When should you use “who,” and when should you use “whom” in your writing?

**The Rule:** “Who” and “whom” are interrogative pronouns. This means they take the place of a noun in a question. The official rule is that “who” is used in the subject position in the sentence, while “whom” is used in the object position of the sentence.

If this sounds confusing, remember this simple rule: use “who” where you would use “he” and “whom” where you would use “him” or “her.” This will make the rule more evident to your ear as you read your sentence to yourself.

**Examples:**

Notice the connection between “who” and “he” or “she” and between “whom” and “him” or “her” in the following sentences.

- Who gave you the ball?
  - He gave you the ball.

- He gave the ball to whom?
  - He gave the ball to her.

Most of the time, the subject is at the beginning of the sentence and the object is at the end. But that is not always the case. Take, for example, the following sentences:

- To whom did you give the ball?
  - To him I gave the ball.

These sentences may sound a bit unusual, but they are grammatically correct. That’s why the surest guide is to remember to use “who” where you would use “he” and “whom” where you would use “him.” Try out the following exercises to make sure you’ve learned this concept.

Given the discussion on the front side of this page, decide whether to replace the bold word or words with “who” or “whom” in the following sentences:

1. He gave you the picture frame?
2. You took it from him?
3. You took it from him?
4. She met you at the coffee shop?
5. She arrived with him?
6. She arrived with him?
7. Why don’t you ride with Charles?
8. Sandra says you should go?
9. To the victor go the spoils?
10. For what person was this report made?
LUC WRITING CENTER – “WHO VS. WHOM”

Answers:

1. Who
2. Whom
3. Who
4. Who
5. Whom
6. Who
7. Whom
8. Who
9. Whom
10. Whom