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Parallelism

Name _____
Date _____

Parallelism is the use of the same grammatical structure to express two or more parallel ideas. Ideas are parallel if they are similar or are of equal importance. Because parallel structures are repetitive, they add a kind of rhythm to writing. As you read the following bumper stickers, note how the rhythm lends impact to the words.

I'll try to be nicer, if you try to be smarter.

One planet, one people.

I fish, therefore I lie.

If you ain't different, you ain't normal.

Guns don't kill people; people kill people.

Notice that the grammatical structure on the right side of the mid-sentence punctuation in each bumper sticker is the same as the grammatical structure on the left side.

noun verb infinitive adj. noun verb
I'll try to be nicer, if you try
infinitive adj.
to be smarter.

adj. noun adj. noun

One planet, one people

As the bumper stickers show, parallel structure works especially well to compare or contrast ideas. In his famous opening paragraph of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens used parallel structure to describe the contrasting times the story took place in. Read below.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way . . .

Directions

Use the lines below to create either:

- several bumper stickers that compare or contrast ideas, or
- a paragraph in Dickens' style about current times.

Pronouns in the Objective and Subjective Case

Name _____

Date _____

Do you ever get confused about which pronoun to use, such as I or me, she or her, he or him, we or us? It all depends on case. A pronoun functioning as a subject is in the *subjective case*, as shown in the examples below.

Examples

My sister and *I* love our grandmother.

(*I*, along with *my sister*, is the subject of an independent clause.)

We skateboarders are working toward getting a skateboarding park.

(*We* is the subject of an independent clause.)

Joaquin and *he* take drum lessons together.

(*He*, along with Joaquin, is the subject of an independent clause.)

Although Maya and *she* hold very different beliefs, the two are best friends.

(*She*, along with Maya, is the subject of a dependent, or subordinate, clause.)

An easy test for the subjective case is to ask: Is there a verb nearby that the pronoun goes with? If so, the pronoun is in the subjective case. Locate the verbs that go with the pronouns in the examples above.

Note: No doubt you've been taught that when you pair the word *I* with another name, *I* should always be placed last. This is true, but some people interpret the rule to mean that whenever the person speaking pairs his- or herself with another name, the

pronoun that replaces the speaker's name is *I*. This is not true. It is *I* only if it's in the subjective case.

A pronoun that functions as an object is in the *objective case*. Read these examples.

Examples

Our grandmother loves my sister and *me*.

(*Me*, along with *sister*, is the object of *loves*.)

The city council approved funding for a skateboarding park for *us* skateboarders.

(*Us* is the object of the preposition *for*.)

Drums lessons are taken by Joaquin and *him*.

(*Him*, along with Joaquin, is the object of the preposition *by*.)

Although very different beliefs are held by Maya and *her*, the two are best friends.

(*Her*, along with Maya, is the object of the preposition *by*.)

A good way to test for the objective case when you have pairs such as *my sister and me* is to drop the other person's name. For example, you would say *Our grandmother loves me* not *I*. A good way to test for the situation that occurs in the second example above, is to drop the accompanying noun, in this case, *skateboarders*. You would say *for us* not *for we*. Notice that none of the italicized pronouns above is paired with a verb, therefore it should be in the subjective case.

Directions

Circle the correct pronoun in the sentences below.

1. Please give that video game to *we/us* kids.
2. Elizabeth and *she/her* play on the same intramural volleyball team.
3. The principal awarded the scholastic medals to my best friend Jen and *I/me*.
4. *We/Us* students think the school should add a web design class to its curriculum.
5. *He/Him* and *I/me* always walk to math class together.