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What is a Gremlin?

If you look up the word gremlin, you will see a definition like the following:

An imaginary creature that damages machinery

Or

A tiny mischievous imaginary being that is blamed for faults in tools, machinery, and electronic equipment

This year, we will refer to pesky writing mistakes as “gremlins”. Think of them as mischievous, yet friendly little monsters who just love to “mess up” your grammar!

You’ll see make-believe stories about gremlins throughout these lessons, and hopefully this will make things a little fun.

Also, once we learn a “gremlin”, we will not leave it for good. Instead, we will continue practicing with it all year. This means that a “gremlin” we cover in week one will be on our last review test! This repetition will help us eliminate all of these pesky mistakes once and for all.



Getting Started

- Gather materials. Students will need a notebook, glue, scissors, and art supplies like colored pencils, markers, crayons, gel-pens, highlighters. We allow our students to use whichever of these they want or even a combination. This is the part that they like the most.
- Leave four blank pages at the front for your notebook or section for the cover page and the table of contents which are included in this packet. We set up this section of our notebooks in the first week of school by gluing in these pages.
- Explain to your students what a gremlin is and discuss why you will be calling the problems in writing “grammar gremlins”. You can use our page titled “What is a Gremlin” to help you explain.
- Each Monday, introduce the “Gremlin of the Week”. Copy the mini-lesson, and pass them out to students. You can either pre-cut them or have students cut them to glue in the notebooks. Just cut the lesson out, and remove the excess white paper around it. All lessons will fit nicely in a composition notebook. These lessons are student friendly and include tricks to help students learn! Have the students glue the mini lesson on the left side of a page.
- After you teach the lesson and make sure all students understand, it is time for them to respond. On the right side of the page, use the foldables and cut-outs provided in this packet to reinforce the lesson. If you feel that more is needed, you may allow students to be creative by drawing a picture, making up a rap song, creating a poem, or something else in response.. Because time is limited and precious in our ELA classes, we only provide at the most five or six minutes for the Gremlin of the Week creative response.
- The practice pages provide a short assessment to make sure students have understood the lesson and can apply what they have learned. These pages can be done in class or assigned for homework.
- Continue to review the week’s gremlin until Friday. On Friday, give the quiz. There are quizzes provided for each Grammar Gremlin.

What's the deal with the gremlin?

Our little gremlin appears in each lesson. Facts about his gremlin world are included in all of the mini-lessons. This helps keep things interesting and will give your students something to giggle about! We have a gremlin word wall in our classrooms, where all of our gremlins go after we learn them each week. Also, after a gremlin is taught, students must be careful to edit their writing to make sure any "gremlin" we have covered is used correctly. For example, if we have already covered the semicolon as a gremlin, students are to make sure they use it correctly in their writing. If they do not, "GREMLIN ALERT!" is written right on their paper. This is great for writing instruction because the teacher can ignore the mistakes that have not been covered yet and only focus on the ones that have been taught. Students build their "editing toolbox" as the lessons progress each week.

You can add to these lessons!

Create additional handouts for students to practice. Provide more homework with the gremlin of the week by having students write sentences.

Spiraling assessment is also a component!

After every five gremlins, there is a review test. These tests reviews past weeks' gremlins and assess all that have been taught up to that point. Study guides are provided as well. This is the best part about this resource because as all teachers know, repetition is the key!

Make it fun!

Monsters are very popular these days. We buy monster stickers and reward students with them when they make a 100 on a gremlin quiz. We make a Gremlin Wall and hang cute little cut out monsters with each lesson that we learn. We even bought the cutest little squishy monsters at the Dollar Tree, and on Mondays when we introduce the lesson, we toss these little fellows around. Whoever catches it either answers a question about the week's gremlin or uses it correctly in a sentence. Kids love this!

Grading

It's up to you as to how often to grade the notebooks. We are including rubrics that we use to periodically check notebooks.



It's vs. Its

It's always means it is or it has.

The apostrophe in it's takes the place of the missing letter.

It is = it's ~ Here the *i* is missing. **It has** = it's ~ Here the letters *h* and *a* are missing.

It's been a long time since the gremlin drank coffee without lemon. (It has been a long time...)

It's time to get a trim when a gremlin trips over its own fur! (It is time to...)

Test it! Try it is or it has in your sentence. If it sounds right, use it's. If it sounds weird, use its.

Its is a possessive pronoun.

Use it to show possession. If something belongs to "it", use *its*.

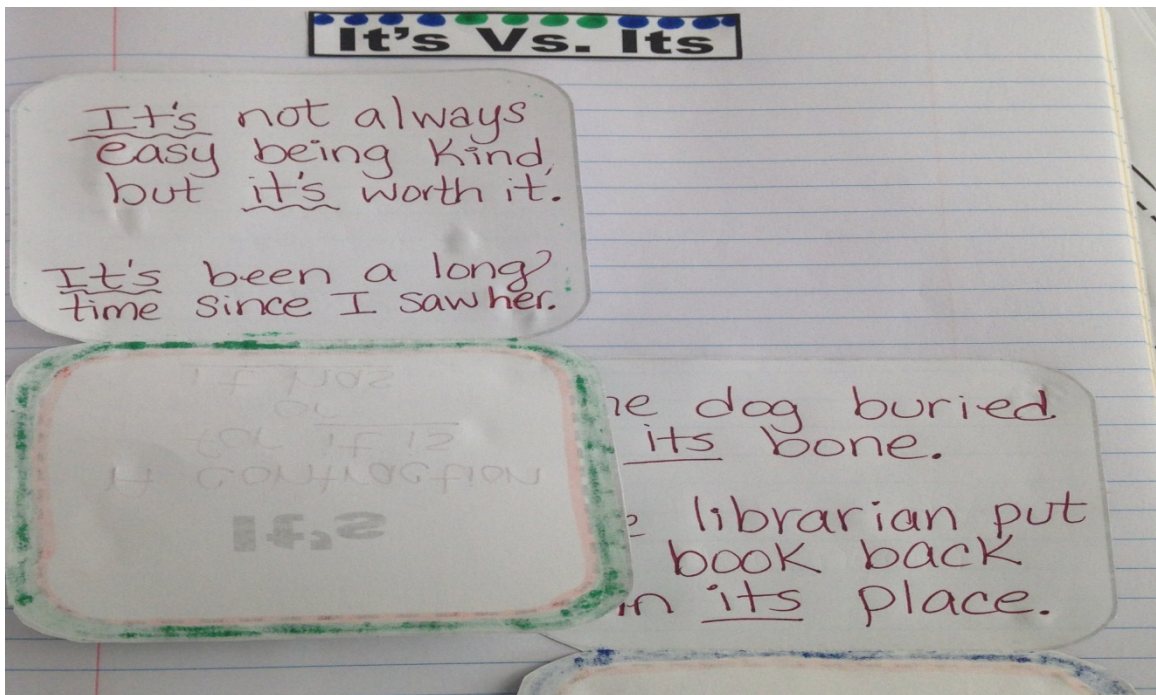
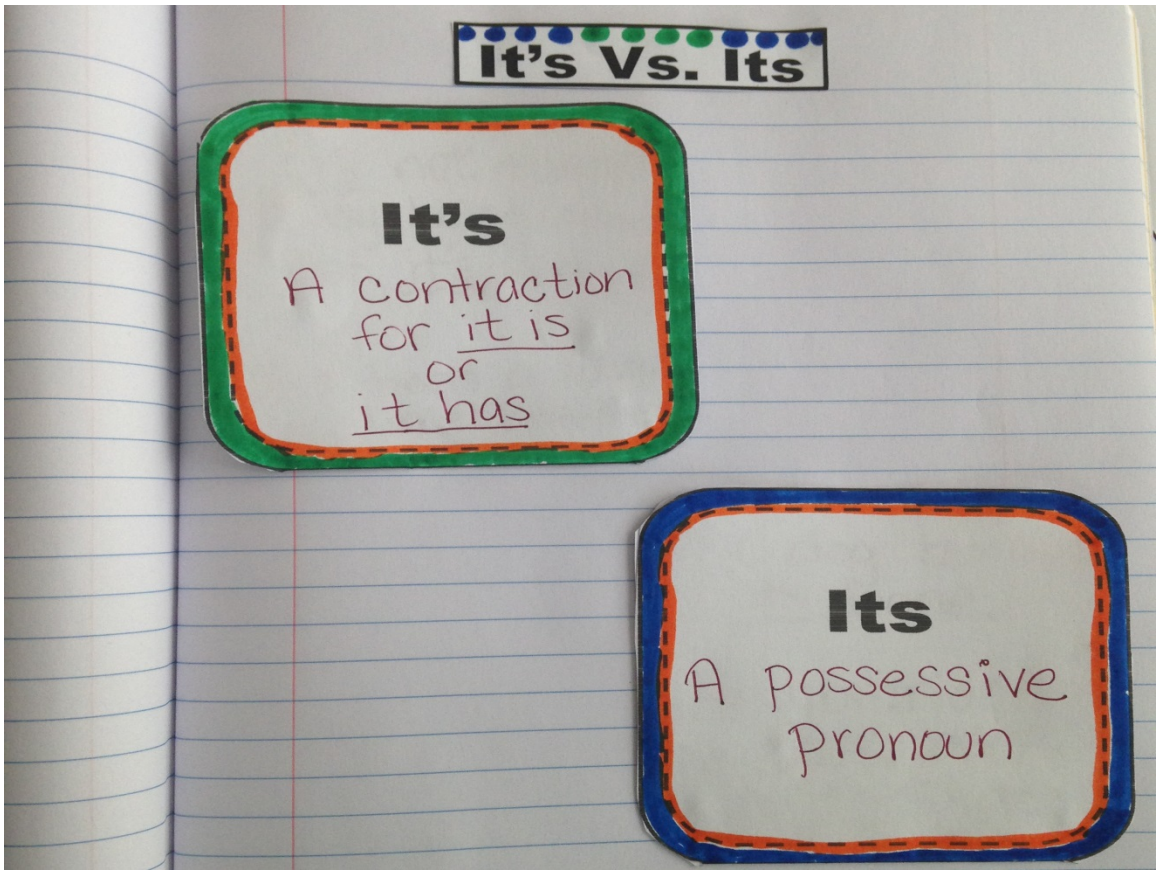
Ex. its bone, its house

While the gremlin was going crazy about its lost pet hippopotamus, its mommy was making a lost and found poster on the computer.

Practice (Choose the correct word in the parenthesis.)

1. The gremlin ate (it's its) favorite lunch- a spinach and chocolate sandwich.
2. The gremlin said, "(it's its) almost time to walk my pet mouse."
3. After working in the garden, the gremlin washed (it's its) feet.

Foldable View



It's vs. Its

Notebook Foldable

Foldable Directions: Cut out each shape. Do not cut dotted lines. Fold the shape in half. Glue each box into notebook. On the outside of one square, write *It's* with the definition. On The outside of the other square, write *Its* with the definition. Lift each square, and inside, write two sentences using the correct word.

It's

Its

It's vs. Its Practice

Directions: For numbers 1 – 4, write *its* or *it's* on the lines. For numbers 5 – 6, write two sentences of your own using *its* and *it's* at least one time each. Keep the gremlin nightlight story going. 😊

1. _____ a best kept secret.
2. Did you know that each and every gremlin keeps a night light in _____ room because gremlins are secretly scared of the dark!
3. Although _____ been centuries since a gremlin has seen a nightly monster, they all keep nightlights handy.
4. _____ quite surprising to most people.
5. _____

6. _____

KEY

Practice (Choose the correct word in the parenthesis.)

1. The gremlin ate (it's **its**) favorite lunch- a spinach and chocolate sandwich.
2. The gremlin said, “(**it's** its) almost time to walk my pet mouse.”
3. After working in the garden, the gremlin washed (it's **its**) feet.

Directions: For numbers 1 – 3, write *its* or *it's* on the lines. For numbers 4 – 5, write two sentences of your own using *its* and *it's* at least one time each. Keep the gremlin nightlight story going. 😊

1. **It's** a best kept secret.
2. Did you know that each and every gremlin keeps a night light in **its** room because gremlins are secretly scared of the dark!
3. Although **it's** been centuries since a gremlin has seen a nightly monster, they all keep nightlights handy.
4. **It's** quite surprising to most people.
5. **For a gremlin, it's critical to have a nightlight to be able to get any sleep at all.**
6. **It's been proven that gremlins need twelve hours of sleep each night, and without a nightlight, that is not possible.**

It's vs. Its Quiz

Name: _____

Directions: Write *it's* or *its* on each line.

1. She lost her puppy when the frisky poodle hopped out of _____ box.
2. _____ getting dark earlier now, so you will have to hurry.
3. As she ran to the backdoor, she said to herself, " _____ been a long time since I have had a job interview."
4. Because her pocketbook is new, _____ tags are still in place.
5. The boat fell over on _____ side.
6. _____ too hot outside to do anything at all today!
7. Each year when we drive to Florida, _____ very crowded!
8. _____ past time for you to return your library book.
9. Our town has seen half of _____ residents move to larger cities for work.
10. _____ going to be impossible to pay attention to him!
11. I just know _____ in the closet.
12. The team is missing _____ starting center for the game tonight.
13. The kitten is busy chasing _____ tail.
14. I think there is little chance _____ going to rain today.
15. The pizza slipped out of _____ box and plopped onto the floor.

It's vs. Its Quiz

Name: Key

Directions: Write it's or its on each line.

1. She lost her puppy when the frisky poodle hopped out of its box.
2. It's getting dark earlier now, so you will have to hurry.
3. As she ran to the backdoor, she said to herself, "It's been a long time since I have had a job interview."
4. Because her pocketbook is new, its tags are still in place.
5. The boat fell over on its side.
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