

# Who or what are we reading about?

## TEXT COMPREHENSION

### Tracking who's who in a text

Pronouns can facilitate reading comprehension by avoiding repetition of the same words. Pronouns can also make understanding harder because students need to connect the pronouns to the correct words or ideas in the text.

### FOR EXAMPLE...

'The old lady opened the window. She looked outside and smiled. Her cat was sunbathing on the porch.'

➔ The old lady is the antecedent of the pronouns She and Her



### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Research indicates that students with **lower working memory or oral language skills struggle** with understanding pronouns in text. Teaching pronouns helps all students understand inferences in text.



### WHAT CAN TEACHERS DO?

#### PRONOUN CHAINS

Have students practice tracking pronoun chains across sentences or short passages. Explain how agreement in number, gender, and meaning help clarify the pronoun chain.

'Liam met Noah at the park. He told him about the new movie he wanted to see. Later, they both went to buy tickets. After the movie, Noah told him his choice was great.'

#### TEACHING TIP

When teaching pronouns, start with narrative texts, then with expository, informative or argumentative texts.

Scan below for activities!



### KEY TAKEAWAY

Teaching students how pronouns link ideas across sentences helps them follow connections more easily and strengthens their understanding of complex reading material.

### GLOSSARY

**Antecedent:** A word or group of words that a pronoun refers to. The pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number (singular or plural), person (first, second, or third), and sometimes gender (masculine, feminine, neuter).

**Argumentative text:** A text in which the author defends a point of view on a topic.

**Informative or expository text:** A text that is not fiction; it focuses on the real world and contains facts and/or arguments.

**Narrative text:** A text that tells a story, usually with characters and a clear sequence of events.

**Pronouns:** Words that replace nouns, they have many different forms and roles in sentences.

**Sentence:** A group of words that expresses a complete idea, usually including a subject and a verb.

Sentences can take different forms and can be made of two or more simple sentences to express complex ideas.

