

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
20+ years of student success
www.csulb.edu/uwc
(562) 985 – 5162
SSC – 245

Who vs. Whom

Overview: Relative pronouns, such as *who* and *whom*, can be tricky because many writers are unclear about the specific rules regarding their use. Students often decide to completely eliminate *whom* from their

Who and *whom* are both relative pronouns, which means that they function to connect a clause to the rest of a sentence. In other words, relative pronouns are found in sentences that contain more than one clause, and they relate to a specific word or phrase that they modify. *Who* and *whom* are usually used only in relation to people. In the following example, *who* is used in reference to

used in reference to the object of a sentence. The subject is what the object is the receiver of the action. Therefore, *who* relates to the pronouns "him," "her," and "us." In the following sentence, "Michael" is the subject.

Michael cared for deeply.
to reword the clause with "her": "Michael cared for *her* deeply.")

with *who* or *whom*. Again, if you are not sure what acts as the subject of a statement, replacing *who/whom* with *he* or *him*, and see the results below:

y candy bar.

the new job listing? I had *him* in mind for the new job listing.

Compound Forms of Who/Whom

Who and *whom* function in the same way in their compound forms, *whoever* and *whomever*.

- *Whoever* volunteers to cover my shift is a great frieih *whoever*