Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Choose correct pronouns to match singular and plural antecedents, concentrating on the plural possessive pronoun their.
• Practice using different types of pronouns and their antecedents.
• Discuss how to apply this strategy to their independent writing.

Preparation

Materials Needed

• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text and practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.

1. Focus

Explain Using the Plural the Possessive Pronoun Their

Say: When we write informational reports, we write about many different topics. Sometimes we write about places. Sometimes we write about people. Our sentences include many nouns that refer to people, places, and things. Good writers make sure that the pronouns they use match the nouns, or antecedents, that they refer to. One of the possessive pronouns that writers must use is the plural pronoun their. And many writers get confused about how to use this pronoun correctly. Today we’re going to look at examples of when to use this pronoun, and we’re going to practice using it in sentences.

Model Using the Plural the Possessive Pronoun Their

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Modeling Text

Ask students to listen for pronouns and antecedents as you read the text aloud.

Say: In these sentences, the author gives some facts about the game of soccer. Let’s look closely at these sentences. Listen for the possessive pronoun in each sentence. Think about what noun, or antecedent, the pronoun refers to.

After sentence 1. Say: The writer says, “Players can better maintain their footing if they are wearing the right kind of shoes.” In this sentence, the pronoun their refers to the antecedent players. The writer must use the pronoun their because the antecedent is plural, players.

After sentence 2. Say: In this sentence, the writer says, “Goalkeepers need to be easily identified by their own team.” Again, the noun, or antecedent, goalkeepers is plural, so the pronoun is their. If I said, “Goalkeepers need to be easily identified by his own team,” that wouldn’t sound right, would it?

After sentence 3. Say: This sentence has a compound noun: The words Germany, Brazil, and Italy form the compound noun. I know the noun is plural
because it refers to three countries. The writer says, “Germany, Brazil, and Italy are proud that their soccer teams . . .” Their is the correct possessive pronoun because it refers to all three countries.

2. Rehearse

Practice Using the Plural the Possessive Pronoun Their

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

1. Soccer players need special shoes. _______ shoes are called cleats.
2. Shin guards protect players’ legs from bruises when other players kick _______ legs while going for the ball.

Practice Text

Ask students to work with a partner to identify the correct pronoun for each sentence.

Share Practice Sentences

Bring students together and ask volunteers to tell what the correct pronouns are. Ask what the antecedent is for each pronoun.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that plural nouns, such as the word players, take the plural possessive pronoun their. When you write your informational reports, make sure that your pronouns and antecedents agree. Using the correct noun and pronoun agreement helps your readers understand what you want to say.

Encourage students to choose their pronouns carefully as they draft and edit during independent writing time. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud sentences in which they’ve used nouns and the plural possessive pronoun their correctly.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
Model making simple sentences to introduce the pronoun their to beginning ELs.

Give two students pens to hold. Say: [Name] and [Name] have their pens. Give the students books to hold. Say: [Name] and [Name] have their books. Repeat with other objects and ask students to generate sentences using the same sentence frame.

Write the sentences on chart paper and circle the word their in each sentence.

Intermediate and Advanced
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.