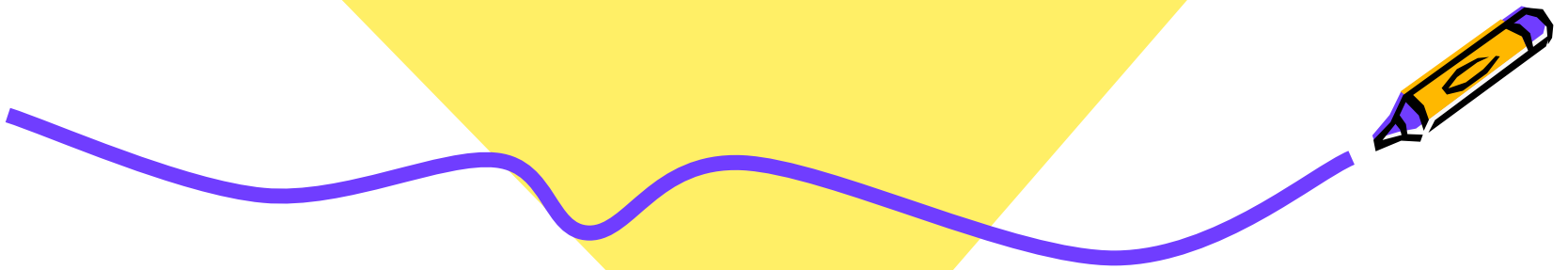
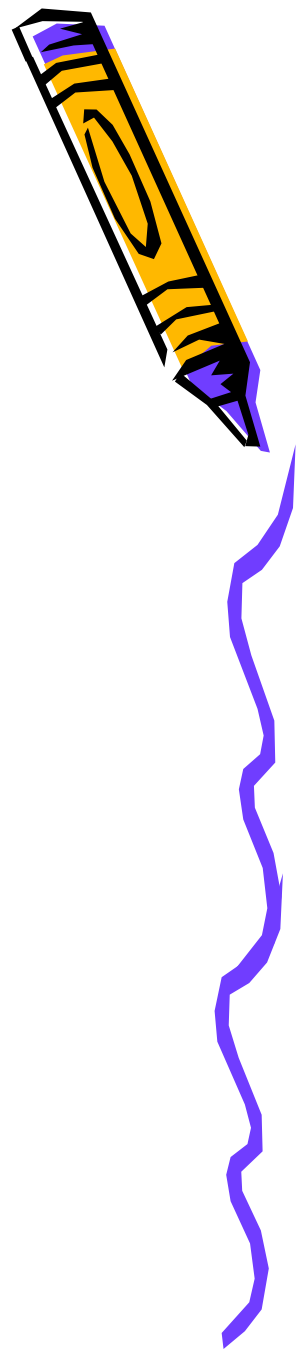




# Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement



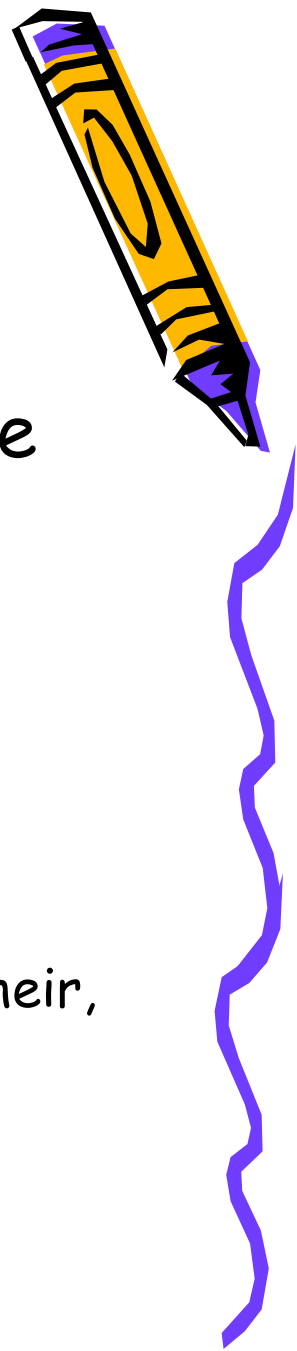
# What do you need to understand about pronoun-antecedent agreement errors?



- What's a pronoun?
- What's an antecedent?
- What's a pronoun-antecedent agreement error?



# What's a Pronoun?



- A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun or other pronoun
  - It can take the place of a subject word
    - (I, you, he, she, it, we, they)
  - It can take the place of an object word
    - (me, you him, her it, us, them)
  - It can take the place of a possessive word
    - (my, mine, your, yours, his, hers, its, our, ours, their, theirs)



# What's an antecedent?

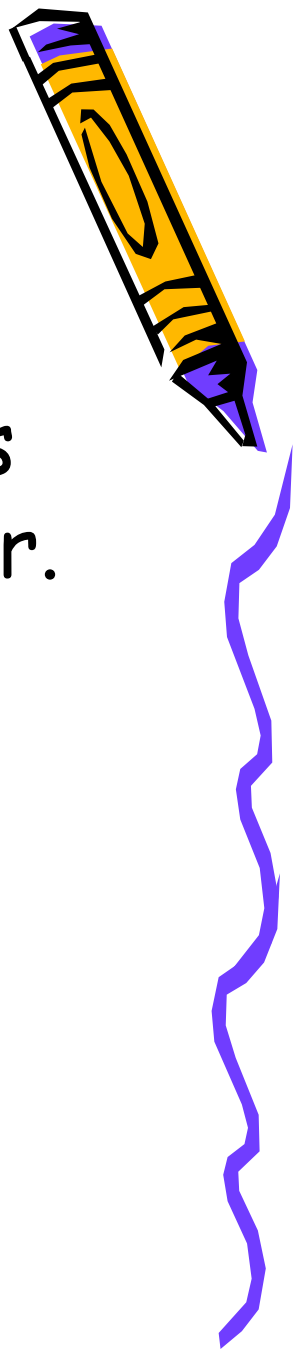


- The word that the pronoun replaces.
  - Hermione Granger threw **her** wand onto the floor
    - ("**her**" renames "Hermione Granger").
  - When Ron Weasley saw the wand drop, he picked **it** up and handed it to her.
    - ("**it**" renames the "wand")
  - Then Ron and Hermione went to **their** Defense Against the Dark Arts class.
    - ("**their**" renames "Ron and Hermione")



# Basically, it's this:

- All pronouns and their antecedents need to agree in person and number.

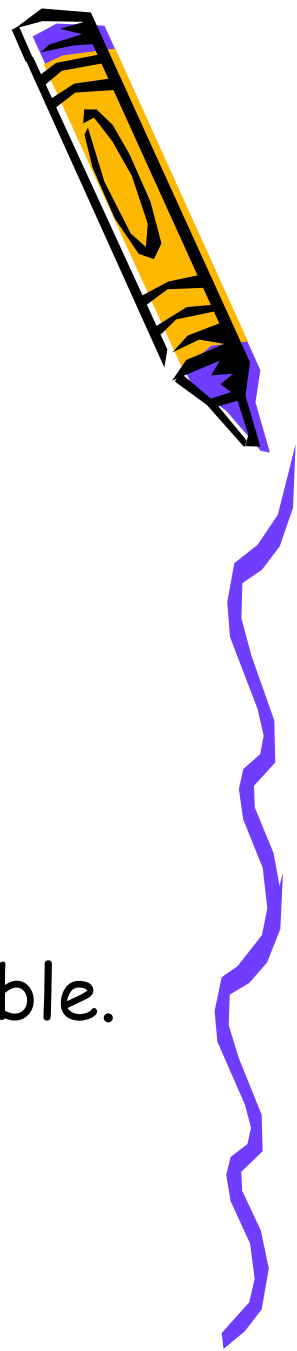


# Agree in Person

- **I** hate to proofread my paper because proofreading is such a boring thing for **you** to do.
  - (disagreement in person--first person antecedent "**I**", second person pronoun "**you**")
- "Why should **I** study literature? **You** don't get anything out of it"
  - (disagreement in number—**I** shouldn't study it because "**you**" don't get anything out of it?)



# Agree in Number

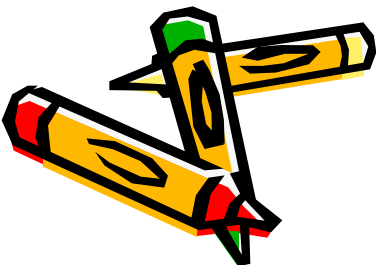
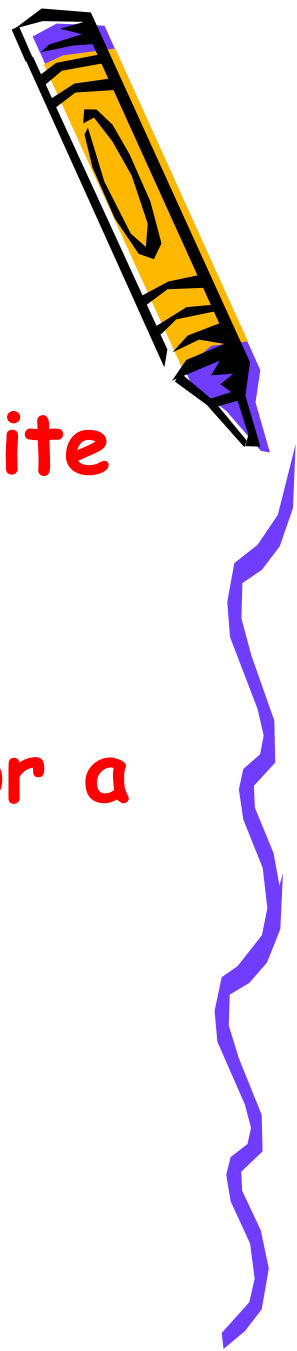


- Singular antecedents get singular pronouns
  - The **boy** tossed his **hat** on the table.
- Plural antecedents get plural pronouns
  - The **boys** tossed their **hats** on the table.



# You'll generally run into problems in two cases:

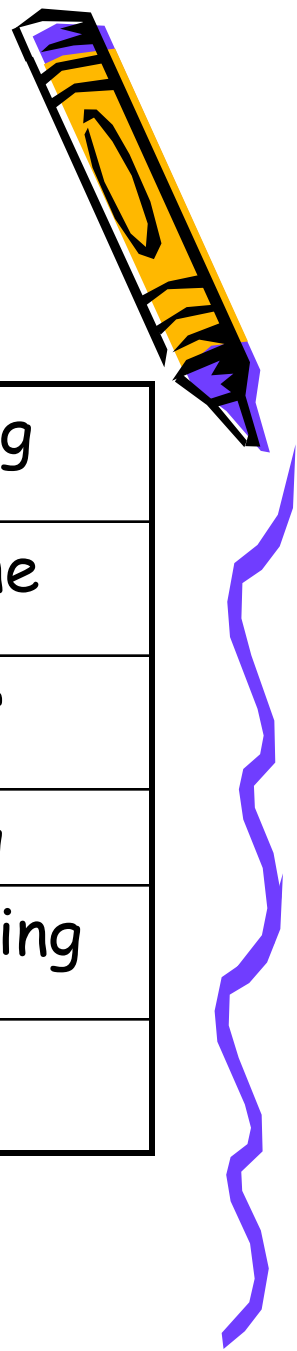
- When the antecedent is an **indefinite pronoun** and
- When the antecedent is a **singular noun that could refer to a man or a woman.**





# Indefinite Pronouns:

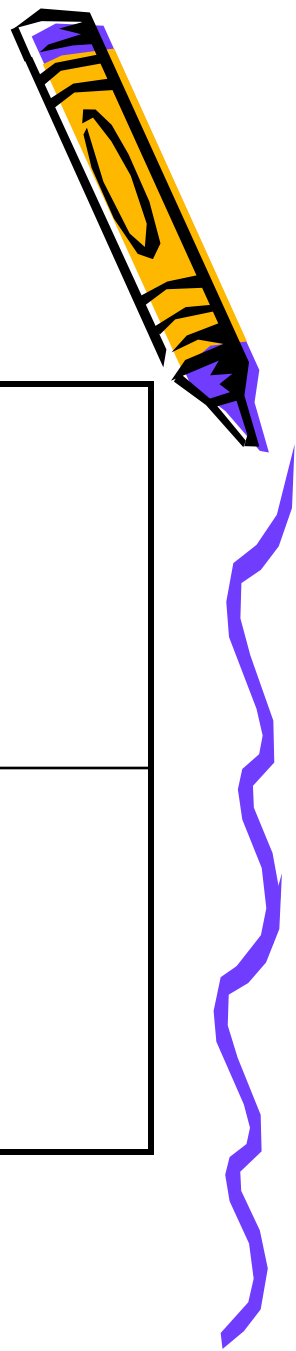
## They're usually singular



Another	Anybody	Anyone	Anything
Each	Either	Everybody	Everyone
Everything	Little	Much	Neither
Nobody	Nothing	No one	Nothing
One	Other	Somebody	Something
Someone			



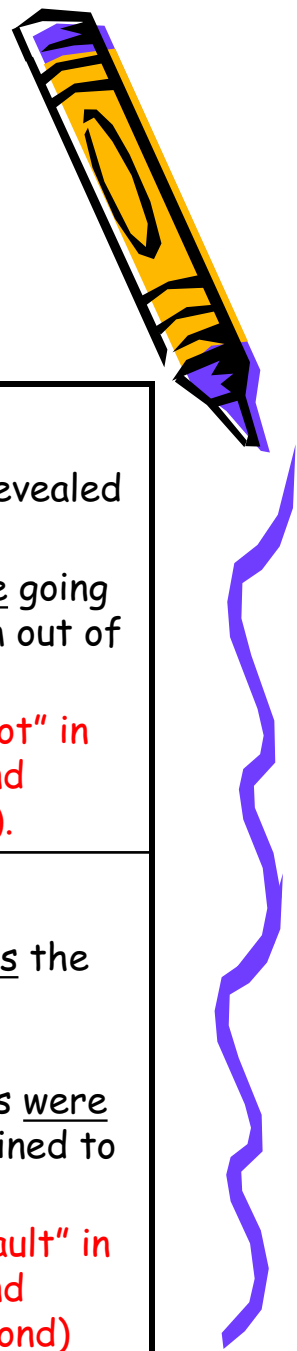
# Except when they're plural



Both	Few	Many
Others	Several	



# Or when they're singular or plural, depending on context



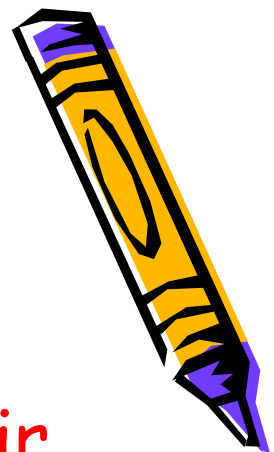
<p><b>All</b></p> <p><u>All</u> of the gas <u>is</u> gone. <u>All</u> of the kids <u>are</u> gone. (“All” refers to “gas” in the first sentence and “kids” in the second)</p>	<p><b>Any</b></p> <p><u>Any</u> of the jewelry <u>is</u> yours for the taking. <u>Any</u> of my cousins <u>are</u> right for the part (“Any” refers to “jewelry” in the first sentence and “cousins” in the second)</p>	<p><b>More</b></p> <p><u>More</u> of the plot <u>is</u> revealed in act three. <u>More</u> of our plans <u>are</u> going towards breaking him out of jail. (“More” refers to “plot” in the first sentence and “plans” in the second).</p>
<p><b>Most</b></p> <p><u>Most</u> of the cake <u>was</u> gone when I got home. But <u>most</u> of the cookies <u>were</u> still there. (“Most” refers to “cake” in the first sentence and “cookies” in the second)</p>	<p><b>None</b></p> <p><u>None</u> of material <u>was</u> covered in the test review. <u>None</u> of the students <u>were</u> happy about that. (“None” refers to “material” in the first sentence and “students” in the second)</p>	<p><b>Some</b></p> <p><u>Some</u> of the fault <u>was</u> the teacher’s for being disorganized. <u>Some</u> of the students <u>were</u> so angry they complained to her boss. (“Some” refers to “fault” in the first sentence and “students” in the second)</p>

# Silly Reference

- A person who gives a wrong answer on their own
- A technician who gives a wrong answer and causes a problem
- Often used to describe a person who waits for a question and then gives a wrong answer



I'M  
SORRY,...  
BUT THAT'S  
THE WRONG  
ANSWER.



leir

love

ts



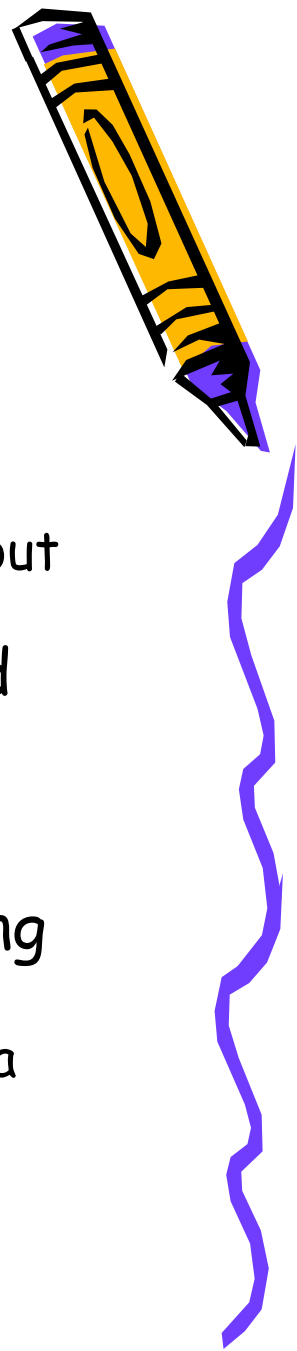
# Generally, these errors occur



- because the writer is trying to avoid sexism.
- When you don't know if the antecedent is male or female, it seems logical to use the pronoun "they."



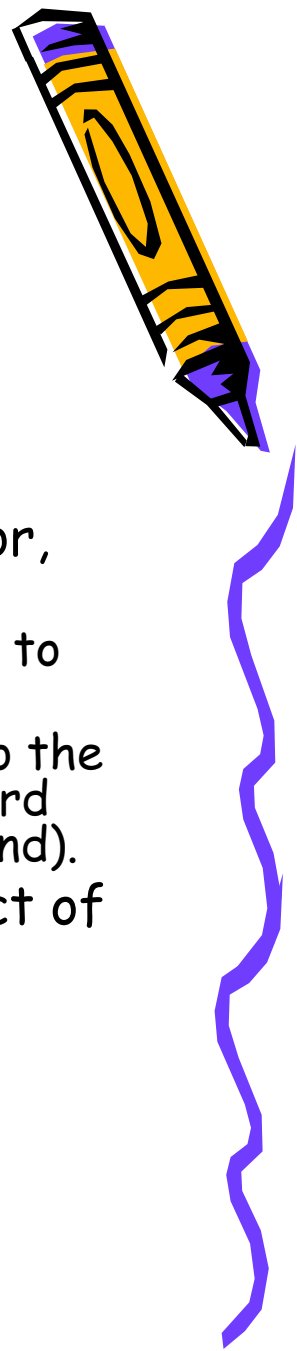
# When you can, just make the antecedent plural



- A **person** should be able to make up **their** own mind about prayer in schools (incorrect).
  - **People** should be able to make up **their** own mind about prayer in schools (correct).
- A **teacher** should show **their** students love and compassion (incorrect).
  - **Teachers** should show **their** students love and compassion (correct).
- Often, a **doctor** will leave **their** patients waiting for a ridiculously long time (incorrect).
  - Often, **doctors** will leave **their** patients waiting for a ridiculously long time (correct).



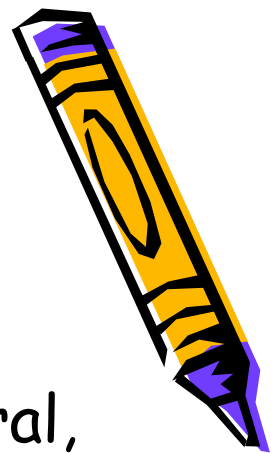
# General Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Rules



- Compound antecedents are usually plural;
  - Joey and Melissa think **their** kids are brilliant.
- If two antecedents are joined by either/or, neither/nor, the pronoun agrees with the antecedent closest to it;
  - Either Michael or his friends will bring **their** video games to the party.
  - Either his friends or Michael will bring **his** video games to the party. (This sentence is correct, but sounds illogical. Word the sentence like the first example rather than the second).
- The pronoun agrees with the antecedent, not the object of the prepositional phrase;
  - **Each** of the dogs needs **its** own crate.



# General Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Rules



- Collective noun can be either singular or plural, depending on the context.
  - The *jury* took only two hours to reach *its* verdict. (Emphasizes the singularity of the jury)
  - The *jury* took only two hours to reach *their* verdict. (Emphasizes the jury as a group of individuals)
- Avoid sexism
  - Not "A doctor should listen carefully to *his* patients."
  - But rather (1) making the pronoun and its antecedent plural, or (2) reword the sentence.
    - Doctors should listen carefully to their patients.
    - Doctors should listen carefully to patients.







# Vague Pronoun Reference

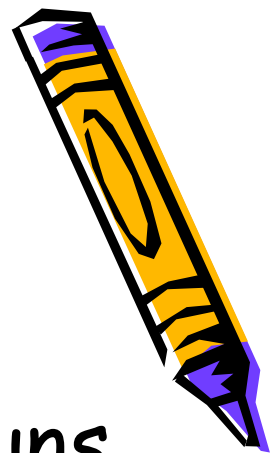
- "Mom wasn't sure if Jane had her make-up,"
  - it is unclear if "her" refers to Mom or Jane. Whose make up is it?
- "Mom wasn't sure if Jane had brought Mom's make up."
- "Mom wasn't sure if Jane had brought Jane's make up."

OR

- "Had Jane brought her make up?" Mom wondered.
- Mom thought, "Has Jane brought my make up?"



# Other Resources

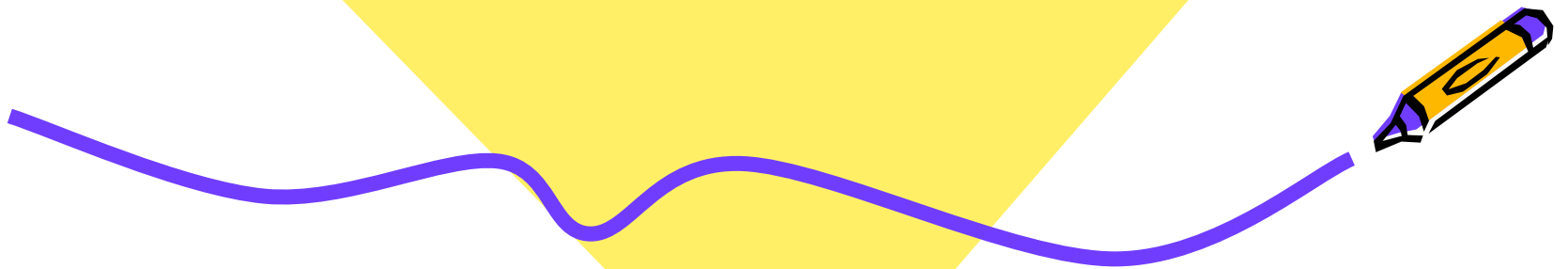


- Pronoun reference: explains pronouns using a student's different learning styles:
- Pronoun-Agreement Exercise
- Pronoun-Agreement Exercise
- Pronoun-Antecedent Rules (RTF)



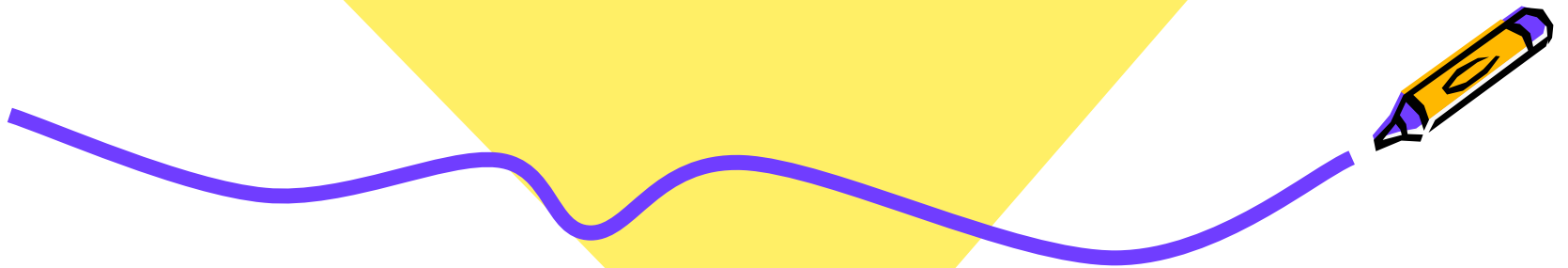


# Commonly Confused Words





Cite, Sight, and Site



- When writing research papers, students are required to (cite, site, sight) their sources of information.
- When writing research papers, students are required to **cite** their sources of information.

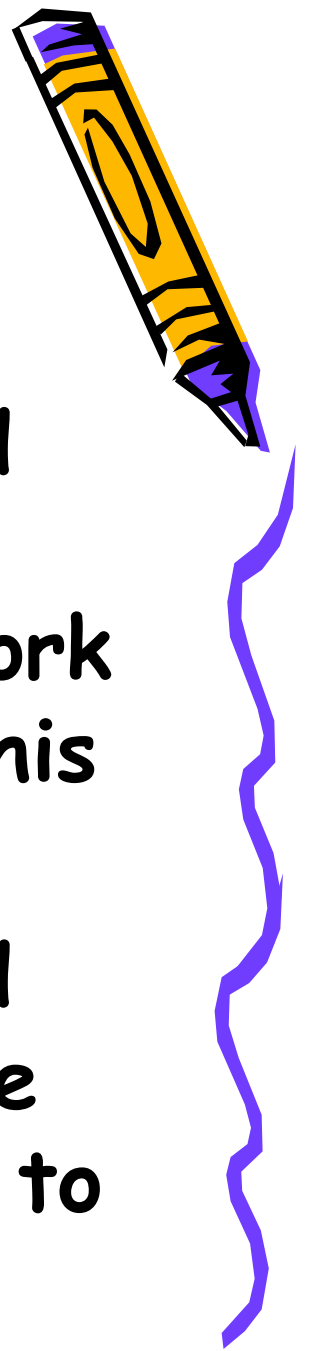


- As we get older, so do our bodies and the lenses of our eyes. Consequently, our (cite, site, sight) is often affected.
- As we get older, so do our bodies and the lenses of our eyes. Consequently, our site, **sight** is often affected.



- One of the most famous Civil War battle (cites, sites, sights) is Gettysburg.
- One of the most famous Civil War battle **sites** is Gettysburg.





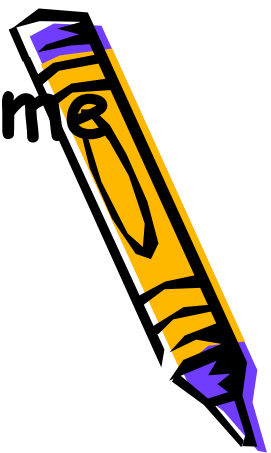
- The student reluctantly admitted that he had neglected to (cite, site, sight) the authors whose work he had used to do research for his term paper.
- The student reluctantly admitted that he had neglected to **cite** the authors whose work he had used to do research for his term paper.





- When our dog finally returned home after a week's adventure away, she was certainly a (cite, site, sight) for sore eyes! We were thrilled that she had found her way home.

- When our dog finally returned home after a week's adventure away, she was certainly a **sight** for sore eyes! We were thrilled that she had found her way home.



# Whose or Who's?



- Whose: the possessive case of who used as an adjective: *Whose umbrella did I take? Whose is this one?*
- Who's: contraction of who is: *Who's there?*

- \_\_\_\_\_ is having dinner?
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the letter from?
- \_\_\_\_\_ car is parked on the street?
- \_\_\_\_\_ is watching television?
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the boy hugging?





# Effect vs Affect

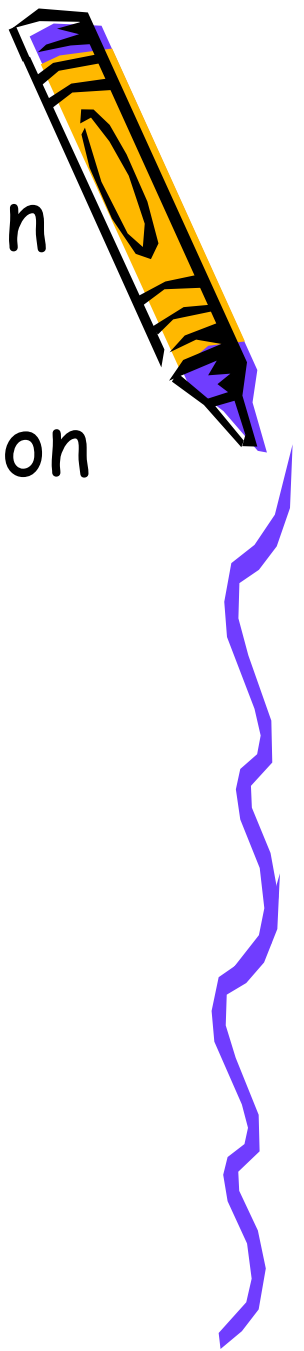
Effect: something that is produced by an agency or cause; result; consequence: Exposure to the sun had the effect of toughening his skin.

Affect: to act on; produce an effect or change in: Cold weather affected the crops.



# Choose the right answer

- A) The **affect** of the antibiotic on her infection was surprising.
- B) The **effect** of the antibiotic on her infection was surprising.
- A) When will we know if the chemotherapy has taken **effect**?
- B) When will we know if the chemotherapy has taken **affect**?

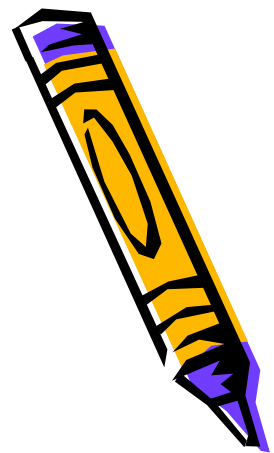


# Uninterested vs Disinterested

- Disinterested: absence of interest; indifference (I tried it and didn't care for it anymore.)
- Uninterested: having or showing no feeling of interest; indifferent. (Never cared about it, and never will)



# There, Their, and They're



- Once upon a time,

\_\_\_\_\_ were three little  
pigs. \_\_\_\_\_ was Curly.  
He was the oldest.

\_\_\_\_\_ was Wurly. He  
was the smartest. And then  
\_\_\_\_\_ was Flo.



# There, Their and They're



- One day, Mama Pig sent the three pigs to the store to buy apples for \_\_\_\_\_ dinner. She gave them a list of items that she needed. She also gave them \_\_\_\_\_ allowance, and she told them that they could buy \_\_\_\_\_ favourite candy which they would eat for dinner.

