



Demonstrative Pronouns: Demonstratives in Context: Phone Calls, Introductions and Referring Back

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- [On the phone] Hello, ___ is Maria. May I speak to Mr Lee?
a) it
b) this
c) she
d) that
- [On the phone] Hello? Who is ___?
a) it
b) he
c) this
d) that
- Mum, ___ is my friend Alex. Alex, this is my mother.
a) that
b) it
c) he
d) this
- The meeting was cancelled. ___ was really disappointing for everyone.
a) That
b) This
c) These
d) Those
- I passed all my exams! — ___ wonderful! Well done!
a) It has
b) These are
c) That's
d) This is
- We should always be honest. ___ is what I believe.
a) Those
b) This
c) These
d) That
- [On the phone] Hi, ___ is the dentist's office. How can I help you?
a) this
b) it
c) here
d) that
- She works 12 hours a day without any break. I could never do ____.
a) this
b) that
c) those
d) these
- Ladies and gentlemen, ___ are the winners of tonight's competition!
a) that
b) this
c) those
d) these
- He never listens to anyone. ___ is his biggest problem.
a) These
b) This
c) That
d) Those



Answers

1. b) this
2. c) this
3. d) this
4. a) That
5. c) That's
6. d) That
7. a) this
8. b) that
9. d) these
10. c) That
11. b) This
12. a) this
13. c) Those
14. a) this
15. b) that
16. d) That
17. a) that
18. d) These
19. c) that's
20. b) that ... this



Explanations

1. “this” (b)

On the phone, we identify ourselves with 'this': 'This is Maria.' We do not say 'I am Maria' or 'It is Maria' when answering or making a phone call.

2. “this” (c)

On the phone, we ask 'Who is this?' to find out who is calling. 'Who is it?' is used when someone knocks at the door, not on the phone. 'This' is the standard word for phone identification.

3. “this” (d)

When introducing someone who is present, we say 'This is...'. It is the standard introduction phrase in English.

4. “That” (a)

'That' refers back to the whole situation (the meeting being cancelled). We use 'that' as a pronoun to comment on a fact or event just mentioned. It is singular, so 'those' and 'these' do not fit.

5. “That's” (c)

'That's wonderful!' (= That is wonderful) is a natural response to good or bad news. We use 'that' to refer to what the other person just said.

6. “That” (d)

'That' refers back to the idea just stated ('we should always be honest'). It is used as a pronoun for back-reference to a whole statement.

7. “this” (a)

When answering a phone call and identifying your place of work, we say 'This is...'. For example: 'This is the dentist's office.'

8. “that” (b)

'That' refers to the action described in the previous sentence (working 12 hours without a break). The speaker distances themselves from the idea, so 'that' is the natural choice. 'This' would imply something near or current, which doesn't fit.

9. “these” (d)

The winners are present on stage (near), and they are plural, so we use 'these'. This is a formal introduction of people who are right here.

10. “That” (c)

'That' refers back to the habit described (never listening). We use 'that' to point to a previously mentioned fact or behaviour.

11. “This” (b)

When introducing a person who is present, we say 'This is...'. We do not say 'She is my colleague' as an introduction — 'this' is the standard form.

12. “this” (a)

'This' is used for forward reference (cataphoric use) — it points to what comes next: 'never give up'. The speaker is about to state something.

13. “Those” (c)

'Those' refers to things from a past time (far in time), and 'things' is plural. We use 'those' as a determiner before the noun 'things' when talking about a distant period.

14. “this” (a)

When calling and checking who answered, we ask 'Is this the pizza restaurant?' Using 'this' is standard phone English.

15. “that” (b)

'That' refers to the fact she mentioned (being tired). 'Apart from that' is a set phrase meaning 'except for that thing'.

16. “That” (d)

'That' refers to the whole activity described (playing guitar and drums). The speaker is commenting with admiration on someone else's skill, so 'that' (pointing back, with distance) is natural. 'This' would imply something the speaker is currently doing.

17. “that” (a)

'Remember that!' refers to the information just given (the train departure time). 'That' points back to what was said.

18. “These” (d)

'These' refers to people near the speaker (our designers, standing close by), while 'those' refers to people further away. Both are plural.

19. “that's” (c)

'That's great news!' (= That is great news) responds to what someone just told you. We use 'that' to refer to the other person's statement.

20. “that ... this” (b)

A uses 'that' because the object is far from A (across the room). B uses 'this' because B has now picked it up (it is near B). This shows how the same object changes from 'that' to 'this' depending on the speaker's proximity.