Pronouns Overview

Pronouns can be used in a number of ways to either replace a noun or modify its context. While there are many different types of pronouns, the three most common forms are: **Personal Pronouns**, **Demonstrative Pronouns**, and **Relative Pronouns**.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns are substitutes for proper nouns and can be singular, plural or dual. Like all nouns, personal pronouns decline based on number and case, but only the third-person singular has gender, having a separate word for male and female references. Examine the two sentences below: *You two love your children* and *God tests us*.

Though there are a lot of personal pronouns to remember, all but the dual pronouns should be recognisable to a modern English speaker. '*Min - mine*', '*ure - our*' and '*eower - your*'. If you're unsure which number a pronoun is, sound it out and it will usually sound similar to a modern pronoun. The one exception to this are the dual pronouns, which fell out of usage, so if you see '*inc*' or '*unc*' you can be sure you're dealing with a dual pronoun.

	Nom	**Acc**	**Gen**	**Dat**
1st Person Singular	ic	me	min	me
1st Person Dual	wit	unc	uncer	unc
2nd Person Singular	þu	þe	þin	þe

2nd Person Dual	git	inc	incer	inc
3rd Person Singular	he / heo	hine / heo	his / hire	him / hire
1st Person Plural	we	us	ure	us
2nd Person Plural	ge	eow	eower	eow
3rd Person Plural	hie	hie	hira	heom

Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns are pronouns that 'demonstrate' or add specificity to a noun. There are two types of demonstrative pronouns in Old English, the '*þes - this*' pronouns and the '*se - that*' pronouns. The '*se*' pronouns are also what we use for 'the' so it is important to remember that any of the pronouns in the '*se*' category can be translated as either 'the' or 'that'.

As before, remember that demonstrative pronouns are a good way of telling what case a word is in, as a noun and all its modifiers, including pronouns, always share the same case, gender and number.

	þes - this				se - that			
	Masc	**Neut**	**Fem**	**Plur**	**Masc**	**Neut**	**Fem**	**Plur**
Nom	þes	þis	þeos	þas	se	þæt	seo	þa
Acc	þisne	þis	þas	þas	þone	þæt	þa	þa
Gen	þisses	þisses	þisse/ þisre	þissa/ þisra	þæs	þæs	þære	þara
Dat	þissum	þissum	þisse/ þisre	þissum	þæm	þæm	þære	þæm

Relative Pronouns

A relative pronoun is a word which introduces a relative clause. A relative clause is a clause that is dependant on an earlier part of the sentence for context. For example, in the phrase 'Our father who art in heaven', the 'art in heaven' is dependant on the **antecedent** 'our father' and the relative pronoun is 'who'.

A relative pronoun can be represented by '*þe*' alone, a 'the' demonstrative and '*þe*', or a 'the' demonstrative alone. The word '*þe*' never means 'the'.

If the relative participle '*þe*' is paired with a demonstrative, which form the relative pronoun takes depends on which noun the relative pronoun is linked to. For example, if the relative pronoun is linked to a feminine subject, it would be '*seo þe*', while if it was linked to a plural direct object, it would be '*þa þe*'.

Relative Pronouns				
	Masculine	**Neuter**	**Feminine**	**Plural**
Nominative	se þe	þæt þe	seo þe	þa þe
Accusative	þone þe	þæt þe	þa þe	þa þe
Genitive	þæs þe	þæs þe	þære þe	þara þe
Dative	þæm þe	þæm þe	þære þe	þæm þe