



Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

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Banta Learning Reflexive and Other Pronouns by K S Sandhu

A Weekend Adventure at Home

Last weekend, Banta and his sister Preeti decided to fix up their old garden shed. Their parents were away, so the teenagers had to look after the house by themselves. "We can do this ourselves," Banta said confidently. "No need to wait for Dad or Mum."

Preeti laughed. "Okay, but don't injure yourself with those heavy tools!" She remembered the time their dad fell off a ladder and hurt himself badly while repairing the roof. "If you want a job done well, do it yourself," she teased, repeating what their mum always said.

They started early in the morning. First, they cleaned the shed. Banta swept the floor while Preeti wiped the dusty shelves. "These shelves are filthy," she complained. "We should clean them properly ourselves." After that, they painted the walls. The paint cans were heavy, so they helped each other lift them. "Pass me the brush, please," Banta asked. "I can't reach the top by myself."

While they worked, their dog Jack ran around excitedly. He chased his tail and then washed himself in a puddle nearby. "Look at Jack enjoying himself," Preeti said. "Animals like him can take care of themselves very well."

In the afternoon, they took a break. Preeti made sandwiches for both of them. "I prepared these myself," she said proudly. Banta poured orange juice. "Thanks. I was starving," he replied. They sat outside and talked. "Do you think the twins next door can behave themselves when their parents are out?" Banta asked.

Preeti nodded. "They're old enough now. They play with each other and don't need adults all the time. Last week, they even looked after their little brother by themselves for an hour."

Suddenly, Banta noticed a problem. One of the shed windows was broken. "We should fix this before it rains," he said. "Otherwise, water will get in and ruin everything." Preeti found some wood and nails. "I'll hold the wood, and you hammer it," she suggested. They worked carefully so they wouldn't hurt themselves. When they finished, the shed looked much better. "We did a great job!" Banta exclaimed. "We should be proud of ourselves."

As the sun went down, they relaxed in the garden. Jack lay down beside them, content. The brother and sister smiled at each other. "It feels good to manage things ourselves," Preeti said. "We didn't need any help, and we didn't cause any problems for anyone."

Banta agreed. "Next time, maybe we can help our neighbours too. It's nice when people support one another." They both felt satisfied. Sometimes, doing things independently teaches you a lot, and working together makes everything easier and more fun.

Questions:

Question 1: Why did Banta and Preeti decide to fix the garden shed themselves?

Question 2: What happened to their dad in the past when he was working on the roof?

Question 3: How did Banta and Preeti help each other while painting the shed?

Question 4: What did Preeti say about the neighbours' twins and their ability to look after themselves?

Question 5: At the end of the day, what did Banta and Preeti feel about managing things independently?

Answers:

Answer 1: Their parents were away, so the teenagers had to look after the house by themselves / they decided they could do the job themselves without waiting for help.

Answer 2: He fell off a ladder and hurt himself (but he wasn't badly hurt).

Answer 3: Preeti held the wood while Banta hammered it / they helped each other lift the heavy paint cans.

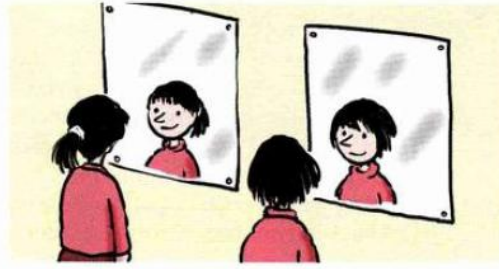
Answer 4: They are old enough now; they play with each other and can look after their little brother by themselves for short periods.

Answer 5: They felt good / satisfied / proud of themselves (and thought it was nice when people support one another).

9 Reflexive and other pronouns



1 Alice and Imogen are looking at **each other**.



2 Alice and Imogen are looking at **themselves**.

1 Reflexive pronouns

Compare the form and use of object pronouns and reflexive pronouns:

OBJECT/REFLEXIVE	<i>me/myself</i>	<i>you/yourself</i>	<i>him/himself</i>	<i>her/herself</i>	<i>it/itself</i>
	<i>us/ourselves</i>	<i>you/yourselves</i>	<i>them/themselves</i>		

*Her name is Christine but **her** friends call **her** Tina.* (*her* = object pronoun)

*Her name is Christine but **she** calls **herself** Tina.* (*herself* = reflexive pronoun)

We use reflexive pronouns (*myself, yourself, etc.*) when the subject and object of a sentence are the same person or thing: *Have **you** hurt **yourself**?*

We can also use reflexive pronouns to emphasise the subject of the sentence: *Why do I have to do everything **myself**? Dentists use this toothpaste **themselves**.*

By myself/himself, etc. means 'alone/on your own' or 'without help':

*'Do you live **by yourself**?' 'No, I share a flat.'* *The children did the drawing **by themselves**.*

2 Verbs with reflexive pronouns

Some verbs are often used with reflexive pronouns, for example:

*They **didn't enjoy themselves** on the activity holiday – it was hard work!*

***Help yourself** to some food – there's plenty of it!*

*Did the children **behave themselves** at the zoo?*

*I **blame myself** for the mistakes in the report – I didn't check it carefully.*

⚠ *Complain, feel, remember, rest, relax, get up and stand up do not have a reflexive pronoun:*

*✗ Do you ~~remember yourself~~ the hotel? ✓ Do you **remember** the hotel?*

But we can use a reflexive with *wash, shave* and *dress* if the situation is unusual:

*✓ After my operation I couldn't **dress myself** for three weeks.*

3 each other, one another

We use *each other* and *one another* when the subject and object are different:

*Alice and Imogen are looking at **each other/one another**.*

(= Alice is looking at Imogen and Imogen is looking at Alice.)

Compare: *Alice and Imogen are looking at **themselves**.*

(= Alice is looking at Alice and Imogen is looking at Imogen.)

4 you, one and they

We often use *you* for people in general: ***You** can't park here after 8.30 in the morning.*

We can also use *one* but it is very formal: ***One** needs to be careful when travelling alone.*

We often use *they* for the people in government or in charge of organisations:

***They're** putting taxes up again. **They** closed the factory in 2008.*

We also use *they* to talk about someone when we don't know who he or she is.

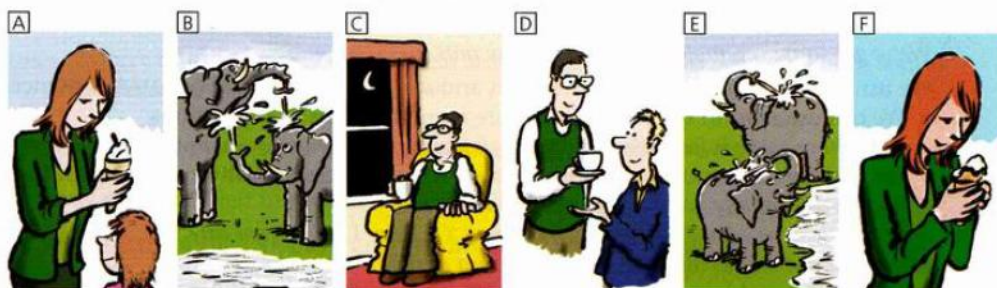
*Someone left this note for you, but **they** didn't leave **their** name.*

Practice

1 Complete the second sentence so it means the same as the first. Use reflexive pronouns and any other words that are necessary. **2.17** Listen and check.

- 0 We hope that all our guests have a good time.
We hope that all our guests enjoy *themselves*.....
- 1 Children under twelve must be with an adult.
Children under twelve can't see the film
- 2 Danger! Hard hats must be worn to prevent injury.
If you don't wear a hard hat, you may
- 3 This is a self-service restaurant.
In this restaurant, we have to get the food
- 4 Any of the team's supporters found causing problems will be removed.
All the supporters must behave

2 Match the sentences 1–5 with the pictures A–F.



- 0 Ryan brought his brother home and made him a cup of coffee. *D*.....
- 1 Ryan got home late and made himself a cup of coffee.
- 2 Jane went out with her daughter and bought her an ice cream.
- 3 Jane went out this afternoon and bought herself an ice cream.
- 4 The elephants frequently wash themselves.
- 5 The elephants enjoy washing one another.

3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Read the conversation and choose the correct words in *italics*.

2.18 Listen and check.

TONI Hi, Jan. Did you have a good holiday?

JAN Oh yes, thanks. We really enjoyed (0) *us* / *ourselves!* We were in one of those really big holiday clubs, you know, where (1) *you* / *they* pay before you go. There were a lot of activities, so the twins could look after (2) *them* / *themselves* and we didn't have to worry about (3) *them* / *themselves*.

TONI They're old enough to play with (4) *them* / *each other* now, anyway, aren't they?

JAN Oh, of course, we can leave them (5) *by* / *on* themselves now for short periods and not worry. Oh, how's your roof, by the way? Did you get it fixed?

TONI Well, the builder started, but he fell off a ladder and hurt (6) *hissself* / *himself*. He wasn't badly hurt but he couldn't finish the roof.

JAN It's true what (7) *one* / *they* say – if you want a job done well, do it (8) *yourself* / *your own!*

Answers

UNIT 9

- 1** 1 Children under twelve can't see the film *by themselves*.
2 If you don't wear a hard hat, you may *hurt/injure yourself*.
3 In this restaurant, we have to get the food *ourselves*.
4 All the supporters must behave *themselves*.
- 2** 1 C 2 A 3 F 4 E 5 B
- 3** 1 you 2 themselves 3 them 4 each other
5 by 6 himself 7 they 8 yourself