

Using *Who* and *Whom*

Reteaching

The case of the pronoun *who* is determined by the pronoun's function in the sentence.

Nominative	Objective	Possessive
who, whoever	whom, whomever	whose, whosever

Who and *whom* can be used to ask questions and to introduce subordinate clauses.

Who is the nominative form. In a question, *who* is used as a subject or as a predicate pronoun. *Whom* is the objective form. In a question, *whom* is used as a direct or indirect object of a verb or as the object of a preposition.

Subject	<u>Who</u> discovered the tomb of King Tut?
Predicate nominative	The explorer was <u>who</u> ?
Object	With <u>whom</u> did Howard Carter work?

This is how to use *who* and *whom* when introducing subordinate clauses. When the pronoun functions as the subject in a subordinate clause, use *who*. When the pronoun functions as the object in a subordinate clause, use *whom*.

Subject of clause	It was Howard Carter <u>who</u> found the door of the tomb.
Object in clause	The ruler <u>whom</u> the ancient Egyptians buried in the tomb was Tutankhamen.

Using *Who* and *Whom* Correctly

Choose the correct pronoun from those in parentheses in the following sentences.

1. (Who, Whom) was Tutankhamen?
2. Before and after (who, whom) did he reign?
3. King Tut was a young king (who, whom) ascended the throne when he was only nine years old.
4. Aton was the single god (whom, who) the people of Egypt worshiped at that time.
5. Although King Tut believed in Aton, there were many priests in Egypt (whose, whom) beliefs ran counter to the King's.
6. After Tut's death and burial, priests (who, whom) rejected Aton tried to destroy all monuments to the young king.
7. By (who, whom) was King Tut remembered after centuries?
8. Archaeologist Howard Carter, for (who, whom) researching ancient Egypt was a lifelong obsession, found the tomb of King Tut while digging at the entrance to a nearby tomb.
9. The people who stocked the tomb left both useful and beautiful things to be used in the afterlife by the king (who, whom) they respected and admired.
10. Carter, (who, whose) reaction was great joy, was amazed at what he found.
11. (Whoever, Whomever) had filled the tomb had left a variety of precious and historical objects, such as model ships, carved statues, gold jewelry, and weapons.
12. (Who, Whom) believes in the so-called curse of King Tut?

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More Practice

A. Identifying the Function of *Who* and *Whom*

In the following sentences, identify the function of *who* or *whom*. If a sentence uses *who*, underline once the verb of which it is the subject. If a sentence uses *whom*, underline twice the verb or preposition of which it is an object.

EXAMPLES I read about people **who** had been born on my birthday.
One of them is someone about **whom** we have all heard.

1. **Whom** do you know in Denver, Colorado?
2. The new principal will be **whomever** the school board supports.
3. Do you know **who** won the election?
4. The salesclerk to **whom** you spoke yesterday is working with another customer.
5. The artist **who** painted this portrait captured an unusual expression.
6. Was John Adams the president **who** was the first to live in the White House?
7. **Whom** will you choose as your lab partner in chemistry?
8. The operator **whom** I called gave me important information.

B. Using *Who* and *Whom* Correctly

Choose the correct pronoun from those in parentheses in the following sentences.

1. The workers (who, whom) had been digging in the desert heat were tired.
2. (Whom, Who) expected them to find this treasure, almost untouched for centuries?
3. (Whoever, Whosever) dream it was to find the tomb of King Tut had inspired their employers.
4. The king (who, whose) death happened centuries ago is now known worldwide.
5. Howard Carter, the archaeologist (who, whom) made the discovery, was excited.
6. He contacted the man from (who, whom) he had received financial backing, Lord George Edward Carnarvon, in England.
7. By (who, whom) had the royal seal been affixed to the wall so many years ago?
8. The first person to look inside was (who, whom)?
9. Carter himself, (who, whom) had searched for years, was given the privilege.
10. He was the one (who, whom) reported that he caught the glint of gold.
11. (Whoever, Whomever) had filled the tomb wanted to insure King Tut's happiness in the afterlife.
12. Carter was a scientist (who, whose) dedication we should all admire.
13. Six weeks after entering the tomb, one of the searchers (who, whom) had entered the tomb died of a blood infection.
14. Others (who, whom) had been involved in the discovery supposedly committed suicide.
15. Howard Carter dismissed all rumors of a curse; he was one of those logical people to (who, whom) superstitions made no sense.

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Application

A. Proofreading for *Who* and *Whom*

Proofread the following paragraph. When you find the pronoun *who*, *whom*, or *whose* used incorrectly, cross it out. Then insert this proofreading symbol \wedge and write the correct pronoun above it.

Who knows why the magnificent Mayan civilization of Central America collapsed over a thousand years ago? The Maya, who we credit with achievements in the fields of architecture, astronomy, mathematics, and the arts, peaked as a civilization around A.D. 250. The Maya were the people whom understood the movement of the sun and stars better than anyone else at the time. They made a calendar whose basis was the 365-day orbit of the earth around the sun. The Maya are also the people whom many historians believe first invented the zero. Whomever sees the inscribed stone monuments in the ruins of their ancient cities is looking at an original system of writing. Students, especially those for who history is the highest interest, will continue to wonder why the Mayan civilization declined.

B. Using *Who*, *Whom*, and *Whose* in Writing

Rewrite each sentence or pair of sentences below as a single sentence that uses a subordinate clause introduced by or containing *who*, *whom*, or *whose*. Use the pronoun given in parentheses in your new sentence.

EXAMPLE I just met the homeowner; she tends this beautiful garden. (who)
I just met the homeowner who tends this beautiful garden.

1. Charles Dickens was a popular author in 19th century England; he released many of his stories in serial format to keep his audience interested for months. (who)

2. Franklin Roosevelt was a powerful president, and his ideas were fresh and innovative. (whose)

3. Pierre and Marie Curie were scientists; they discovered radium. (who)

4. Do you remember the name of that tutor? You called her on Thursday night. (whom)
