

Intensive or Reflexive? How to Use Them

Reading and Discussion

Pronouns are words that take the place of a noun. The most common pronouns are personal pronouns. There are several other types of pronouns too, such as:

- **intensive**
- **reflexive**
- **demonstrative**
- **indefinite**
- **interrogative**
- **relative**

Intensive and **reflexive** pronouns are the same pronouns, but they are used in different ways. Here are the most common intensive and reflexive pronouns:

- **myself, yourself, herself, himself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves**

These pronouns can be confusing because they are exactly alike. Let's take a closer look at this pair and take the mystery out of their use.

Intensive pronouns are personal pronouns that emphasize a noun or another pronoun. They intensify the subject. An easy way to find these pronouns is to look for the ending **self** or **selves**. Intensive pronouns are not used as objects. They are used only to give more emphasis to the **subject**.

- John **himself** built a sand sculpture of a dragon.

The pronoun **himself** is used to give emphasis to the subject **John**. An intensive pronoun is used like a spotlight to shine on the subject.

- I will build a sand castle **myself**.

Here, the pronoun **myself** is used to give emphasis to the subject **I**.

Reflexive pronouns are the same pronouns as intensive pronouns, but they are used in a different way. A reflexive pronoun cannot be used alone. It must refer to someone or something already spoken about. A reflexive pronoun is used as an **object**.

- John built **himself** a sand castle.

Here, the pronoun **himself** is used as an object. It reflects back to the subject **John**.

- The kitten hurt **itself** when it jumped off the roof.

Here, the pronoun **itself** reflects back to the subject **kitten**.

Name _____

Date _____

Activities

Activity A: Intensive or Reflexive? Which pronoun is used in the following sentences? If the underlined pronoun is **intensive**, write **I** on the blank line. If the underlined pronoun is **reflexive**, write **R** on the blank line.

1. _____ My little sister just learned how to feed herself.
2. _____ Susan wrote herself a note.
3. _____ I myself will take the puppy for a walk.
4. _____ Jake and Ryan themselves will bake a cake.
5. _____ We ourselves have cleaned the yard.
6. _____ The kite twisted itself around the tree.

Activity B: Write a sentence using an intensive pronoun.

1. _____

Activity C: Write a sentence using a reflexive pronoun.

1. _____

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Key

Activity A

1. **R** My little sister just learned how to feed herself.
2. **R** Susan wrote herself a note.
3. **I** I myself will take the puppy for a walk.
4. **I** Jake and Ryan themselves will bake a cake.
5. **I** We ourselves have cleaned the yard.
6. **R** The kite twisted itself around the tree.

Activity B

Answers will vary.

Activity C

Answers will vary.