
Pronoun Practice!



English is a very gendered language. This can pose a problem for people who don't identify as male or female, like genderqueer and non-binary folks. More and more people are using gender neutral pronouns such as "ze", "they", and "per." We often hear from GSA advisors, educators, and students that they want to use gender neutral pronouns, but still feel awkward doing it or are afraid that they are going to make a mistake. Well practice makes perfect! Even with practice, though, mistakes will still happen. When they do, don't make a big deal out of it: Briefly apologize, correct yourself, and work to do better next time.

This resource was created to help people practice using gender neutral pronouns by talking about three fictional characters: **Shea**, **Charlie**, and **Tenzin**.

Directions:

- If you are working with a big group of people, have everyone split off into groups of three.
- Print off enough of the character sheets so that each person can have one.
- Give folks some time to look over the sheet and learn a little bit about their character.
- In their groups, each person will take turns answering the following questions about their character, making sure to use the character's preferred pronouns:

1. What is your character's name, and what are their pronouns?
2. Where does your character live?
3. What is your character's favorite subject in school?
4. Does your character have a pet? What is the pet's name?
5. What kind of music does your character like to listen to?
6. What is your character's favorite snack?
7. What does your character want to be when they grow up?

Encourage folks to answer the questions using the gender neutral pronouns rather than the character's names. We have provided an answer key on page 5. For further reference, check out the "Pronouns are Important" resource on the GSAFE website.

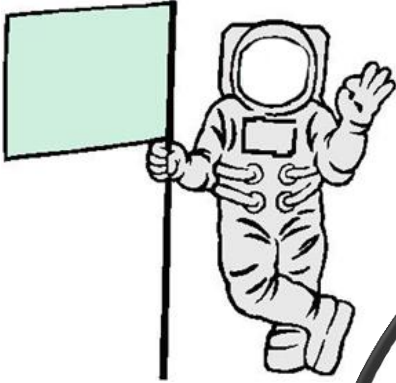
1

Shea
they/them/theirs

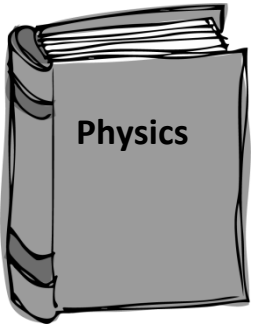
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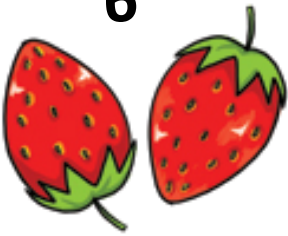
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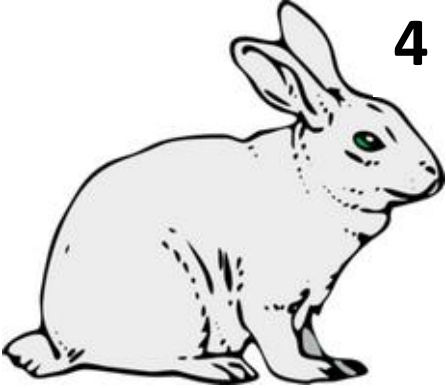
3



6



4



5



Sally

1

Charlie
per/per/pers

2



3



4

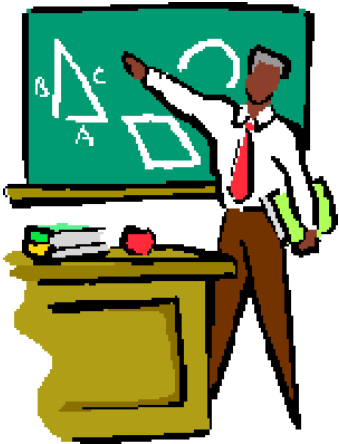


Hank

5



7



6



1

Tenzin
ze/hir/hirs

2



3

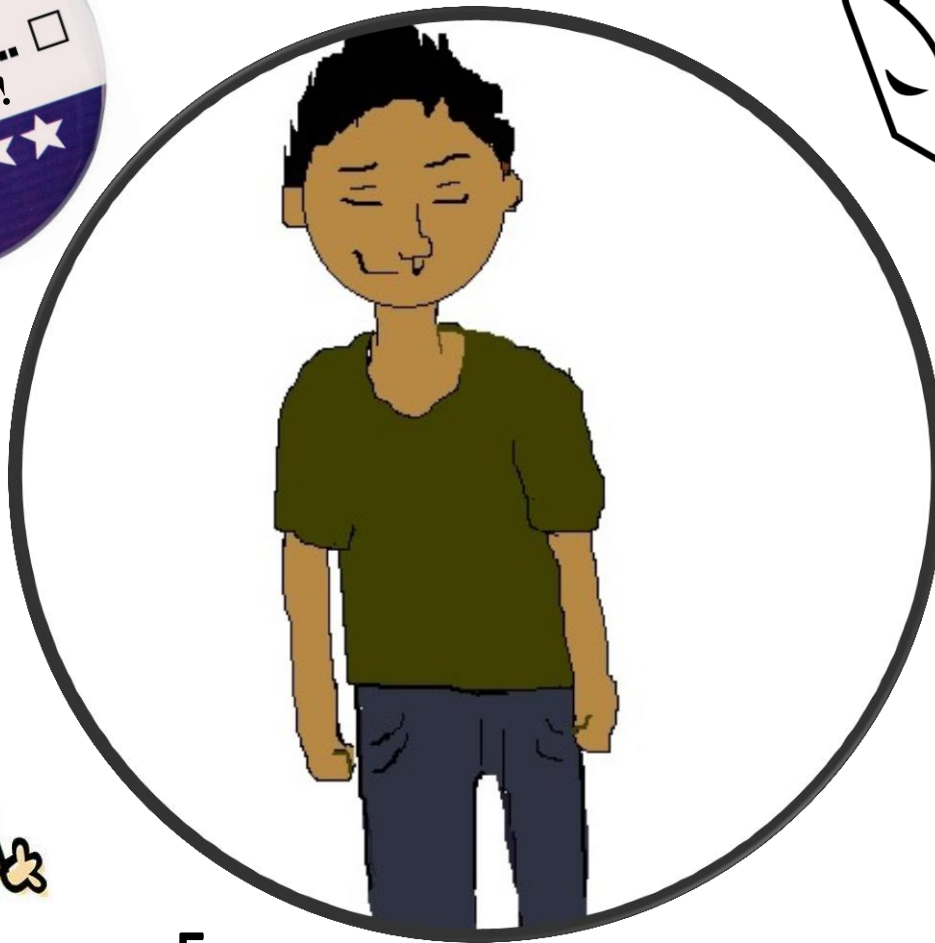
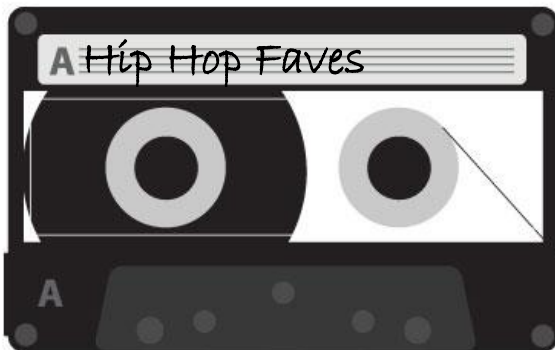


4



Tiger

5



7



6



Answer Key

Wording of the responses will vary. This is simply provided to demonstrate how these pronouns could be used in response to the questions. A pronoun chart is also included for reference.

Shea

1. My character's name is Shea, and their pronouns are they/them/theirs.
2. They live in Baltimore, Maryland.
3. They favorite subject is physics. – or – They really like physics.
4. They have a rabbit. Their rabbit's name is Sally.
5. They like to listen to classical music. – or – Their favorite music is classical music.
6. They love to eat strawberries! – or – Their favorite snack is strawberries.
7. They want to be an astronaut when they grow up!

Charlie

1. My character's name is Charlie, and per pronouns are per/per/pers.
2. Per lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.
3. Per favorite subject is history. – or – Per really likes history.
4. Per has a goldfish. Per goldfish's name is Hank.
5. Per likes to listen to jazz. – or – Per favorite kind of music is jazz.
6. Per loves to eat ice cream sundaes! – or – Per favorite snack is ice cream sundaes.
7. Per wants to be a teacher when per grows up!

Tenzin

1. My character's name is Tenzin, and hir pronouns are ze/hir/hirs.
2. Ze lives in Oakland, California.
3. Hir favorite subject is creative writing. – or – Ze really likes creative writing.
4. Ze has a cat. Hir cat's name is Tiger.
5. Ze likes to listen to hip hop. – or – Hir favorite kind of music is hip hop.
6. Ze loves to eat popcorn! - or – Hir favorite snack is popcorn.
7. Ze wants to be a politician when ze grows up!

Subject pronouns	Object pronouns	Possessive pronouns
<i>She is a student.</i>	<i>I go to school with her.</i>	<i>That is her book. – or – That book is hers.</i>
ze	hir	hir/hirs
per	per	per/pers
they	them	their/theirs