

PRONOUNS (4)

Indefinite Pronouns (07)

In context

3 min

What is an indefinite pronoun?

1



There is *nobody* in the room.



They are *both* working.

¹ Empty room picture from xedos4 / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Indefinite Pronouns 12 min

Indefinite pronouns are words that replace nouns without specifying which noun they replace. They are vague, not definite. There are many indefinite pronouns:

Singular	Plural	Singular or plural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> another - I like this drink, I will have another. anybody / anyone - There isn't anybody/anyone in the house. anything - Can you see anything? each - Each took a brochure. either - Either will be fine for me. enough - Enough is enough. everybody / everyone - Everybody/Everyone seemed happy. everything - Everything was in order. less - Sometimes, less is better. little - Little has been said about her past. much - Much was discussed at the meeting. neither - Neither agree with me. no one / nobody - No one / Nobody is listening to you. nothing - There is nothing to eat in the fridge. one - One could doubt his intentions. other - A girl was playing with a doll while the other was playing cards. plenty - I do not need more, I have plenty. somebody / someone - There is somebody / someone at the door. something - I can see something under the chair. whatever / whichever - Take whatever / whichever you want. whoever - Whoever did this? you (when it means 'one', informal) - You can guess who it was. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> both - Both look great. few - Few speak 5 languages. fewer - Fewer are using typewriters nowadays. many - Many have no idea about this new service. others - Others will tell you the opposite. several - Several chose to leave. they (when it means 'people in general', informal) - They say that smoking is bad for you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all - All is forgotten. any - Is there any left? more - More are coming tomorrow. most - Most answered correctly. none - None replied to my email. some - Some decided to stay. such - Such is life.

Language Tip: Indefinite Pronouns vs. Adjectives

5 min

A lot of indefinite pronouns can also be used as adjectives. The pronoun replaces the noun. The adjective is before the noun.

Examples:

Few believed him. (pronoun)

Few people believed him. (adjective)

Writing Exercise

5 min

Match each column on the left to a column on the right with the same meaning.

1. Either is fine with me.	a. Few would agree.
2. Not many would say this.	b. I listened to everything.
3. I wish I knew somebody.	c. Little is visible.
4. I heard it all.	d. Give me whichever you want.
5. I can't see much.	e. Nobody looks familiar.

Writing Exercise

5 min

Complete the sentences with: **either, neither, some, most, they, everybody, nobody, both, fewer, others.**

1. Is _____ here?
2. I am available Tuesday and Friday, _____ works for me.
3. Yes, please, I would like _____.
4. _____ say you should never drink and drive.
5. People used to smoke a lot but _____ do now.
6. I asked both of them for help but _____ replied.
7. _____ knows what he will decide.
8. Some people prefer the spring, _____ prefer the summer.
9. A few people may accept, but I am afraid _____ will not.
10. Joe and Vince are new employees, _____ work for me.

Reading Exercise with the Teacher

5 min

Read these sentences to your teacher. Then, replace the underlined words by an indefinite pronoun.

1. People say you should eat healthy. → _____
2. All the people I know have a smart phone. → _____
3. I can't see a thing in this helmet. → _____
4. Brent and Mark are neighbors; these two guys live in my street. → _____

Watch the Video!

10 min

With this video lesson, you will practice using non-selective indefinite pronouns.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6Lnzq12n0o>

Watch it again and choose the correct answer:

1. Non-selective indefinite pronouns are so called because:
 - a. they refer to a specific noun
 - b. they do not refer to a specific noun
 - c. they are always plural
2. 'anyone', 'something', 'nobody' are conjugated in the:
 - a. plural
 - b. feminine
 - c. singular
3. Which statement is true:
 - a. 'any' and 'every' are non-exclusive; 'no' and 'some' are exclusive.
 - b. 'any' and 'every' are exclusive; 'no' and 'some' are non-exclusive.
 - c. 'any' and 'some' are non-exclusive; 'every' and 'some' are exclusive.

Quiz

5 min

True or False?

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. There are few indefinite pronouns. | true | false |
| 2. Indefinite pronouns are words that replace nouns without specifying which noun they replace. | true | false |
| 3. A lot of indefinite pronouns can also be used as adjectives. | true | false |
| 4. 'another', 'whatever', and 'either' can be used as indefinite pronouns. | true | false |

Answers:

1. false
2. true
3. true
4. true

Choose the correct indefinite pronoun:

1. There is _____ in the lobby. (nobody / anybody)
2. _____ did this will be in trouble. (somebody / whoever)
3. This picture doesn't look too good, take _____. (other / another)
4. _____ is well that ends well. (everything / all)
5. _____ is my idea of happiness. (such / something)
6. I visited three dealerships, but _____ convinced me. (such / none)
7. Thank you, that's _____. (some / plenty)
8. A lot of students seemed interested, but _____ looked bored. (several / such)
9. Is there _____ I can do for you? (something / anything)
10. You know what _____ say: better late than never! (you / they)

Answers:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. There is <i>nobody</i> in the lobby. | 6. I visited three dealerships, but <i>none</i> convinced me. |
| 2. <i>Whoever</i> did this will be in trouble. | 7. Thank you, that's <i>plenty</i> . |
| 3. This picture doesn't look too good, take <i>another</i> . | 8. A lot of students seemed interested, but <i>several</i> looked bored. |
| 4. <i>All</i> is well that ends well. | 9. Is there <i>anything</i> I can do for you? |
| 5. <i>Such</i> is my idea of happiness. | 10. You know what <i>they</i> say: better late than never! |