

“ I tried to pick out the shape of the deer’s body, but it was all wrong. The legs weren’t long enough, neither was its neck. ”

—From *The Killing Woods* by Lucy Christopher,
found by Kennedy Cantu

Teach it

1. Write this on the board

Its

Proof:

its = his

Ex:

The computer was broken,
(his)
but its monitor still worked
fine.

PRACTICE THE CONVERSATION:

- A:** Go ahead and read the sentence.
- B:** *The computer was broken, but its monitor still worked fine.*
- A:** Yes. But wait . . . how did you spell *its*?
- B:** I-t-s.
- A:** You mean *apostrophe s*?
- B:** No. No apostrophe.
- A:** I think you should put an apostrophe.
- B:** Not this time!
- A:** Can you prove that for me?
- B:** *The computer was broken but his monitor still worked fine.*
- A:** His monitor, its monitor, that’s right. Perfect!



2. **Explain:**

This word is a mess. Lots of people put an apostrophe in it because it sounds possessive. But it never gets an apostrophe.

***Its** is a pronoun. It’s like the word his or her. Is there an apostrophe in that? We like h-i-’-s friend. Nope, that would be crazy.*

*So a great substitute word is his. When you use **its**, substitute the word his for it and listen. If it makes sense, then you have the right word.*

*When you write **its**, here is how you prove it:*

- Underline the word and write the proof over it.
- Write his in parentheses over the word **its**.

Remember, the underline means I intentionally made a grammatical choice here. The proof above the word means that it’s the correct choice.

3. **Ask:** Who will try out this proof with me? (Enact the conversation.)
4. **Say:** Open to your grammar chart and find **its**. Let’s jot down the proof word on the chart.

Model it

5. Project the journal entry and read it.
6. Ask volunteers to read the sentences with **its** aloud. Enact the conversation with several students.

Practice it

7. **Say:** In your journal today, see if you can use the word **its** at least five times, underlining each use. Write the proof over each one.

April 8

Well Hi!!! Have you ever had that dream where there are a bunch of crabs crawling on you? Well, I'm at the beach right now and surprisingly the crab that is on me isn't biting or pinching me at all!!! It's weird. Oh no!!! The crab's claws! I took ^(his)its claws!!! ^(his)its claws are what it uses to stand! I took ^(his)its feet, and ate them! ^(his)its claws are tasty!!! ^(his)its eyes, not so tasty.

—Grayson Kyle
Grade 6