



# University of Catania

## Scientific Writing Resources

*Words and phrases that can confuse*

**Respectively and Respective**





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### Respectively and Respective

**Respectively** indicates each on its own or in turn or in the order mentioned. It can only be used with two groups of two or more things or people and must have a second group to link to the first, in the correct order.

Well, that does sound a little difficult, but it is very easy.

First group (A, B, C) second group (1, 2,3) we can now link them by saying: A, B, C scored 1, 2,3, **respectively**. (this really means: A=1, B=2, C=3).

So you can see that we have 2 groups with the same number of “items” and the order is the same: first from group 1 goes with the first from group 2.

- The amounts of A and B were 30ml and 40ml, **respectively**. (correct)
- The two amounts were 30ml and 40ml, **respectively** (incorrect: we do not have the exact 2 amounts)
- Here, ATTM and controls are depicted in dark red and black, **respectively**. (correct)



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### Respectively and Respective

**Respective** is an adjective meaning regarding or appropriate to each of several individually.

- Prof. Jones and Prof. Smith are both experts in their **respective** fields of study. (correct)
- When we finished, all compounds were returned to their **respective** containers. (correct)
- The number of colonies in each **respective** dish was counted. (incorrect: the “number of colonies” is not specified. Here remove “respective”)
- Each class was refined using the 3D auto-refine procedure against the **respective** particles within that class.