

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Formal writing avoids the second person pronouns: *you*, *your*, and *yours*. Students forget this because they use the pronouns all the time in everyday speech. Sometimes, even in formal writing, the student might want to use *you* as a rhetorical device to directly address the reader. That should be a rare occurrence, however. If writers want to test whether or not they really are directly addressing the reader, they should try replacing the word *you* with the teacher's name: *Dr. Wheeler*. If the sentence still makes sense and says what they want it to say, it is probably acceptable to use *you*. If not, the writer should rewrite the sentence and figure out to whom the word *you* actually refers. This trick will also force the writer to (a) be specific, (b) think through the generalization, and (c) limit the discussion or argument appropriately.

Correct the following sentences to avoid that excessive "you."

- 1) If you reach the age of fifty, you should perform a check for lumps on your breasts while in the shower at least every three months.
- 2) If the toilet is plugged up, you need to remove the clog by using a plunger. You can find plungers at Wal-Mart for only three or four dollars. You should keep this plunger in your home near your bathroom.
- 3) As the tax deadline approaches, you might want to consider having H & R block look over your returns. You would not like being audited.
- 4) To become a Christian, first you must confess all your sins to God and receive Christ as your personal savior.
- 5) When it comes time for the final examination at Carson-Newman, you had better be prepared for extensive study sessions with your friends.
- 6) What should you do when your date doesn't show up? You might consider calling some of your friends who are also alone and having a night out with the gang instead of feeling sorry for yourself.
- 7) When you are at the Eagles' Nest, you know the staff will take care of all your dining needs!
- 8) It is safe to assume your wife will probably divorce you if you keep running around licking cathedral walls.
- 9) You know you will be happy if you purchase a Masterworks toolset from your local supply store. These tools will help you fix anything in your house in no time.
- 10) When you are in the hospital, there's nothing worse than having your spleen replaced.
- 11) After you go through a bout of clinical depression, you want to do nothing but sleep and watch television.
- 12) If you vote for Tennessee Bill AU-182, you will be condemning your neighborhood to economic disaster.

**Tip:** Students can always use the "find" function available on most computers. If they use this to locate the word *you* in the paper, they can quickly replace them with a more exact and formal noun.