

EXERCISE G3-1 ♦ Pronoun-antecedent agreement: Guided practice

Edit the following paragraphs for problems with pronoun-antecedent agreement. The numbers in the margin refer to relevant rules in section G3 of *A Writer's Reference*, Seventh Edition. The first revision has been done for you; a suggested revision of this exercise appears in the back of this book.

Everyone has heard of Dorothy and Toto and their tornado “flight” from Kansas to Oz. ^{*Everyone also knows*} ~~They also know~~ that the Oz adventure was pure fantasy and that it ended happily. But another girl from Kansas took real flights all around the real world. G3-a

Whenever she landed safely after setting one of her many records, everyone rejoiced and sent their congratulations to her. When she disappeared on her last flight, the whole world mourned. Not every pilot can claim they have that kind of following. G3-a

Neighbors knew that Amelia Earhart would not be a typical “lady.” A child as curious, daring, and self-confident as Amelia was bound to stand out from her peers. When she and her sister Muriel were young, girls were supposed to play with dolls. If a girl played baseball or collected worms, they were called “tomboys” and were often punished. Boys and girls even had different kinds of sleds—the girls’ sleds were lightweight, impossible-to-steer box sleds. G3-a

But the Earhart family lived by their own rules. Amelia’s father, whom she depended on for approval, bought Amelia the boys’ sled she longed for. Many fast trips down steep hills gave Amelia a foretaste of flying with the wind in her face. G3-a

The closest Amelia came to flying was on a homemade roller coaster. She and her friends built it, using an old woodshed for the base of the ride. They started eight feet off the ground and tried to sled down the slope without falling off. No one was successful on their first attempt, but Amelia kept trying until she had a successful ride. Satisfied at last, she declared that the ride had felt “just like flying.” G3-a

EXERCISE G3-2 ♦ Pronoun-antecedent agreement

To read about this topic, see section G3 in *A Writer's Reference*, Seventh Edition.

Five of the following word groups contain a problem with pronoun-antecedent agreement. Mark the correct sentences “OK” and edit the incorrect ones to eliminate the problem. Example:

Pilots

During World War I, Amelia Earhart listened to wounded pilots’ tales of adventure. ^A pilot would describe a particularly daring wartime adventure and joke about their ability to beat the odds.

1. After World War I, Amelia Earhart took flying lessons. She learned quickly, but the lessons cost her most of her salary.
2. She wanted those lessons, so she worked two jobs to pay for them: She clerked for the telephone company and drove a dump truck for a sand and gravel company.
3. Members of her family pooled their funds to buy a gift—a little yellow biplane—for her twenty-fourth birthday celebration; it was the perfect gift.
4. Amelia Earhart soon learned that when someone owns a plane, they need a lot of money.
5. She sometimes executed dangerous maneuvers before her teacher was sure Amelia could handle it.
6. At first everyone could not believe their eyes when she deliberately put her plane into a spin.
7. Each spectator would gasp when they heard her cut the engine off in a spin.
8. But Amelia Earhart repeatedly pulled the plane out of its spin and landed safely, delighting everyone.
9. When an aviator wants to break records, they will work very hard.
10. Aviation record keepers had to make a new entry in the record books: They had seen Amelia Earhart fly 14,000 feet high.

EXERCISE G3-3 ♦ **Pronoun-antecedent agreement**

To read about this topic, see section G3 in *A Writer's Reference*, Seventh Edition.

In each set of sentences, circle the letter of the sentence that has a problem with pronoun-antecedent agreement. Which of the other two sentences (both correct) do you prefer? Put a check mark next to that sentence. Example:

- a. A college dropout often gets little respect for their choosing to leave school.
- b. College dropouts often get little respect for their choosing to leave school.
- ✓ c. A college dropout often gets little respect for choosing to leave school.
1. a. Not everyone who drops out of college ruins their life.
- b. Not all students who drop out of college ruin their lives.
- c. Not all college dropouts ruin their lives.
2. a. Students sometimes discover that they don't like their chosen field.
- b. A student sometimes discovers that he or she doesn't like their chosen field.
- c. Students may lose interest in their chosen field.
3. a. People like Amelia, who quit school to learn to fly, must be very sure of themselves.
- b. Someone like Amelia, who quit school to learn to fly, must be very sure of themselves.
- c. Someone like Amelia, who quit school to learn to fly, must be very sure of herself or himself.
4. a. In their catalog, Columbia University offered a wide range of courses, but Flying Airplanes was not among them.
- b. Flying Airplanes was not among the wide range of courses offered in Columbia University's catalog.
- c. In its catalog, Columbia University offered a wide range of courses, but Flying Airplanes was not among them.
5. a. Amelia Earhart became a dropout any university would be proud to claim.
- b. Amelia Earhart became one of those dropouts any university would be proud to claim as theirs.
- c. Amelia Earhart became a dropout all universities would be proud to claim.

EXERCISE G3-4 ♦ Pronoun-antecedent agreement: Guided review

Edit the following paragraphs for problems with pronoun-antecedent agreement. The numbers in the margin refer to relevant rules in section G3 of *A Writer's Reference*, Seventh Edition. The first revision has been done for you.

When Amelia Earhart became the first woman to cross the Atlantic in a plane, she got no money; she did get a free ride, fame, and job offers. Not ^{all fliers} every flier would think these rewards were enough for their time and trouble on the trip, but Amelia Earhart was delighted with the whole experience. Afterward, a book she wrote about that flight brought her another first: a publisher, a shrewd business manager, and a husband—all in one man, George Putnam. (Putnam also understood her fierce independence—not every man would sign a prenuptial agreement saying that their wife could have a divorce anytime she asked!) G3-a

The first national organization for “flying women,” formed by Amelia Earhart and a friend, recruited their members in the belief that every woman should follow her own interest. After all, who had made the first solo flight from Honolulu to the United States? From Los Angeles to Mexico City? And from Mexico City to New Jersey? It was she, Amelia Earhart. No woman ever did more to prove that they could handle jobs traditionally reserved for men. G3-a

Amelia Earhart’s last “first” was never completed. When she tried to become the first pilot to fly around the world at the equator, she disappeared somewhere over the Pacific. The US government search covered more than 265,000 miles of air and sea space, but they found nothing. G3-a

In 1994, fifty-seven years after Amelia Earhart’s disappearance, twelve-year-old Vicki Van Meter became the youngest female pilot to fly across the Atlantic. She took off from Augusta, Maine, from the very spot where Amelia Earhart had started her flight across the Atlantic. When Van Meter landed safely in Glasgow, everyone offered their congratulations, and Van Meter felt a special kinship with her predecessor, Amelia Earhart. G3-a