A pronoun replaces a noun in order to avoid repetition. Subject pronouns are subjects of verbs. In French, a subject pronoun is immediately or almost immediately followed by its verb. The use of subject pronouns is mandatory in French; always use a subject pronoun to construct sentences in the absence of a noun subject. Here are the French subject pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>person</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td>je, I</td>
<td>nous, we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td>tu, you</td>
<td>vous, you/y'all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>il, he/it elle, she/it on, one/we (colloquial)</td>
<td>ils, they (masc.) elles, they (fem.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subject pronouns are labelled by the term ‘person’, referring to the subject’s role in the conversation. 1st person refers to the person(s) speaking (I, we); 2nd person to the person(s) spoken to (you); and 3rd person to the person(s) or thing(s) spoken about (he, she, it, they).

**je**
Unlike the English pronoun 'I', je is not capitalized unless it begins a sentence.

**tu**
The pronoun tu is singular and, importantly, informal. Use tu to address people your own age and those you know well.

**on**
The pronoun on means 'one', or 'they' in a nonspecific sense: 'comme on dit' (as they say). On often replaces 'nous' in spoken French: 'On y va?' (Shall we go?).

**vous**
The pronoun vous is conjugated with a plural verb so it obviously refers to more than one person. However, it is also the customary form of address when you are talking to only one person you do not know well, such as an elder, a boss, a shopkeeper, etc. Inappropriate use of the tu form is considered a sign of disrespect.

Tammy: Bonjour, Paw-Paw. Vous allez bien?  
Paw-Paw: Ah, oui! Et vous, mes enfants, Tex, Tammy, vous allez bien?  
Tammy: Hello Paw-Paw. Are you doing well?  
Paw-Paw: Ah, yes! And you, kids, Tex, Tammy, are you doing OK?

**il/elle**
Il and elle besides meaning 'he' and 'she' can both express the meaning 'it' depending on the gender of the noun being replaced. For example:

Bette: La musique est bonne, n’est-ce pas?  
Tex: Non, elle est terrible! Je déteste la musique country.  
Bette: The music is good, isn't it?  
Tex: No, it's terrible. I hate country music.

Bette: Oh, qu’est-ce que tu as fait, Tex? Le juke-box est cassé?  
Bette: Oh, what did you do, Tex? The juke-box is broken.
Tex: Oui, il est cassé!  Tex: Yes, it is broken!

**ils/elles**

*Ils* and *elles* are similar to *il* and *elle* since they agree with the gender of the noun they replace. *Ils* and *elles* may refer to people or things. *Elles* is used to mean 'they' if it replaces people who are all women or objects that are all feminine in gender. On the other hand, *ils* is used to mean 'they' for objects that are masculine in gender or a group of all men or any group where there is at least one male person or masculine object in the group.

Bette et Tex sont de bons amis.  Bette and Tex are good friends.

Normalement ils s'entendent bien, mais pas aujourd'hui!  Normally, they get along well, but not today!

Listen to the dialogue:

Fiona: Bonjour Tex, tu vas bien?  Fiona: Hi Tex, are you doing well?

Tex: Pas du tout, je vais très mal. Je veux écouter de la musique française. Et puis Bette et moi, on s'est disputé.  Tex: Not at all. I'm doing poorly. I want to listen to some French music. And then Bette and I had a fight.

Fiona: Ah bon? Elle est toujours là?  Fiona: Oh really? Is she still here?

Tex: Non. Elle est partie avec Tammy. Elles sont allées au Broken Spoke.  Tex: No, she left with Tammy. They went to the Broken Spoke.

Fiona: Tiens, nous y allons, toi et moi?  Fiona: Hey, why don't you and I go there?

Tex: Tu ne m'as pas entendu? Je n'aime pas la musique country!!! Beurk! Qu'est-ce qu'on aime la musique country au Texas!  Tex: Didn't you hear me? I don't like country music!!! Argh! People really like country music in Texas!

**fill in the blanks**

Fill in the blank with the correct subject pronoun: *je, tu, il, elle, on, nous, vous, ils, elles.*

1. Edouard: ______ suis un escargot français. (I)
2. Tex: ______ m'appelle Tex. (I)
3. Joe-Bob: Bonjour, Tammy ______ vas bien? (you, fam)
4. Corey: Tex, ______ es un tatou? (you, fam)
5. Tex? ______ est professeur. (he)
6. Tammy? ______ est étudiante. (she)
7. Tex: En France, ______ est content? (one/we)
8. La craie? ______ est bleue. (it, fem)
9. Tex: Mes étudiants, ______ sommes français. (we)
10. Joe-Bob: Bonjour, monsieur le professeur. Comment allez-______? (you, formal)
11. Corey et Joe-Bob? ______ sont du Texas. (they)
12. Tammy et Bette? ______ sont étudiantes. (they)