them to bed. (3) Nevertheless, self-esteem runs high, some researchers have found, in many women on (who, whom) a family depends for both wage earning and child rearing. (4) Compared with women (who, whom) pursue careers but have no children, those (who, whom) handle a double shift experience less anxiety and depression, according to the research. (5) Perhaps the reason for this finding is that those for (who, whom) the extra paycheck helps pay the bills feel pride and accomplishment when they rise to the challenge.

9h What pronoun case comes after *than* or *as*?

When *than* or *as* is part of a sentence of comparison, the sentence sometimes doesn't include words to complete the comparison outright. Rather, by omitting certain words, the sentence implies the comparison. For example, *My two-month-old Saint Bernard is larger than most full-grown dogs [are]* doesn't need the final word *are*.

When a pronoun follows *than* or *as*, the meaning of the sentence depends entirely on whether the pronoun is in the subjective case or the objective case. Here are two sentences that convey two very different messages, depending on whether the subjective case (*I*) or the objective case (*me*) is used.

1. My sister loved that dog more **than I**.
2. My sister loved that dog more **than me**.

In sentence 1, because *I* is in the subjective case, the sentence means *My sister loved that dog more than I [loved it]*. In sentence 2, because *me* is in the objective case, the sentence means *My sister loved that dog more than [she loved] me*. In both situations, you can check whether you're using the correct case by supplying the implied words to see if they make sense.

9i How do pronouns work before infinitives?

MOST INFINITIVES consist of the SIMPLE FORMS of verbs that follow *to*: for example, *to laugh*, *to sing*, *to jump*, *to dance*. (A few exceptions occur when the *to* is optional: *My aunt helped the elderly man [to] cross the street*; and when the *to* is awkward: *My aunt watched the elderly man [to] get on the bus*.) For both the SUBJECTS of infinitives and the OBJECTS of infinitives, use the objective case.

Our tennis coach expects **me to serve**. [Because the word *me* is the subject of the infinitive *to serve*, the objective-case pronoun is correct.]

Our tennis coach expects **him to beat me**. [Because the word *him* is the subject of the infinitive *to beat*, and *me* is the object of the infinitive, the objective-case pronoun is correct.]

9j How do pronouns work with *-ing* words?

When a verb's *-ing* form functions as a NOUN, it's called a GERUND: *Brisk walking is excellent exercise*. When a noun or PRONOUN comes before a gerund, the POSSESSIVE CASE is required: *His brisk walking built up his stamina*. In contrast, when a verb's *-ing* form functions as a MODIFIER, it requires the subjective case for the pronoun, not the possessive case: *He, walking briskly, caught up to me*.

Here are two sentences that convey different messages, depending entirely on whether a possessive comes before the *-ing* word.

1. The detective noticed the **man staggering**.
2. The detective noticed the **man's staggering**.

Sentence 1 means that the detective noticed the *man*; sentence 2 means that the detective noticed the *staggering*. The same distinction applies to pronouns: When *the man* is replaced by either *him* or *his*, the meaning is the same as in sentences 1 and 2.

1. The detective noticed **him staggering**.
2. The detective noticed **his staggering**.

In conversation, such distinctions are often ignored, but use them in ACADEMIC WRITING.

EXERCISE 9-4 Underline the correct pronoun of each pair in parentheses. For help, consult 9h through 9j.

EXAMPLE Few contemporaries of the most famous novelist of the Victorian era had careers as productive as (he, him).

(1) The reading public wanted (him, his) to continue spinning new tales for their enjoyment, and he managed to write forty-seven novels over a thirty-year career. (2) In his *Autobiography*, published near the end of his life, Anthony Trollope boasted that few people had led so full a life as (he, him). (3) His story begins with (him, his) landing a low-level civil service job that took him from his native England to Ireland and allowed (him, he) to view first-hand the terrible hardships facing the Irish people in the 1850s. (4) He absorbed what he saw so well that few people could depict Ireland better than (he, him). (5) Trollope's keen observations inspired (him, he) to write a series of novels about the Irish poor, each of which made him more popular as a writer.

9k What case should I use for *-self* pronouns?

Two types of pronouns end in *-self*: reflexive pronouns and intensive pronouns.

A **reflexive pronoun** reflects back on the subject, so it needs a subject in the sentence to be reflected back on. Without a subject, the reflexive pronoun cannot operate correctly.

The **detective** disguised **himself**. [The reflexive pronoun *himself* reflects back on the subject *detective*.]

Never use a reflexive pronoun to replace a personal pronoun in the subjective case.

NO My teammates and **myself** will vote for a team captain.

YES My teammates and **I** will vote for a team captain.

Also, never use a reflexive pronoun to replace a personal pronoun in the objective case. The only exception is when the object restates the subject.

NO That decision is up to my teammates and **myself**.

YES That decision is up to my teammates and **me**.

Intensive pronouns, which reflect back in the same way as reflexive pronouns, provide emphasis by making the message of the sentence more intense in meaning.

The detective felt that **his career itself** was at risk. [*Itself* intensifies the idea that the detective's career was at risk.]

PRONOUN REFERENCE

9l What is pronoun reference?

The word or group of words that a pronoun replaces is called its **antecedent**. In order for your writing to communicate its message clearly, each pronoun must relate precisely to an antecedent.

I knew a **woman**, lovely in **her** bones/When small **birds** sighed, **she** would sigh back at **them**.

—Theodore Roethke, “I Knew a Woman”

9m What makes pronoun reference clear?

Pronoun reference is clear when your readers know immediately to whom or what each pronoun refers. Box 9-3 on page 157 lists guidelines for using pronouns clearly, and the section in parentheses is where each is explained.

9n How can I avoid unclear pronoun reference?

Every pronoun needs to refer to a specific, nearby ANTECEDENT. If the same pronoun in your writing has to refer to more than one antecedent, replace some pronouns with nouns.

NO In 1911, **Roald Amundsen** reached the South Pole just thirty-five days before **Robert F. Scott** arrived. **He** [who? Amundsen

BOX 9-3 SUMMARY



Guidelines for clear pronoun reference

- Place pronouns close to their ANTECEDENTS (9n).
- Make a pronoun refer to a specific antecedent (9n).
- Do not overuse *it* (see 9q).
- Reserve *you* only for DIRECT ADDRESS (9r).
- Use *that*, *which*, and *who* correctly (9s).

or Scott?] had told people that **he** [who? Amundsen or Scott?] was going to sail for the Arctic, but **he** [who? Amundsen or Scott?] was concealing **his** [whose? Amundsen's or Scott's?] plan. Soon, **he** [who? Amundsen or Scott?] turned south for the Antarctic. On the journey home, **he** [who? Amundsen or Scott?] and **his** [whose? Amundsen's or Scott's?] party froze to death just a few miles from safety.

YES

In 1911, **Roald Amundsen** reached the South Pole just thirty-five days before **Robert F. Scott** arrived. **Amundsen** had told people that **he** was going to sail for the Arctic, but **he** was concealing **his** plan. Soon, **Amundsen** turned south for the Antarctic. Meanwhile, on **their** journey home, **Scott** and **his party** froze to death just a few miles from safety.




ALERT: Be careful with the VERBS *said* and *told* in sentences that contain pronoun reference. To maintain clarity, use quotation marks and slightly reword each sentence to make the meaning clear.

NO **Her** mother told **her she** was going to visit **her** grandmother.

YES

Her mother told **her**, “**You** are going to visit your grandmother.”

YES

Her mother told **her**, “**I** am going to visit your grandmother.” 

Further, if too much material comes between a pronoun and its antecedent, readers can lose track of the meaning.



Alfred Wegener, a German meteorologist and professor of geophysics at the University of Graz in Austria, was the first to suggest that all the continents on earth were originally part of one large landmass. According

to this theory, the supercontinent broke up long ago and the fragments

Wegener
drifted apart. ~~He~~[^] named this supercontinent Pangaea.

[*He* can refer only to Wegener, but material about Wegener's theory intervenes, so using *Wegener* again instead of *he* jogs the reader's memory and makes reading easier.]

When you start a new paragraph, be cautious about beginning it with a pronoun whose antecedent is in a prior paragraph. You're better off repeating the word.

 **ESL NOTE:** Many languages omit a pronoun as a subject because the verb delivers the needed information. English requires the use of the pronoun as a subject. For example, never omit *it* in the following: *Political science is an important academic subject. It is studied all over the world.* 

EXERCISE 9-5 Revise so that each pronoun refers clearly to its antecedent. Either replace pronouns with nouns or restructure the material to clarify pronoun reference. For help, consult 9n.

Most companies used to frown on employees who became involved in office romances. They often considered them to be using company time for their own enjoyment. Now, however, managers realize that happy employees are productive employees. With more women than ever before in the workforce and with people working longer hours, they have begun to see that male and female employees want and need to socialize. They are also dropping their opposition to having married couples on the payroll. They no longer automatically believe that they will bring family matters into the workplace or stick up for one another at the company's expense.

One departmental manager had doubts when a systems analyst for research named Laura announced that she had become engaged to Peter, who worked as a technician in the same department. She told her that either one or the other might have to transfer out of the research department. After listening to her plea that they be allowed to work together on a trial basis, the manager reconsidered. She decided to give Laura and Peter a chance to prove that their relationship would not affect their work. The decision paid off. They demonstrated that they could work as an effective research team, right through their engagement and subsequent marriage. Two years later, when Laura was promoted to assistant manager of a different department and after he asked to move also, she enthusiastically recommended that Peter follow Laura to her new department.

9o How do pronouns work with *it*, *that*, *this*, and *which*?

When you use *it*, *that*, *this*, and *which*, be sure that your readers can easily understand what each word refers to.

NO Comets usually fly by the earth at 100,000 mph, whereas asteroids sometimes collide with the earth. **This** interests scientists. [Does *this* refer to the speed of the comets, to comets flying by the earth, or to asteroids colliding with the earth?]

YES Comets usually fly by the earth at 100,000 mph, whereas asteroids sometimes collide with the earth. **This difference** interests scientists. [Adding a noun after *this* or *that* clarifies the meaning.]

NO I told my friends that I was going to major in geology, **which** made my parents happy. [Does *which* refer to telling your friends or to majoring in geology?]

YES My parents were happy **because I discussed my major with my friends.**

YES My parents were happy **because I chose to major in geology.**

Also, the title of any piece of writing stands on its own. Therefore, in your introductory paragraph, never refer to your title with *this* or *that*. For example, if an essay's title is "Geophysics as a Major," the following holds for the first sentence:

NO **This subject** unites the sciences of physics, biology, and paleontology.

YES **Geophysics** unites the sciences of physics, biology, and paleontology.

9p How do I use *they* and *it* precisely?

The expression *they say* can't take the place of stating precisely who is doing the saying. Your credibility as a writer depends on your mentioning a source precisely.

NO **They say** that earthquakes are becoming more frequent. [*They* doesn't identify the authority who made the statement.]

YES **Seismologists** say that earthquakes are becoming more frequent.

The expressions *it said* and *it is said that* reflect imprecise thinking. Also, they're wordy. Revising such expressions improves your writing.

NO **It said** in the newspaper that California has minor earthquakes almost daily. [*It said in the newspaper that* is wordy.]

YES **The newspaper reported** that California has minor earthquakes almost daily.

9q How do I use *it* to suit the situation?

The word *it* has three different uses in English. Here are examples of correct uses of *it*.


1. **PERSONAL PRONOUN:** Ryan wants to visit the 18-inch Schmidt telescope, but **it** is on Mount Palomar.
2. **EXPLETIVE** (sometimes called a subject filler; it delays the subject): **It** is interesting to observe the stars.
3. **IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION** (words that depart from normal use, such as using *it* as the sentence subject when writing about weather, time, distance, and environmental conditions): **It** is sunny. **It** is midnight. **It** is not far to the hotel. **It** is very hilly.

All three uses listed above are correct, but avoid combining them in the same sentence. The result can be an unclear and confusing sentence.

NO Because our car was overheating, **it** came as no surprise that **it** broke down just as **it** began to rain. [*It* is overused here, even though all three uses—2, 1, and 3 on the above list, respectively—are acceptable.]

YES **It** came as no surprise that our overheating car broke down just as the rain began. [The word order is revised so that *it* is used once.]



ESL NOTE: In some languages, *it* is not used in an expletive. In English, it is. 

NO Is a lovely day.

YES **It** is a lovely day.

9r When should I use *you* for direct address?

Reserve *you* for **direct address**, writing that addresses the reader directly. For example, we use *you* in this handbook to address you, the student. *You* is not a suitable substitute for specific words that refer to people, situations, or occurrences.

NO Prison uprisings often happen **when you allow** overcrowding. [The reader, *you*, did not allow the overcrowding.]

- YES** Prison uprisings often happen **when prisons are** overcrowded.
- NO** In Russia, **you** usually have to stand in long lines to buy groceries. [Are *you*, the reader, planning to do your grocery shopping in Russia?]
- YES** **Russian consumers** usually have to stand in long lines to buy groceries.

EXERCISE 9-6 Revise these sentences so that all pronoun references are clear. If a sentence is correct, circle its number. For help, consult 9q and 9r.

EXAMPLE By collecting data on animal species around the world, you gain insight into the ways animals communicate.

By collecting data on animal species around the world, researchers gain insight into the ways animals communicate. [Revision changes *you* to third person, the noun *researchers*.]

1. Researchers find that animal communication is more complex and more varied than you might expect.
2. Throughout the animal kingdom, they use low-pitched noises to convey aggression and high-pitched noises to convey fear.
3. They say that dogs bark for many reasons: to ask for food, to alert a family to danger, to convey excitement.
4. In the water, damselfish emit squeaks and dolphins send out clicks and whistles. This interests marine biologists.
5. Elk males have rutting contests to prove which male is stronger, with the one that ruts louder and longer proving his dominance.

9s When should I use *that*, *which*, and *who*?

To use the pronouns *that* and *which* correctly, you want to check the context of the sentence you're writing. *Which* and *that* refer to animals and things. Only sometimes do they refer to anonymous or collective groups of people. Box 9-4 on the next page shows how to choose between *that* and *which*. For information about the role of commas with *that* and *which*, see 23f.

Who refers to people and to animals mentioned by name.

John Polanyi, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry, speaks passionately in favor of nuclear disarmament. [*John Polanyi* is a person.]

Lassie, who was known for her intelligence and courage, was actually played by a series of male collies. [*Lassie* is the name of an animal.]

Many professional writers reserve *which* for nonrestrictive clauses and *that* for restrictive clauses. Other writers have begun to use *that* and *which* interchangeably. Current practice allows the use of either as long as you're consistent in each piece of writing. However, for ACADEMIC WRITING, your instructor might expect you to maintain the distinction.

BOX 9-4 SUMMARY

Choosing between *that* and *which*

Choice: Some instructors and style guides use either *that* or *which* to introduce a RESTRICTIVE CLAUSE (a DEPENDENT CLAUSE that is essential to the meaning of the sentence or part of the sentence). Others may advise you to use only *that* so that your writing distinguishes clearly between restrictive and NONRESTRICTIVE CLAUSES. Whichever style you use, be consistent in each piece of writing:

- The zoos ***that*** (or ***which***) **most children like** display newborn and baby animals. [The point in this sentence concerns children's preferences. Therefore, the words *most children like* are essential for delivering the meaning and make up a restrictive clause.]

No choice: You are required to use *which* to introduce a nonrestrictive clause (a dependent clause that isn't essential to the meaning of the sentence or part of the sentence).

- Zoos, ***which most children like***, attract more visitors if they display newborn and baby animals. [The point in this sentence concerns attracting more visitors to zoos. Therefore, the words *most children like* are not essential to the meaning of the sentence and make up a nonrestrictive clause.]



ALERT: Use commas before and after a nonrestrictive clause. Don't use commas before and after a restrictive clause; see 23.4. 

EXERCISE 9-7 Fill in the blanks with *that*, *which*, or *who*. For help, consult 9s.

EXAMPLE For years, consumers who want the very latest electronic gadgets have had to travel to Japan to buy them.

1. In Japan, consumers can buy a set of tiny clip-on headphones ____ have enough memory for an hour's worth of music.
2. These headphones, ____ are a popular item in Japan, are unlikely to reach foreign markets, because manufacturers don't export them.
3. People from outside Japan ____ crave innovative Japanese products now have an alternative way of buying them ____ is less expensive than traveling to Japan.
4. Web-based businesses, ____ are springing up every day, now specialize in exporting products ____ are trend-setting in Japan.
5. These companies, ____ offer extra advantages such as English-language warranties and manuals, are finding a ready market among English-speaking technophiles.