

Relative clauses in-depth

GRAMMAR

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
B2_3025G_EN

LANGUAGE
English





Goals

- Can identify and explain the differences between defining and non-defining relative clauses.
- Can use defining and non-defining relative clauses to give clear and detailed information.







Preview and warm-up

- In this lesson, we will look at **relative clauses** in more detail.
- We will use them to **join clauses together** and **provide additional information**.



The woman **who spoke to me** is a senior surgeon.
Julia, **who attended a top medical school**, is very well-respected.



Relative clauses

- There are two types of **relative clause**:
 - **Defining relative clauses** tell us which **noun** the speaker means.
 - **Non-defining relative clauses** give us **extra information** about the **noun**.



I bought a new computer **that is very fast**.

My mother, **who is great at cooking**, taught me everything I know.





Recap: defining relative clauses

- **Defining relative clauses** make it clear which **noun** we are **talking about**.
- We introduce them using **relative pronouns**:
 - *who, which, that, when, where, and whose.*



Sam is the colleague **who** helped fix my computer.

That's the artist **whose** exhibition we went to last week.





Recap: defining relative clauses

- A **defining clause** gives **essential information** about **someone** or **something**.
- It can help to think of defining relative clauses as **joining** two independent clauses **together**.

Main clause	Defining clause
I bought a new car.	The car was expensive.
the car → that	
I bought a new car that was expensive.	



Relative pronouns replace pronouns when we express a **main clause** and **defining clause** as one sentence

It is one of those cars **that** runs on electricity.
I decided to get one **when** I saw how much money I would save on petrol.



Relative clauses without a relative pronoun

- You can also remove **that, who** and **which** from **defining clauses**.
- You **can only do** this when these words refer to the **object** of the clause.
- You **cannot** remove **relative pronouns** which replace the **subject** of a clause.

With relative pronoun	→	Without relative pronoun
This is the cake that I baked yesterday.	→	This is the cake I baked yesterday.
I met a friend who I last saw in May.	→	I met a friend I last saw in May.
I heard a joke which you would like.	→	I heard a joke you would like.



Choose the correct relative pronoun(s)

1. We use _____ when we talk about objects, not people.

- a. that b. which c. that and which d. who

2. We use _____ when we talk about people, not objects.

- a. that b. who c. who and that d. which

3. We use _____ when something belongs to the object of the sentence.

- a. where b. that c. which d. whose

4. We use _____ when we talk about a place in the relative clause.

- a. whose b. when c. where d. that



Change each set of two sentences into once sentence by using a relative pronoun

1. They served us a meal. It was cold and flavourless.



They served us a meal **which** was cold and flavourless.

2. I get the train. It leaves at 6:15am.



3. We hired the architect. She designed the theatre in town.



4. This is the land. Our new office will be built.



5. I've met the woman. Her daughter sold us the land.





Using relative pronouns in defining relative clauses

1. Your brother is wearing a fashionable jacket.



You say:

I like the jacket **that you are wearing**.

2. You arrive at the station. It is much busier than usual.



You tell your colleague at work:

There were hundreds of people _____ had been cancelled.

3. You visit a restaurant. Your friend Isha had recommended it to you.



You tell another friend:

We went to the restaurant _____ had recommended.

4. You have organised a conference. Not everyone can come.



You tell the delegates:

Some people _____.

5. You are moving flat and you have chosen our favourite part of the city.



You tell your sister:

That's the area _____.



Who is who?

Imagine you're at a party and you meet the people below. They tell you something about themselves. You will need this information to complete the activity on the next slide.

My father taught me the guitar.



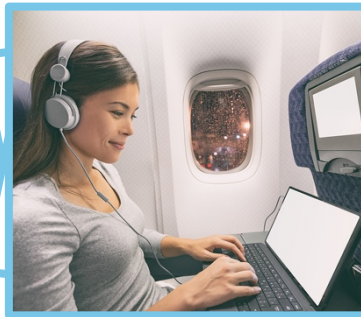
Amelia



Darius

My children speak three languages.

My job takes me all over the world.



Alison



Rose

My ambition is to become an actor.



Using *whose* in defining relative clauses

You call your friend to tell them about the party. Use *whose* to complete the sentences.



1. I met someone _____.



2. I met a woman _____.



3. I met someone _____.



4. I met a man _____.



where

- We use **where** in a **relative clause** to talk about a **place**.

Subject	Relative clause	Complement
The office –	I used to work there .	– has shut
there → where		
The office where I used to work has shut.		



Katie would like to live in a city **where** there is an interesting music scene.
 She grew up in a small town **where** there wasn't much to do.



Using *where* in defining relative clauses

1. You drive past a university campus with your friend.



You tell them:

That is the university **where my niece is studying**.

2. Your sister wants to buy a new car. She asks you for advice.



You tell her:

The dealership _____ I bought my car is a good place to start.

3. You can't find an important file. Your colleague saved it somewhere.



You ask your colleague:

Do you remember the name of the folder _____?

4. You read an interesting article. Your friends wants to read it but you don't know how to find it.



You tell him:

I can't remember _____.

5. You take your parents to a restaurant. You proposed to your husband there.



You tell your parents:

This is the restaurant _____.



Recap: non-defining relative clauses

- **Non-defining** relative clauses provide us with **extra information**.
- These clauses are **not necessary** to understand the sentence as a whole.
- They can be **removed** from the sentence without **affecting** the overall meaning.



Frank studied on Easter Island, **which is full of mysterious statues**.

Cassandra, **who had slept badly**, was very tired in her English class.





Recap: non-defining relative clauses

- We use **relative pronouns** to introduce **non-defining relative** clauses.
- **Non-defining relative clauses** very often appear **between two commas**, separating the **subject** of a sentence from the **main verb**.
- We also add **non-defining relative clauses** after a **comma** at the end of a **main clause**.



Andre, **who enjoys reading**, is a member of a book club.

Mason has just flown to Madrid, **where his girlfriend lives**.





Recap: non-defining relative clauses



- You **cannot** use the **relative pronoun *that*** to introduce a **non-defining relative clause**.
- You must use ***who*** or ***which***.



Greta, **who** likes to cycle to work, bought herself a new bike.
She has just started a new job, **which** is really enjoying.



Recap: non-defining relative clauses

- **Non-defining relative clauses** can also describe the **object** of the **main clause**.



We camped by the side of a **lake, which was absolutely beautiful.**

I said goodbye to **Laura, who was flying home to Australia the next day.**



Management was happy with **Liam, whose idea it had been to improve the company logo.**



Using non-defining relative clauses

Match the non-defining relative clauses to each sentence.
Try to fit the clauses in to the right context.

1) Johnny got a standing ovation from the crowd.

a) ,whose father was an artist,

2) Katerina is my grandmother.

b) ,who impressed everyone with his guitar solo,

3) He picked up a bunch of bananas,

c) ,which are commonly found in Australia.

4) Marsupials are very interesting animals.

d) which he noticed were rotting.

5) I was just travelling through Vietnam,

e) ,where I got the surprise of my life.



Correct the sentences to ensure the relative pronouns are used correctly

1. The dancer which was very beautiful dazzled the audience



The dancer, **who** was very beautiful, dazzled the audience.

2. The school where she likes is very prestigious.



3. The yacht who is worth more than two million pounds is my most prized possession.



4. The man which Jill worked with for a while went into local politics.



5. She has a cousin which is a famous Olympian.





Add non-defining relative clauses

Add non-defining relative clauses of your own to each of these sentences.

The swans glided gracefully on the lake.

Sarah and Andy started working on the garden.

The President decided to call off the press announcement.

Francine's father trudged slowly up the stairs.

Roberto played the synthesiser in the band.

My friend has just toured around the world with his comedy act.

Lisa danced for hours last night.

Koalas are not actually bears.

My mother comes from Cambodia.



Categorise

Categorise the sentences to determine whether they contain a defining or non-defining relative clause.

1. Here are some of the patients who have been waiting.

2. The jar, which was half full of water, was knocked from the table.

3. They should offer assistance to those who have been affected by the disaster.

4. Mike played guitar in a band, which had some success in Australia.

5. I've just come back from Colombia, where I had the best coffee.

6. Julie, a prominent lawyer, decided to take on the case.

7. I met your brother, who works at the bank, last night.

8. There are the candidates that the panel has identified as promising.

Defining relative clause

Non-defining relative clause



Rewrite the sentences

Rewrite the sentences below, simplifying the relative clause where possible.

Note that some of these sentences cannot be simplified.

1. The glasses which are on the table have been cleaned.
2. This is the topic that confused me in the exam.
3. The policeman who was interested in talking to you is on the telephone.
4. The book which I wanted to borrow is no longer here.
5. There is the car that I want to buy.
6. This is the guitar which I used on the tour.
7. There is his sister who laughed at me.
8. My Dad, who has been living abroad, is very well travelled.



Relative clauses quiz

	TRUE	FALSE
1. Relative clauses are also known as adverbial clauses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Relative clauses add more information to a sentence, defining the noun.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Non-defining relative clauses give us more information but are not necessary to understand the sentence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Relative clauses are useful if we want to join two simple sentences together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You can use the relative pronoun that in a non-defining relative clause.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. A defining relative clause tells which noun we are talking about.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no

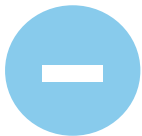
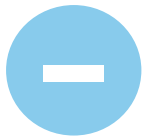




Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again





Answer key 1/2

Activity p. 9
1. c, 2. c, 3. d, 4. c

Activity p. 10

2. I get the train **which/that** leaves at 6:15.

3. We hired the architect **who/that** designed the theatre in town.

4. The is the land **where** our new office will be built.

5. I've met the woman **whose** daughter sold us the land.

Activity p. 11 – other answers are possible

2. There were hundreds of people **whose** train had been cancelled.

3. We went to the restaurant **that/which** you had recommended.

4. Some people **who** said they could come cannot make it.

5. That's the area **where** I want to live.

Activity p. 13

1. I met someone **whose** job takes the all over the world.

2. I met a woman **whose** father taught her the guitar.

3. I met someone **whose** ambition is to become an actor.

4. I met a man **whose** children speak three languages.



Answer key 2/2

Activity p. 15 – suggested answers

2. The dealership **where** I bought my car is a good place to start.
3. Do you remember the name of the folder **where you saved that file**?
4. I can't remember **where I read it**.
5. This is the restaurant **where I proposed to Keith**.

Activity p. 20

1B, 2A, 3D, 4C, 5E

Activity p. 21

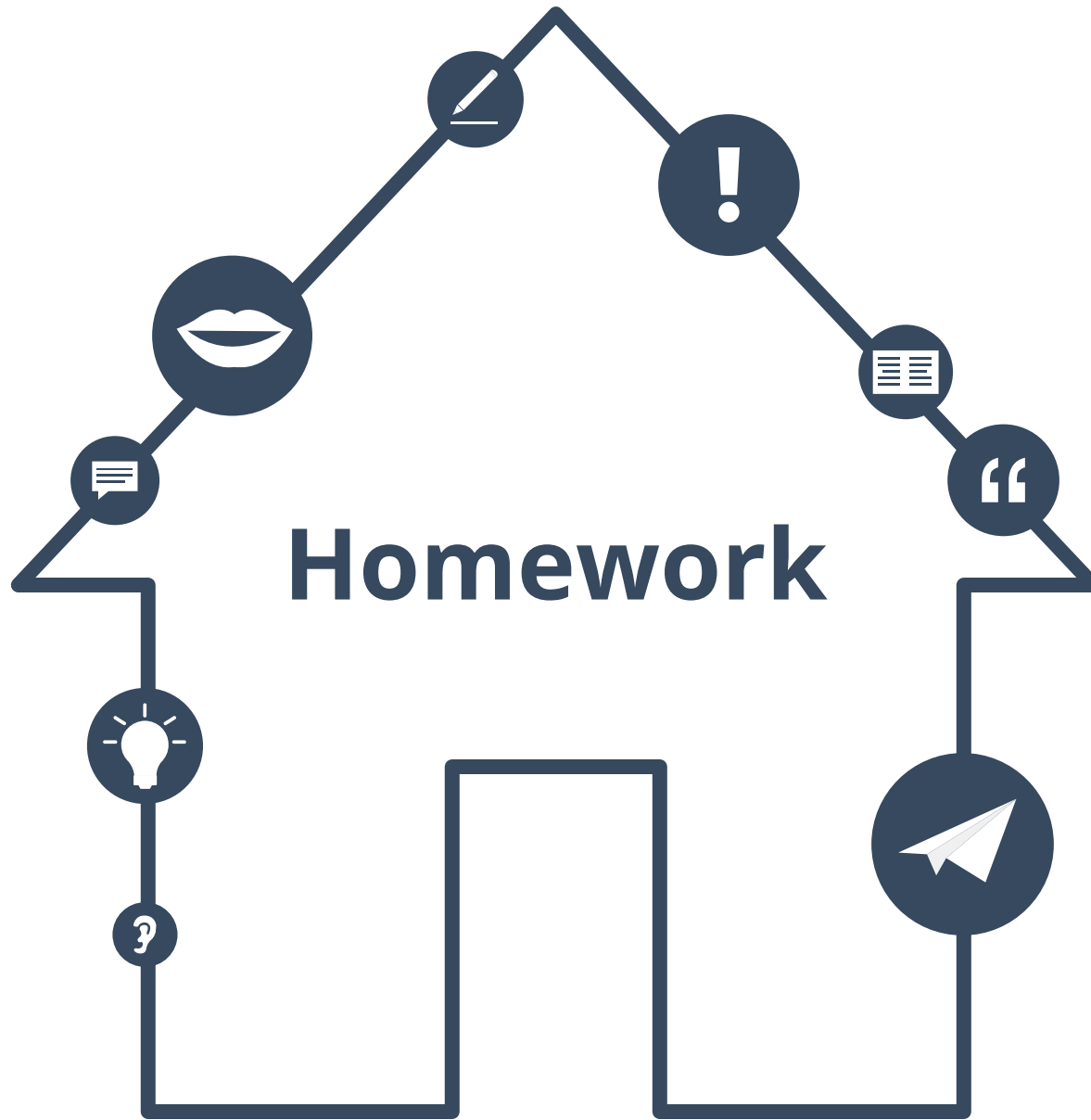
2. The school, **which/that** she likes, is very prestigious.
3. The yacht, **which/that** is worth more than two million pounds, is my most prized possession.
4. The man, **who** Jill worked with for a while, went into local politics.
5. She has a cousin, **who** is a famous Olympian.

Activity p. 23

Defining: 1, 3, 8

Non-defining: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Activity p. 25 – 1F, 2T, 3T, 4T, 5F, 6T





Write a letter

You are taking a trip through Europe. Write a letter to your friend about what you have seen and enjoyed. Use relative clauses to add more detail and information to your sentences.

-□×

Josie

Subject: Europe is amazing!

Hey Josie,



Explain

Your friend is learning English and is struggling to understand defining and non-defining relative clauses. Write a short step by step guide for them.

