

Pronoun Worksheet

Reflecting on what you learned, try to answer the following questions

If you were doing introductions for a class and wanted the group to introduce their names *and* their pronouns how might you ask people to do this?

Possible points of pushback:

If someone in that group asked, “Why are you asking pronouns? Why are they important?” How could you respond?

If someone else said, “Why are you asking my pronouns? Can’t you just figure them out by looking at me?” How could you respond?

If someone said, “I get why it makes sense to talk about pronouns for *those* people but why do I need to say my pronouns?” How could you respond?



Pronoun Worksheet - Sample Answers

If you were doing introductions for a class and wanted the group to introduce their names and their pronouns how might you ask people to do this? Why might you ask people to do this?

- **Role model:** “Hey everyone we are going to go around in a minute and I’d like to know your name and what pronouns you use. I’ll go first! My name is Meg and I use she/her for my pronouns.”
- **Role model and explain why you’re asking:** “Hey everyone in a minute here I am going to ask everyone to go around and share their name and pronouns. For example my name is Meg and I use she/her pronouns. It is important to me to know all of your pronouns so that I don’t make any incorrect assumptions and so we all know how we should refer to each other.”
- **Role model and explain what pronouns are:** “Hey everyone we are going to start with intros and I am going to ask everyone to go around and share their name and pronouns. For example my name is Meg and I use she/her pronouns. If you’ve never been asked your pronoun before it’s simply how people refer to you without your name. Common pronouns are he/him, she/her, and they/them.”

If someone in that group asked, “Why are you asking pronouns? Why are they important?” How could you respond?

- **Getting away from assumptions:** “The reason that I’m asking everyone to introduce pronouns is because while pronouns are something most of us have grown up assuming for ourselves and other people, there are a lot of folks for whom we make incorrect pronoun assumptions. There are also people who use pronouns we may not be aware of. In an effort to be more inclusive and to ensure we don’t make incorrect assumptions, we’re asking everyone to intro their pronouns.”
- **Attach it to the mission of the organization:** “As an organization we recognize that there are a lot of different ways to identify and that sometimes we incorrectly assume pronouns for folks. In an effort to create more affirming spaces we are asking everyone to introduce their pronouns.”

If someone else said, “Why are you asking my pronouns? Can’t you just figure them out by looking at me?” How could you respond?

- “I could assume that I know your pronouns but I **can’t know for sure** that I’d get it right until you tell me. So rather than risk being wrong I prefer to ask.”
- “I’m **not making assumptions** that you *aren’t* [a man] or [a woman], I’m just not making assumptions in any direction, and I’m leaving it open for you to share with me how you identify.”
- “For a lot of people it’s likely that my assumption of how they would like to be referred to would be accurate. I’ve **been wrong before and I prefer to ask** rather than assume pronouns for anyone.”

If someone said, “I get why it makes sense to talk about pronouns for those people but why do I need to say my pronouns?” How could you respond?

- “All different types of people use all different types of pronouns. So I can’t tell by looking at you what pronouns you use, I could guess, I could assume, but I **can’t know for sure** which is why I ask you to share your pronouns.”
- “I’m glad that you can understand why it would be important for some people to discuss pronouns, and rather than me guessing who those people are or calling particular attention to them, I **ask everyone to introduce their pronouns**. As you can imagine it might get frustrating for that person to always have to be the one to bring it up or advocate for intro-ing pronouns.”

