The background of the image is a spiral-bound notebook with a light beige, textured paper. The spiral binding is visible on the left side. The text is centered on the page.

The Book of Grammar

Lesson Four

AP Language and Composition
Mr. McBride

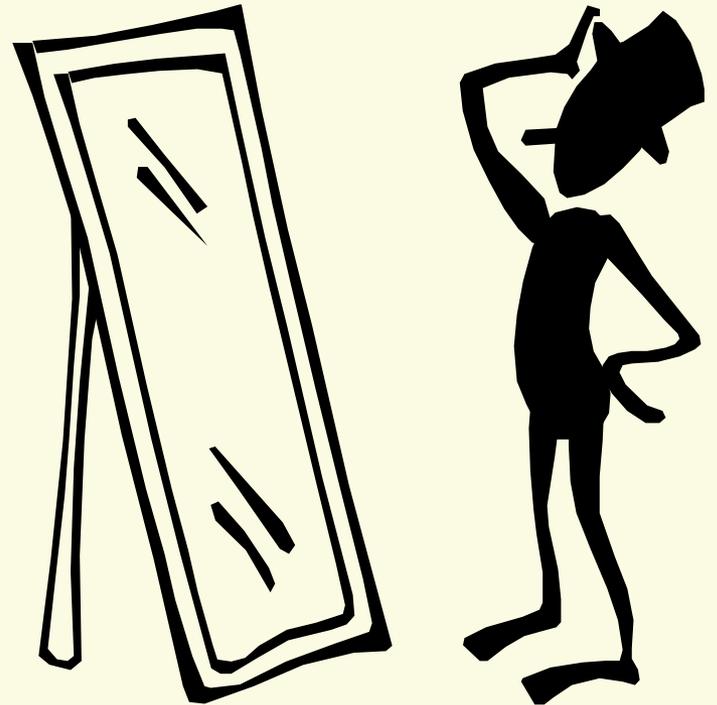
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But, after lesson three, don't I now know everything about pronouns?

- Did each of the planes keep *its* place in the formation or did each of the planes *their* place in the formation?



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- Did each of the planes keep *its* place in the formation or did each of the planes *their* place in the formation?



What you should know by the end of Lesson Four:

- When to use the *plural* and when to use the *singular* case of a pronoun

Note

Remember that the “antecedent” of a pronoun is the word that the pronoun is replacing or referring back to.



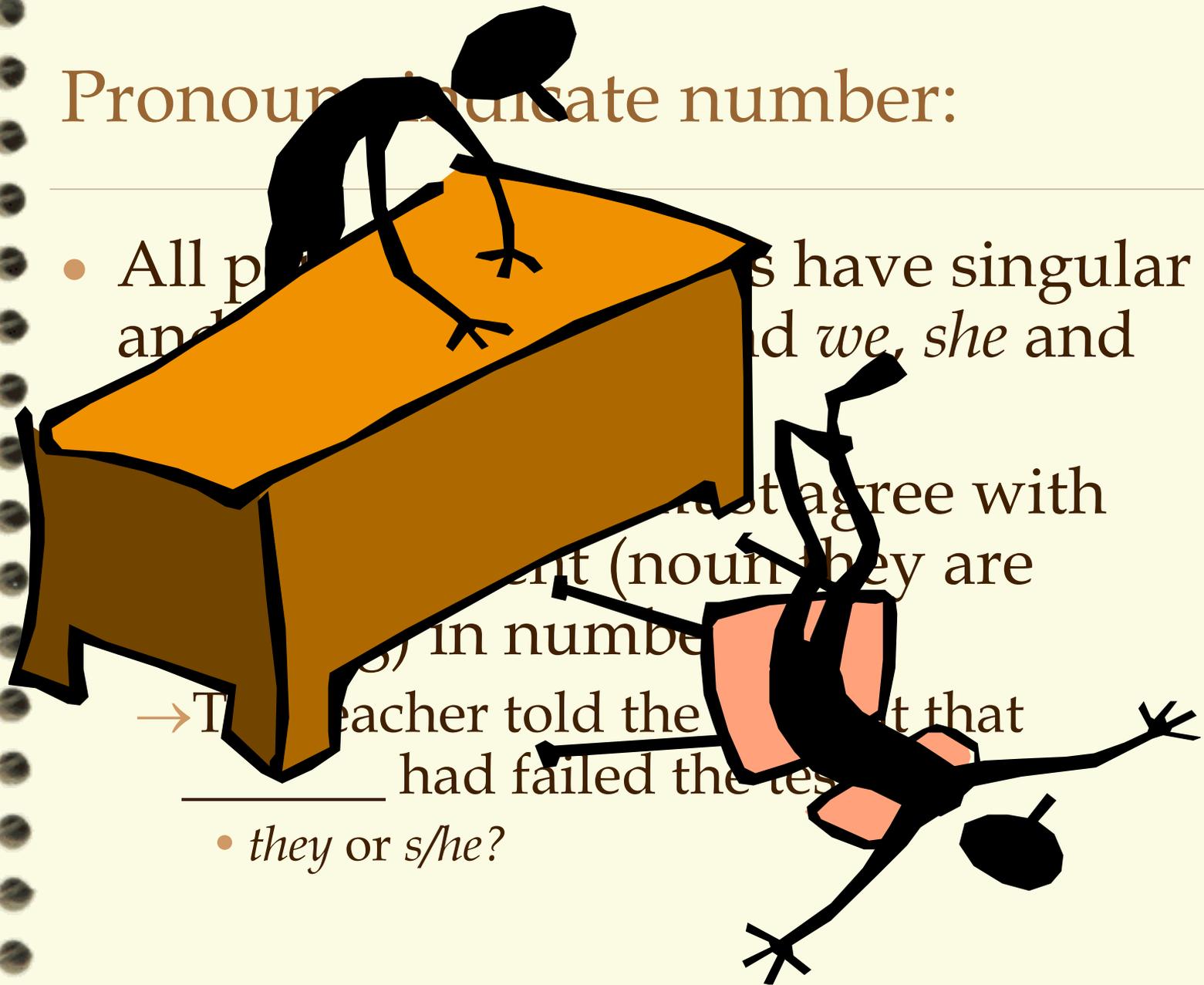
Pronoun indicate number:

- All pronouns have singular and plural forms. *we, she* and

They must agree with the subject (noun they are referring to) in number.

→ The teacher told the student that _____ had failed the test.

- *they* or *s/he*?



Gender Ambiguity

- English lacks a singular personal pronoun that is not gender-specific. In speech, people often make up for this by using “their” when the gender is not clear – “Who left *their* backpack?”
- You must be careful not to do this in formal writing – “Who left *his or her* backpack?”

Examples of personal pronoun problems: Agreement in Number

- Does *their* or *her* go in the following blanks?
- The student forgot _____ homework.
 - Student, the antecedent, is a singular noun, and must be referred to with a singular possessive pronoun: *her*.
- Who left _____ backpack?
 - Only one student could have left her backpack.



Examples of pronoun problems: Agreement in Number

- “Everybody in the class forgot _____ homework.”
 - *their* or *his* or *her*?
 - *Everybody* is singular, and must be referred to with a singular possessive pronoun.



Singular and Plural Antecedents

- Singular: the following words are singular
 - another, anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, little, much, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, other, somebody, someone, something
 - “*Little* was known about the affair, but it was enough to ruin his reputation.”
- Plural: the following words are plural
 - both, few, many, others, several
 - “*Few* of the students were ready to take their test.”

Ambiguously Numbered Antecedents

- The following words can be either singular or plural:
 - all, any, more, most, none, some
- For words that can be singular or plural, look at what they refer to:
 - Some of the cows escaped, and they crossed the road.
 - *Some* refers to cows, which is plural.
 - Some of the wine spilled, and it stained the couch.
 - *Some* refers to wine, which is singular.



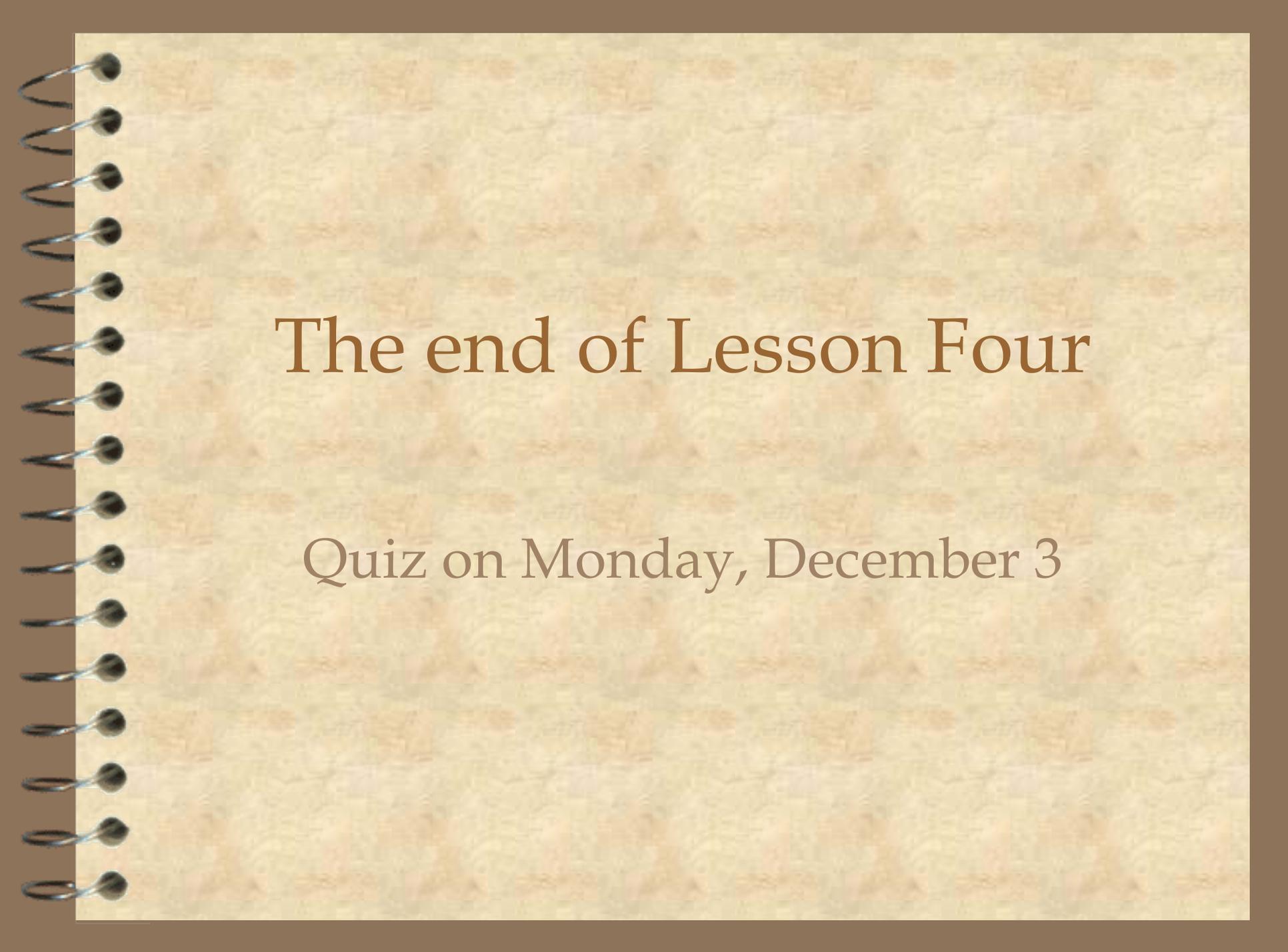
What you should know by the end of this lesson:

- When to use the *plural* and when to use the *singular* case of a pronoun

So do you know the answer to these questions now?

- Did everyone do *his* homework or did everyone do *their* homework?



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The end of Lesson Four

Quiz on Monday, December 3