

Grammar Worksheets: Apostrophe Errors, Answers and Teaching Tips  
<http://www.grammar-worksheets.com>

1. If you think your going to the movies, your mistaken!

**Answer:** If you think **you're** going to the movies, **you're** mistaken!

**Better Answer:** If you think **you are** going to the movies, **you are** mistaken!

**Teaching Tip:** Remember, this is not a comprehensive lesson on apostrophes. This worksheet covers errors that are common in the writing of high school and college students. Sometimes we tell students to write the way they speak. Formal written English has typographical conventions that spoken English does not.

No one would raise an eyebrow if this sentence were SPOKEN, but the conventions (use of apostrophe) of standard written English dictate that we use the `re.

As a "rule of thumb": Encourage your students NOT to use contractions in formal academic writing, unless they are writing dialogue or consciously using an informal tone.

2. The boy who's dog was sent to the pound cried uncontrollably.

**Answer:** The boy **whose** dog was sent to the pound cried uncontrollably.

**Teaching Tip:** Interestingly, some students tell me that they have never heard (or seen) the word "whose," which is the possessive form of who. What throws students is that they associate the apostrophe with the possessive, so many of them believe that adding an apostrophe to who makes it possessive. Have them write: "who's means who is or who has."

3. A good dog always cleans its' food bowl.

**Answer:** A good dog always cleans **its** food bowl.

**Teaching Tip:** This is a very common error. Emphasize to students that its' DOES NOT EXIST in standard written English. Its' is ALWAYS wrong. The word its indicates possession and the contraction it's means "it is."

4. The Sisters of Saint Joseph support they're convent with outside employment.

**Answer:** The Sisters of Saint Joseph support **their** convent with outside employment.

5. Its never as good a deal as the salesperson makes it out to be.

**Answer:** **It's** never as good a deal as the salesperson makes it out to be.

**Better Answer:** **It is** never as good a deal as the salesperson makes it out to be.

**Teaching Tip:** Again, stress that we AVOID CONTRACTIONS in formal written English.

6. The rugby players promise that their not going to stop playing after August.

**Answer:** The rugby players promise that **they're** not going to stop playing after August.

**Better Answer:** The rugby players promise that **they are** not going to stop playing after August.

7. Their not going to the carnival, and your not either.

**Answer:** **They're** not going to the carnival, and **you're** not either.

**Better Answer:** **They are** not going to the carnival, and **you are** not either.

8. Its never too late to apply, even when the registrar's office closes it's doors.

**Answer:** **It's** never too late to apply, even when the registrar's office closes **its** doors.

**Better Answer:** **It is** never too late to apply, even when the registrar's office closes **its** doors.

9. Its' important to realize whose actually using the computers in the lab.

**Answer:** **It's** important to realize **who's** actually using the computers in the lab.

**Better Answer:** **It is** important to realize **who is** actually using the computers in the lab.

## Apostrophe Errors, Worksheet 2, 18 Exercises, Answers and Teaching Tips

1. The orange tree wilted because it's trunk was damaged severely.

**Answer:** The orange tree wilted because **its** trunk was damaged severely.

2. At its' peak, the river crested at sixteen feet.

**Answer:** At **its** peak, the river crested at sixteen feet.

3. The couple who's son won the award swelled with pride as they walked out of the auditorium.

**Answer:** The couple **whose** son won the award swelled with pride as they walked out of the auditorium.

4. Margaret asked, "Whose going to attend the ceremony?"

**Answer:** Margaret asked, "**Who's (or who is)** going to attend the ceremony?"

5. If your going to the game, you should take a glove in case you catch a foul ball.

**Answer:** If **you're** going to the game, you should take a glove in case you catch a foul ball.

6. You showed good manners when you gave up you're seat to the elderly person.

**Answer:** You showed good manners when you gave up **your** seat to the elderly person.

7. When they're train arrived, the students quickly loaded the luggage.

**Answer:** When **their** train arrived, the students quickly loaded the luggage.

8. When Janice and Karen tell there parents that their going to the same college, their parents may buy them a car.

**Answer:** When Janice and Karen tell **their** parents that **they're (or "they are")** going to the same college, their parents may buy them a car.

9. Its never a good idea to spend more money than we earn.

**Answer:** **It's ("It is")** never a good idea to spend more money than we earn.

10. The old dog broke it's paw when it fell from the sofa.

**Answer:** The old dog broke **its** paw when it fell from the sofa.

11. Did Graham tell you whose been selected to the all-star team?

**Answer:** Did Graham tell you **who has ("who's")** been selected to the all-star team?

12. After you have finish you're lunch, please return to the classroom.

**Answer:** After you have finish **your** lunch, please return to the classroom.

13. The Johnsons are not going to cancel there vacation just because of bad weather.

**Answer:** The Johnsons are not going to cancel **their** vacation just because of bad weather.

14. HLN promised it's viewers complete coverage of the Casey Anthony trial.

**Answer:** HLN promised **its** viewers complete coverage of the Casey Anthony trial.

15. Its been eight years since we met, and I love you more than ever.

**Answer:** **It has ("It's")** been eight years since we met, and I love you more than ever.

16. Papa Bear growled, "Whose been sleeping in my bed?"

**Answer:** Papa Bear growled, "**Who has ("Who's")** been sleeping in my bed?"

17. As long as your going to the grocery story, could you please bring back a carton of eggs?

**Answer:** As long as **you're ("you are")** going to the grocery story, could you please bring back a carton of eggs?

18. The Mallory twins lost there tickets on the way to the Justin Bieber concert.

**Answer:** The Mallory twins lost **their** tickets on the way to the Justin Bieber concert.