

4.5.2 Pronoun “it” appearing before the antecedent

Sometimes, the pronoun *it* appears *before* the Noun phrase/clause that it is intended to refer to. Let us look at the following example:

It takes great courage to prevail amidst uncertainty.

A casual look at the above sentence might suggest that *it* does not refer to any noun. However, a closer look would reveal that *it* does refer to a *phrase (to prevail amidst uncertainty)* that appears *later* in the sentence. The sentence basically is:

It (to prevail amidst uncertainty) takes great courage.

Let us look at a sentence based on official question (#3, OG-12: *Although various eighteenth..*), where the pronoun *it* appears *before* the Noun clause that it is intended to refer to:

Although some philosophers and thinkers had suggested that Earth revolved round the sun, it was not until seventeenth century that Galileo firmly established this fact.

Analysis: Again, a casual look at the above sentence might suggest that *it* is not referring to any noun. However, a closer look would reveal that *it* does refer to a *clause (that Galileo firmly established this fact)* that appears *later* in the sentence. The sentence basically is:

Although some philosophers and thinkers had suggested that Earth revolved round the sun, it (that Galileo firmly established this fact) was not until seventeenth century.

Let us look at another sentence based on official question (#52, OG-13: *To Josephine Baker..*), where the pronoun *it* appears *before* the Noun phrase that it is intended to refer to:

Long before it was prevalent for African Americans to enter politics, Alexander Twilight became the first African American to serve in the state legislature.

Analysis: Again, a casual look at the above sentence might suggest that *it* is not referring to any noun. However, a closer look would reveal that *it* does refer to a *phrase (for African Americans to enter politics)* that appears *later* in the sentence. The sentence basically is:

Long before it (for African Americans to enter politics) was prevalent for African Americans to enter politics, Alexander Twilight became the first African American to serve in the state legislature.

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