



GRAMMAR GROWLS WITH THE GRAMMAR OWL – ME, MYSELF & I, pt 2



As I indicated previously, the Owl really gets his grammar feathers in a twist when it comes to the use and misuse of the word *Myself*.

In an attempt to smooth the Owl's feathers, I'd like to mention a few of the ways *Myself* is abused in conversation, writing, and speech-making, and suggest alternatives.

“On behalf of myself and my family, I would like to thank...” ~~ The phrase on behalf of indicates that you are doing something either to benefit someone, or as the representative of someone (see this definition of the phrase at dictionary.com). So you can act as a representative of your entire family in your speech of thanks, but you are already yourself. You do not need to represent yourself. Simply say, “On behalf of my family, I would like to thank...” or “On behalf of the family, I would like to thank...”

Keep the Owl happy — never say “On behalf of myself...”

“Janie and myself are pleased...” “Send the response to myself...” ~~ People often think that *Myself* sounds classier, or more dignified than plain old, everyday *I* or *Me*. Unfortunately, in most cases it merely sounds ungrammatical. Simply say “Janie and I are pleased...” and “Send the response to me.” The Owl will be pleased, too.

I hear you asking, “So, Owl and/or Beth, is it ever correct to use *Myself*?”

Yes, it is! It's a matter of those pesky subjects and objects again. *Myself* is one of the parts of speech known as reflexive pronouns. These pronouns refer (or reflect) back to the word that is the subject of the sentence. A reflexive pronoun is never the subject. Never. Ever.

Myself is used either as the object of a sentence — as in sentences such as “I picked up the book for myself” or “I dressed myself”

OR

Myself can be used to provide emphasis, as well. I myself know this to be true. Notice that the sentence is fine without myself — I know this to be true.

For those who wonder, other reflexive pronouns such as himself or herself follow the same rules.