Understanding Pronoun Case

Generally speaking, we can say that [pronouns](https://pensacolastate.instructure.com/courses/1325752/modules/items/12427593) come in two cases: **nominative** and **objective**.



 **Use the chart below to help you decide which pronoun to use.  Ask yourself...**

1. Is the pronoun I need ***doing the action*** (verb) in the sentence?  Choose **nominative**.
2. Or, is the pronoun I need simply ***related to or involved with the action*** (verb) that is happening in the sentence?  Choose **objective**.

**Let's look at some examples:**

* Bob and***I*** will go with Karen and ***her***.
	+ *The action (verb) in this sentence is "will go".  The pronoun "I" is doing the action--the person speaking ( "I")  is going with Karen.  The person being referred to as "her" isn't the focus of this sentence, so we should choose the objective pronoun "her".*
* The winners of the race were Gail and ***she***.
	+ *The action (verb) in this sentence is "were." Gail and the other person being mentioned "were" the winners, so they are doing the action in this sentence--we should choose the nominative pronoun "she".*
* I gave ***him*** and Dave the addresses.
	+ The action (verb) in this sentence is "gave".  "I" is responsible for doing the action in this sentence.  "Him and Dave" are simply involved with the action and are just receiving the addresses; therefore, we should choose the objective pronoun "him".
* I sent you to the man ***whom*** I called on your behalf.
	+ There are two actions (verbs) in this sentence: "sent" and "called".  "I" is responsible for doing both of the actions in this sentence.  The man being referred to with the pronoun "whom" is just related to the action.  He isn't doing the sending or the calling, so we should choose the objective pronoun "whom".
* I sent you to the man ***who*** called me about you.
	+ This similar sentence also has two actions (verbs): "sent" and "called".  Read carefully.  The difference between the two sentences is that each action is being carried out by a different person:
		- "I" is doing the sending, so we use the nominative pronoun "I".
		- "The man" is doing the calling, which means he is also directly involved in doing the action in the sentence; therefore, we need to use another nominative pronoun, "who," in this part of the sentence.

**Remember that you cannot always go by what “sounds” right, as we often misuse pronouns in informal, non-standard spoken English. With practice, you can use pronouns effectively in formal, standard English—the English we use in formal circumstances.**

**Circle the correct pronoun in each sentence.**

1. Is that award really for Elaine and (I, me)?
2. Yes, it was (I, me) that sent you that birthday card.
3. The lady (who, whom) called said that drama practice had been cancelled.
4. Mr. Brainard, his son Phillip, and (they, them) will be on the committee.
5. It is (they, them) who must take the blame for that.
6. Before you and (she, her) leave, call home, please.
7. The only ones (who, whom) we know are Betty and Joe.
8. Did you and (he, him) ever hear back from the talent scouts?
9. Don and Linda have challenged you and (I, me) to a game of darts.
10. (Who, Whom) do you trust?