

USING PRONOUNS & DETERMINERS

Academic Writing – Cohesion & Coherence

Another way to make your written and spoken English more cohesive is to use pronouns and determiners to refer back to previous ideas. Some pronouns and determiners that can be used for cohesion are listed in the following table.

PRONOUNS					DETERMINERS	
SUBJECT	OBJECT	POSSESSIVE	REFLEXIVE	DEMONSTRATIVE	POSSESSIVE	DEMONSTRATIVE
<i>I</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>mine</i>	<i>myself</i>	<i>this</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>this</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>yours</i>	<i>yourself</i>	<i>that</i>	<i>your</i>	<i>that</i>
<i>he</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>himself</i>	<i>these</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>these</i>
<i>she</i>	<i>her</i>	<i>hers</i>	<i>herself</i>	<i>those</i>	<i>her</i>	<i>those</i>
<i>it</i>	<i>its</i>		<i>itself</i>		<i>its</i>	
<i>we</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>ours</i>	<i>ourselves</i>		<i>our</i>	
<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>yours</i>	<i>yourselves</i>		<i>your</i>	
<i>they</i>	<i>them</i>	<i>theirs</i>	<i>themselves</i>		<i>their</i>	

Look at the following example showing pronouns and determiners used for cohesion.

A medicine **student** worked very hard on a **project**. **She** did all of the work on **it** by **herself**, and **her** English professor was very pleased with **this** work.

In this example, **She** refers to the noun student, the pronoun **it** refers to the noun project, the pronoun **herself** refers to the noun student, the determiner **her** refers to the noun student, and the determiner **this** refers to the noun work. These pronouns and determiners help to make the passage cohesive.

Task 1

Identify what the highlighted pronouns and determiners refer about.

My community should hire a health worker. I worked in a rural area one summer with a community health worker and saw the wonderful ways she helped the people in the area. She worked with mothers teaching **them** how to keep **their** children healthy. She worked with school teachers helping **them** recognize early signs of illness. She worked with restaurant personnel showing **them** proper food handling techniques. A community needs help in many ways. **This** is one way its citizens can make it healthier.

Them _____

Their _____

Their _____

Them _____

Them _____

This _____

Task 2

Fill in each blank with one of the pronouns and determiners from the box to make the passage cohesive.

Her	herself	she	them	this	this
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1. A researcher has been conducting a study on the causes of a certain disease. She has been conducting _____ study by _____. Up to now, _____ has determined several possible causes of the disease and has decided to focus on the most promising of _____. Though _____ research has not yet yielded a conclusive result, the researcher hopes _____ will happen soon.

It	mine	our	our	ourselves	ourselves	this	we	your
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2. You and I have _____ work cut out for _____. You have to finish _____ part of the project, and I have to finish _____. Then when we have finished _____ own parts of the project, _____ can get together to finish _____. We have to take it upon _____ to get _____ project done.

Their	them	themselves	these	they	themselves	they
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3. Some students have an important project to complete by Friday. However, _____ students have been procrastinating for quite some time, and now _____ are in a bit of a hurry, so _____ only hope of finishing the assignment on time is for _____ to stay up all night for the next three nights to get it done. The students have gotten _____ into this situation and now _____ will have to work very hard to get _____ out of it.



**Adapted from LONGMAN PREPARATION COURSE FOR THE TOEFL TEST, Phillips, D, 2006.*