

Gender Neutral Language Ways to Avoid the Generic Use of "He/His/Him"

1. Eliminate the pronoun from your sentence or replace it with "a," "an," or "the."

Example: The student should complete the work assigned to him, but he should not make his test papers into paper airplanes.

The student should complete the assignment, but should not make test papers into paper airplanes.

2. Make the pronoun and the noun to which it refers plural rather than singular.

Example: I will contact each student and tell him when to come for a conference.

I will contact the students and tell them when to come for a conference.

3. Substitute "you/your/yours" when you are addressing your reader directly.

Example: If a student misses two successive appointments, he will lose his standing appointment.

If you miss two successive appointments, you will lose your standing appointment.

4. Change an "if" clause to a "who" clause.

Example: If a student comes late to class, he interrupts the lecture or discussion.

Whoever comes late to class interrupts the lecture or discussion.

5. Change "when" clauses to "on/upon" clauses.

Example: When a student learns of the death of a close relative, he should immediately notify the Student Life Office.

Upon learning of the death of a close relative, a student should immediately notify the Student Life Office.

If all else fails, use either "she or he" or "he or she."

Example: Each student is responsible for his own assignment.

Each student is responsible for his or her own assignment.