

Who/Whom Answer Key/Teaching Tips, <http://www.grammar-worksheets.com>  
This answer key/tip sheet contains the answer key and teaching tips for both the primary Who or Whom exercises, as well as Supplemental Exercises, Sheet 1.

### Primary Worksheet (only 4 exercises)

1. (Who, Whom) did Mom invite to Marcela's birthday party?

**Answer:** Whom

**Teaching Tip:** Ask students to answer the question in a complete sentence using the same tense and words as the original.

"Mom invited (past tense) HIM to Marcela's birthday party." HIM has an "m" sound (it is a pronoun in the objective case). The pronoun WHOM has an "m" sound (it is also a pronoun in the objective case). So the correct form is WHOM.

2. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for (who, whom) the bells tolls; it tolls for thee. (John Donne)

**Answer:** whom

**Teaching Tip:** An object of a preposition (the word "for") is always in the objective case. So anytime you have a preposition (for, in about, above, between, in,...) followed by (who, whom), the answer is **whom**.

3. (Who, Whom) invited Richard to be the representative for the entire class?

**Answer:** Who

**Teaching Tip:** Turn the question into a declarative sentence: xxxxx invited Richard to be the representative for the entire class. Substitute a name or pronoun (he, she) for xxxxx. "He" and "she" are subject case pronouns, and "who" is the subject case form.

4. Susan is the chef (who, whom) will create an exquisite menu for our ten-year reunion.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** Create two sentences:

- Susan is the chef.
- She will create an exquisite menu for our ten-year reunion.

"She" is a subject case pronoun, so the correct answer is "who."

## Supplemental Exercises, Sheet 1 (16 exercises)

1. (Who, Whom) attended the high school graduation ceremony with Rhonda?

**Answer:** Who

**Teaching Tip:** Turn the question into a declarative sentence. (Answer the question in a complete sentence.)

"She" attended the high school graduation ceremony with Rhonda.

"She" is a subject case pronoun, and "who" is the subject case form.

2. When the chef arrived at the restaurant, she asked (who, whom) had ordered only thirty pounds of chicken for the month of August.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** This construction is more subtle than the others. Let's agree that the dependent clause, "When the chef arrived at the restaurant" does not factor in at all, so let's just not consider it.

We are left with: She asked (who, whom) had ordered only thirty pounds of chicken for the month of August.

Students need to recognize that we have a relative clause (that starts with "who") embedded in the main sentence. Let's take that clause "(who, whom) had ordered only thirty pounds of chicken for the month of August." And turn it into a simple declarative sentence:

He (or "she") had ordered only thirty pounds of chicken for the month of August.

The pronoun "He" is in the subject case, so the correct answer must be "who," which is the subject case form.

3. Robert Anderson is the running back (who, whom) the Pittsburgh Steelers drafted in the second round.

**Answer:** whom

**Teaching Tip:** Create two sentences.

- Robert Anderson is the running back.
- The Pittsburgh Steelers drafted **him** in the second round.

The pronoun "him" is object case, so the correct form is "whom," the object case.

4. After sensing a problem with the senior class, the principal demanded to know (who, whom) the class leaders had contacted to conduct the petition drive.

**Answer:** whom

**Teaching Tip:** Disregard the introductory participial (“ing”) phrase. Then create two sentences.

- The principal demanded to know **this**.
- The class leaders had contacted **him** to conduct the petition drive.

When you turn the relative clause (whom the class leaders had contacted to conduct the petition drive) into a simple declarative sentence (The class leaders had contacted **him** to conduct the petition drive), the obvious answer should jump out to most students.

The pronoun “him” is in the object case, so the correct answer is “whom,” the object form.

5. William, (who, whom) removed the milk bottle from the refrigerator?

**Answer:** Who

**Teaching Tip:** Get rid of the word “William” and state the answer as a simple declarative sentence.

- He removed the milk bottle from the refrigerator.

The pronoun “he” is subject case, so “who,” the subject form, is the correct answer.

6. Although the admiral wanted the commander to resign, the commander still wanted to know (who, whom) he had offended.

**Answer:** whom

**Teaching Tip:** Eliminate the dependent clause that starts with “Although”; then create two sentences.

- The commander still wanted to know **this**.
- He (the commander) had offended **him**.

“The pronoun “him” is object case, so “whom” is the correct response.

7. Unlike the women on the reality show The Real Housewives of New Jersey, working moms often don’t know the names of (who, whom) takes care of their children after school.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** Disregard the “Unlike” introductory phrase. Then create two sentences.

- Working moms often don’t know the names.
- **She** takes care of their children after school.

The pronoun “she” is subject case, so we use the subject case form, “who.”

8. Reflecting on his career in entertainment, the actor thanked everyone (who, whom) had helped him succeed.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** Disregard the "Reflecting" introductory phrase. Then create two sentences.

- The actor thanked everyone.
- **He** (the "everyone" from the previous sentence) had helped him (the actor) succeed.

The pronoun "He" is in subject case, so the correct form is "who."

9. Reflecting on his career in entertainment, the actor thanked everyone (who, whom) he had been associated with.

**Answer:** whom

**Teaching Tip:** These sentences may look the same, but they are not. Again, disregard the "Reflecting" introductory phrase. Then create two sentences.

- The actor thanked everyone.
- He (the actor) had been associated with **them**.

The pronoun "them" is in the object case, so the correct form is "whom."

10. As Deborah called the meeting to order, she admonished anyone (who, whom) had not attended the previous meeting to pay close attention.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** Disregard the introductory dependent clause ("As Deborah called the meeting to order") and create two sentences.

- She (Deborah) admonished anyone ... to pay attention.
- **They** (the "anyone" from the previous sentence) had not attended the previous meeting.

The pronoun "they" is in the subject form, so the correct answer is "who."

11. (Who, Whom) will decide whether the palm trees will be planted on the median or on the lawn itself?

**Answer:** Who

**Teaching Tip:** Answer the question in a simple, declarative sentence using a pronoun.

- **She** will decide whether the palm trees will be planted on the median or on the lawn itself.

12. (Who, Whom) will the attorney call to testify?

**Answer:** Whom

**Teaching Tip:** Answer the question in a simple, declarative sentence using a pronoun.

- The attorney will call **him** to testify.

**Note:** **Him** and **them** both end in **m**. So does the pronoun **whom**. This may be a useful mnemonic devise for students.

13. The teacher decided (who, whom) should be the moderator of the classroom panel.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** Create two sentences.

- The teacher decided this.
- **She** should be the moderator of the classroom panel.

The pronoun "she" is in the subject case, so the correct form is "who."

**Note on sentences 14, 15, and 16.** The next three sentences are very similar, but they have subtle differences that affect the use of who and whom. Also, the introductory ing-phrase (Because...) should not be taken into account.

14. Before signing up for the class, the students wanted to know (who, whom) the teacher would be.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** This usage may give students problems, because we have what is called a "predicate nominative." After a linking verb ("is" "was" etc.), if there is a noun or pronoun on the "other side" of the verb that refers to the subject, that noun or pronoun is called a "predicate nominative." It carries the same case as the subject. So...

- The students wanted to know **this**.
- The teacher would be Mr. Jones.

Now substitute a pronoun in the same case (subject) as Mr. Jones:

- The teacher would be **he** (Mr. Jones = teacher). Or, more commonly,
- **He** would be the teacher.

The pronoun "he" is in the subject case, so the correct form is "who."

15. Before signing up for the class, the students wanted to know (who, whom) would teach the class.

**Answer:** who

**Teaching Tip:** Create two sentences.

- The students wanted to know **this**.
- Mr. Jones would teach the class. → with a pronoun **He** would teach the class.

The pronoun "he" is in the subject case, so the correct form is "who."

16. Before signing up for the class, the students wanted to know (who, whom) the class would be taught by.

**Answer:** whom

**Teaching Tip:** Create two sentences.

- The students wanted to know **this**.
- The class would be taught by Mr. Jones.

In this case, "Mr. Jones" is the object of the preposition by, so the pronoun for Mr. Jones must be in the object case.

- The class would be taught by **him**.

The pronoun "him" is in the object case, so the correct form is "whom."