
Heminway, Annie. *French Pronouns and Prepositions*.

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Teachers of French will no doubt agree that pronouns and prepositions are among the most difficult parts of speech to teach. There are a few recent books that deal with these topics in detail, for example, *French Prepositions: Forms and Usage* by T. M. Booth or *Est-ce “à” ou “de”?* by E. Lasserre. Most often, however, pronouns and prepositions are simply included as individual chapters in French grammar books.

The main difficulty in teaching French pronouns results from the fact that they are inflected to indicate their function in the sentence (subject, direct object, and so on), as well as to reflect the person, gender, and number of their referents. While English draws some of these distinctions as well, French draws them in many places where English does not; as a result, there are many more pronouns in French than there are in English. As far as prepositions are concerned, relying on their English counterparts is often deceptive. Even my advanced students often forget the difference between *à*, *sur*, and *pendant* and produce sentences in which they describe the programs they like to watch “*sur la télé sur les weekends*.” Many French textbooks include extensive theoretical explanations and few practice exercises or, on the other hand, numerous exercises, but few explanations. This new book combines both, in a balanced manner, and contains more than a hundred different exercises.

Published in the best-selling *Practice Makes Perfect* series, this volume examines French pronouns and prepositions systematically in a text and workbook format. It gives clear explanations and all the tools students will need to learn and practice these two complex parts of speech. With clear and concise definitions and a variety of exercises, the manual will not only help develop knowledge of how and why pronouns and prepositions are used, but also and, more impor-

tantly, how to incorporate them in everyday conversations. The book is divided into two parts, which contain a total of eighteen units, followed by a glossary and an *Answer Key*. The first fourteen chapters are entirely devoted to various groups of pronouns (demonstrative, disjunctive, indefinite, interrogative, possessive, relative, direct and indirect object). The last four chapters deal with simple and compound prepositions as well as with the order of prepositions. Each unit starts with a brief description of the particular group of pronouns or prepositions, their forms, and their usage, followed by numerous French examples with English translations. The author avoids specialized jargon or lengthy lists of exceptions to the rules, which makes the book easy to read and easy to use.

The idea behind this manual is that students can build their skills in a foreign language through regular, daily practice. The author encourages the learners to do all the exercises in a unit using a pencil, then — and only then — to check the answers in the *Answer Key* at the end of the book. Once all the exercises have been completed, students should start all over again. The mastery of these features, which comes with practice and repetition, in the end will make it easy to understand the nuances of French and appreciate the language even more.

The book can be used either for individual work at home or in a classroom setting with an instructor. It is designed primarily for the intermediate level. More advanced students will also benefit from the book, as a review, before moving on to more complex grammatical structures. The numerous skill-building exercises include a variety of formats, such as fill-in-the-blank sentences, sentence rewriting, writing original sentences, translations from English into French, and others. Furthermore, students will have the opportunity to practice prepositions and gender, pronouns as subjects, direct and indirect objects, prepositions with geographical names, and prepositional contractions.

In addition to the exercises, the volume also includes useful reference lists of verbs followed by the preposition *à* or *de*, as well a list of those verbs that take no preposition. The last unit contains a number of pages titled *A Potpourri of Verbs* where Hemingway discusses verbs whose meaning changes depending on whether they are followed by a preposition or not, such as *manquer à*, *manquer de*, or *manquer*. The section *La cerise sur le gâteau* lists six very common verbs in the *passé composé*, which can be used either with the auxiliary verb *avoir* or *être*, such as *monter* or *descendre*. As in previous units, students will be able to practice the use of these verbs in various exercises.

Given the clear presentation, easy-to-follow examples, and large number of exercises, this book will prove an invaluable resource to intermediate-level students. It can be a useful supplement in a French Grammar course, especially for those students who, having studied French for four or more years, still only have a vague knowledge of pronouns and are sometimes unsure about the difference between a direct and an indirect object pronoun.

Even though students can also use this book on their own by verifying their responses in the *Answer Key*, it would have been helpful to include a more exhaustive glossary at the end of the volume. Intermediate students may not be familiar with words such as *une pelote* (37) or *les concitoyens* (63), which are

not in the glossary. They may not know either how to translate verbs *to prevent* (164) or *to threaten* (164) to complete the translation exercises. Therefore, they may need a good dictionary to supplement this valuable book on pronouns and prepositions.

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Publisher's Response

McGraw-Hill is very pleased to respond to Professor Dziedzic's detailed review of our new addition to the *Practice Makes Perfect* series, *French Pronouns and Prepositions*. He identifies the main aim of the title to present clear explanation and review of all aspects of French pronouns and prepositions, its suitability for both individual work at home and in the classroom, and its aim to encourage learners to effectively incorporate these parts of speech into spoken communication.

While this book is highly appropriate for intermediate students, we would suggest that advanced beginners would also find this book useful. And we take note of Professor Dziedzic's helpful suggestion for a more extensive glossary to reduce the need for students to refer to a dictionary while completing the exercises.

Garret Lemoi
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McGraw-Hill Professional