

Pronoun Usage Guide

EVERY PERSON **DESERVES** - AND HAS THE **RIGHT** - TO BE **VALIDATED** AND **AFFIRMED** FOR WHO THEY **ARE!**

ONE WAY OF DOING THIS IS BY USING AND RESPECTING A PERSON'S **PRONOUNS** AT THEIR REQUEST.

OK, BUT WHAT'S A PRONOUN?



PRONOUNS ARE THOSE LITTLE WORDS WE USE TO **REFER** TO A PERSON WHEN WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THEM.

she/her/hers

he/him/his



OH RIGHT! BUT **SHE** AND **HE** ARE NOT THE ONLY SETS OF PRONOUNS. SOME PEOPLE USE **GENDER-NEUTRAL** OR **NON-BINARY** PRONOUN SETS, WHICH ARE ALSO 100% VALID.

xe/xem/xyr

they/them/theirs

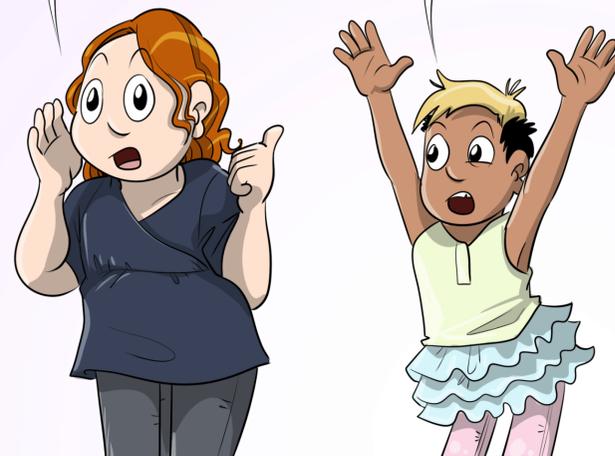


IT'S IMPORTANT TO **RESPECT** A PERSON'S PRONOUNS AND TO USE THEM CORRECTLY, EVEN WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN THEIR PRESENCE.

IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, CORRECT YOURSELF AND MOVE ON, KNOWING YOU WILL DO BETTER NEXT TIME.

THEY ARE REALLY GOOD AT MATH; YOU SHOULD ASK **THEM** IF THEY CAN HELP YOU WITH THIS ASSIGNMENT!

DON'T LISTEN TO **XEM**, **XE** IS MUCH BETTER THAN I AM!



Tips and tools for teachers

- In an effort to be inclusive and respectful of gender diversity, while also creating opportunities for education, use the gender-neutral pronoun set, they, them, theirs, when referring to any person whose pronouns you don't know or remember, until you have a chance to find out what they are.

Class, today we have a guest speaker coming in. **They** are an expert in marine biology. Please give **them** a warm welcome!

Notice how gender binary pronouns are not important in this context. The meaning is not lost. By using gender neutral pronouns, you hold back on making assumptions about a person's gender based on your own perception of them.

- If you have trouble remembering a student's pronouns, it is always best simply to ask for the reminder! It is also important to ask if you may use these pronouns in front of the class, other teachers, and when contacting home.
- While it is totally normal for it to take practice before you're comfortable with something new, it's important to demonstrate genuine effort to get it right. If you accidentally use the wrong pronoun when referring to a student (aka- "misgendering"), even if they are not present, simply correct yourself and commit to getting it right next time.

Hi Fae! How was your summer vacation? Can you remind me what your pronouns are again?

Did you hear that Fae wrote her own, sorry, I mean, their own play over the summer? Sh..They even wrote a score to go with it!

Everyone makes mistakes and demonstrating your effort to work on getting it right after a mistake is an important moment to take.

Remember, it is not the responsibility of the student you have misgendered to address your feelings about having slipped up.

For Occasional Teachers

- Double check with the school administration or with the teacher you are substituting for that the class list provided for you includes up-to-date student names and pronouns which the students have updated themselves.
- It is always best to have students include their pronouns when you do the standard "go-around" of introductions. Be sure to model sharing yours as well!
- As you work to familiarize yourself with the names and pronouns of a new group of students, it may be helpful to ask that students include their name and pronouns on a name-tag or card placed on their desk.