**The Pronouns “en” & “y”**

**The Pronouns: “en” and “y” We hear them and we see them everywhere. How do we use them? 1)En Let's first start by defining en. As a pronoun (be sure not to confuse it with the preposition en ) it is used for many reasons and in many contexts. Here are the most impor**

**We hear them and we see them everywhere. How do we use them?**

**1)En**

 **Let's first start by defining en.**

**As a pronoun (be sure not to confuse it with the preposition en ) it is used for many reasons and in many contexts. Here are the most important ones.**

**En is a pronoun that replaces de or an indefinite determiner such as du , de l' , de la , des + a noun; en can be translated as ‘some' or ‘of it', or ‘not any' in a negative context. It is most often used for indefinite quantities of something, but can also be used to replace the preposition de + a noun (but not a person) in many expressions where verbs are followed by de .**

**Note: en is placed in front of the verb.**

**Examples :**

**Voulez-vous du café ? = Would you like some coffee?**

**Oui, j'en veux ! = Yes, I would like some!**

**Voulez-vous un peu de sucre dans votre café ? = Would you like some sugar in your coffee?**

**Non merci, je n'en veux pas = No thank you, I don't want any.**

**Est-ce que vous vous souvenez du dernier café que vous avez pris avec moi ? = Do you remember the last coffee you took with me?**

**Oui je m'en souviens ! = Yes I remember!**

**Avez-vous parlé de vos vacances ? = Did you talk about your holidays?**

**Oui, nous en avons parlé pendant toute la soirée = Yes, we talked about them all evening.**

**Il adore discuter de politique = He loves discussing politics.**

**Ah oui, il m'énerve ! Il en discute tout le temps! = Ah, yes, he really bugs me! He discusses it all the time.**

**When using en with the imperative (command form), en is placed after the verb, as in this example:**

**Prenez du café ! Prenez-en = Take/have some coffee!**

**However, if the command is negative, en goes back in front of the verb:**

**Ne m'en parle plus ! = Don't talk to me about it any more!**

**If there is an expression of quantity like beaucoup de (a lot of), peu de (a little of) or a number, then en will replace the noun but the modifier or the number will be placed at the end of the sentence.**

**For example:**

**Veux-tu un peu de crème dans ton café ? = Do you want some cream in your coffee?**

**Oui, j'en veux bien un peu, merci ! = Yes, I would like some, thank you!**

**Aimerais-tu deux ou trois biscuits ? = Would you like two or three cookies?**

 **Oh, j'en veux trois, s'il te plaît ! = Oh, I would like three (of them) please!**

 **As-tu un dictionnaire français chez toi ? = Do you have a French dictionary in your home?**

 **Oui j'en ai un ! = Yes I have one (of them).**

 **Note: En usually cannot replace de + verb .**

 **Examples :**

**J'ai décidé de prendre ce travail – J'ai décidé de le prendre. = I decided to take this work – I decided to take it.**

**J'ai essayé de mettre la robe – Je l'ai essayée. = I tried to put on the dress – I tried it on.**

**Finally, you will find en in some everyday expressions – they are very useful to learn!**

**The French use them quite frequently:**

**Je m'en vais ! = I'm leaving!**

**J'en ai assez ! = I've had enough!**

**J'en ai marre ! = I'm fed up!**

**Je m'en fiche ! = I don't care!**

**Je n'en peux plus ! = I can't handle this anymore!**

**Ne vous en faites pas ! = Don't you worry about it! (a negative command)**

**Je lui en veux, ou j'en veux à… ! = I cannot forgive him, or I am upset with…!**

 **2) Y**

**Y is a pronoun that replaces a place, usually a prepositional phrase beginning with à , chez , dans , etc. You can translate y by ‘there'. Even though you don't need to add ‘there'systematically in English, you will need it in French.**

**Check the following examples:**

**Est-ce que tu vas chez Annick aujourd'hui? – Oui j'y vais ! = Are you going to Annick's place today ? – Yes I'm going (there).**

**Nous allons au marché – Vous voulez y aller ? = We're going to the market – Would you like to go (there)?**

**Note: If the verb happens to be venir, ‘to come', then you will need to replace what follows it by en , not y ! Why? Because when speaking about location, venir is always followed with the preposition de .**

**The other use of y is when a verb is followed by the preposition à before a noun (not a person though). This is tricky as this means that you have to know which verbs are normally followed by à . To start, it is good to know a few of these verbs that you are most likely to use when speaking.**

**For example:**

**Penser à = to think of/to think about**

**Je pense à mes vacances ! – J' y pense. = I'm thinking about my Holidays – I'm thinking of them.**

**Répondre à = to respond to Je réponds à mes e-mails – J' y réponds . = I'm replying to/answering my emails – I'm replying to/answering them.**

**But : Je réponds à Jean – Je lui réponds . = I'm answering John – I'm answering him (John is a person and can't be replaced by y ).**

**Participer à = to participate in**

**Je participe à ce film – J' y participe. = I'm participating in this movie – I'm participating in it.**

**Note: Y usually cannot replace à + verb!**

 **For example:**

**Je pense à faire ce travail – Je pense à le faire. = I'm thinking about doing this job – I'm thinking about doing it**