

OBJECTIVE PRONOUNS

By Carole L. Cooney

Setting: The Weston Ranch

Characters:

Narrator

Sue, Dave's older sister

Dave, Sue's younger brother

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun.

Objective pronouns are the **object of a sentence or of a preposition**. "**Me, you, him, her, it, us, and them**" are the most common objective pronouns.

- Narrator: It was roundup time with the sun setting fast. Sue and Dave were just finishing their chores as they ran to the pasture to get Maisy and Big Ben.
- Dave: Hey, Sue. This secret is between you and I. Dad's going to sell Maisy.
- Sue: Dad's going to do what? Sell Maisy? Is that what you said?
- Dave: Yeah. But this is a secret between you and I.
- Sue: Dave, did you say "between you and I?"
- Dave: Yep! That's what I said.
- Sue: Well, Dave, I don't like what Dad's going to do, but the way you said it sounded really weird!
- Dave: (whining) What did I do now? What I said sounded okay to me!
- Sue: I've told you a million times when to use "I" and when to use "me".
- Dave: (upset) Not *that* again! Do I have to have a lesson right now? Can't this wait until later? Let's get Maisy and Big Ben in the barn. Okay?
- Sue: All right.
- Narrator: Maisy slowly lumbered into her stall. Big Ben was another story.
- Dave: Sue, we're going to have trouble with Big Ben. I just know it!
- Sue: Well, go get Laddie. He'll just bark Big Ben in.
- Narrator: Sure enough! When Laddie came running across the field, he saw what was happening, and knew just what to do.
- Dave: Good boy, Laddie. That was pretty easy. I'd bet Maisy knew you were going to teach me a grammar lesson so she moved on pretty slowly.
- Narrator: As soon as the cow and bull were locked in the barn, Sue led Dave to the front porch steps. They sat and she began to teach her brother about mistakes people make with the pronouns "I" and "me."
- Sue: Well, it seems that lots of people make mistakes about when to use the pronouns "I" and "me," but there is a rule. It says the words "**me, you, him, her, it, us, and them**" are objective pronouns.

Dave: (confused) What does *that* mean?

Sue: That means **when a pronoun follows a preposition**, it's called an **objective pronoun**. When you said, "between you and I," the pronoun "I" is not an objective pronoun. "I" is not in the list. "Me" is an objective pronoun. So say your sentence again using two objective pronouns.

Dave: Do you mean I have to say "me" instead of "I"?

Sue: That's right!

Dave: Okay. "This is a secret between you and me." Is that right?

Sue: Perfect!

Dave: Is that all I need to know? Can I go now?

Sue: Well, not quite yet. There is another reason to use an objective pronoun. Here's the second rule. When a **pronoun takes the action of a verb**, it is also called an **objective pronoun**. Listen to this sentence. The ball **hit me**. "Me" is an objective pronoun because it took the action, "hit."

Dave: Okay. I get it. Can I go now?

Sue: Hold on! Just one more minute. Let's have a little practice session. I'll say a sentence that uses pronouns incorrectly and you correct it.

Dave: Like what?

Sue: Like, "The bull scared He and I?"

Dave: Okay. "The bull scared him"... is that right? And, uh... which pronoun do I use next? "me or I?"

Sue: Think of the rule. **A pronoun that takes the action of a verb** is an objective pronoun. Next, think of the list of objective pronouns. Can you say them?

Dave: (whining) No. Do I have to?

Sue: Yes. Just repeat them after me. **Me, you, him, her, it, us, and them.**

Dave: (groaning) **Me, you, him, her, it, us, and them.**

Sue: Good! Now, you can only use one of those pronouns in that list. Which pronoun will you use? "I or me?"

Dave: I guess it's "me." "The bull scared him and me." Is that right? It sounds like I always speak.

Sue: Well, sometimes we just speak correctly and sometimes we don't.

Dave: This grammar stuff is so complicated! Can I go now!

Sue: Dave, I know this is difficult but maybe this will help. Give me a couple of minutes while I type the two rules, the list of common objective pronouns and common prepositions on my computer. If you refer to it when you get stuck, pretty soon you'll have it memorized without really trying.

Dave: (exhausted) Okay. (begging) Can I go now!

Sue: Of course! You did really well, little brother!

Dave: (happily) Well... thanks, Sue!