

## When to use "I" and when to use "me"

Which of the sentences below is correct and why?

- Jill took Justin and I to the shop.
- Jill took Justin and me to the shop.

### Answer

This is a part of a bigger question that troubles both learners and native speakers of English: when to use *I* and when to use *me*.

### The difference between *I* and *me*

Both *I* and *me* are 1st person singular pronouns, which means that they are used by one person to refer to himself or herself. *I* is the subject pronoun, used for the one "doing" the verb, as in these examples:

- I am studying for a Russian test. (*I* is the subject of *am studying*.)
- I can speak Russian, but I can't read it very well. (*I* is the subject of *can speak* and *can't read*.)

*Me* is the object pronoun, used as the object (or receiver) of the action of the verb, as in these examples:

- My math teacher encouraged me to come for extra help after school. (*Me* is the object of *encouraged*.)
- She asked me to bring my homework. (*Me* is the object of *asked*.)

### The confusing part

What gets confusing for many people is which form to use when there are two subjects or objects linked with *and*, as in these examples:

- a. Jenny and me/I (?) joined the chess club.
- b. Jill took Justin and me/I (?) to the shop.

In sentence a), *Jenny* and *me/I* are the subjects of the verb *joined*. Therefore, the subject pronoun, *I*, is considered correct. You will certainly hear native speakers say, "Jenny and me," and it may be acceptable in spoken English, but most traditional grammarians and English teachers will disapprove. Don't use it in writing.

The opposite is true for sentence b), which is the original example from above. *Justin* and *me/I* are the objects of *took*. Therefore *me* is considered correct by most grammarians and teachers, although you will hear people say, "Justin and I." Again, don't use it in writing.

**Hint**

If you're having trouble deciding which one to use in a particular sentence, here's a hint: Take out the other person, and it should be clearer. You are not likely to be tempted to say, "*Me* joined the chess club," or "Jill took *I* to the shop."

I hope this helps.