

**Defining relative clauses**

versus

**Non-defining relative clauses**



**LinguaLike**

**Q1** The hotel \_\_\_\_\_ we stayed was good.

where

which

Either could be used here.

**Q2** - The man \_\_\_\_\_ interviewed me seemed friendly enough.

who

which

Either could be used here.

**Q3** - The car \_\_\_\_\_ was stolen belonged to my partner.

which

that

Either could be used here.

**Q4** - The house \_\_\_\_\_ they have rented is in the  
of town.

centre

which

that

Either could be used here.



**LinguaLike**

# Defining Relative Clauses

- Gives us information about the first part of the sentence, which is needed to identify a person or thing - they define exactly who or what we are talking about.
- Second part starts with a relative pronoun i.e. **who, which...**
- Doesn't have commas
- Can use 'That' instead of who, which...



# Two clauses joined together by a relative pronoun

- Brenda is a friend. I went on holiday with her.
- Brenda is *the friend who I went on holiday with.*



# Example

- I spoke to the man.
- Which man? What about the man?
- We need more detail i.e.
- We require a 'defining relative clause'.
- This gives us detail about the noun  
I spoke to the man who gave you the news.



## Example 2

- I read the letter
- Which letter?
- We need more detail.
- The one that arrived this morning.



# THAT

- Did you know the student (**WHO**) THAT came to the lesson yesterday?
- The book (**WHICH**) THAT I'm reading is very interesting.



# Recap on Defining Relative Clauses

**WHO** = people

**WHICH** = animals and things, ...

**“THAT”** = can be used instead of  
‘WHO’ and ‘WHICH’





# Other Relative Pronouns

- WHOSE = possession
- WHEN = days, months, years....
- WHERE = for places



# WHOSE

*That's the woman **whose** son ran  
over my cat*



# WHEN, WHERE

Tell me *when* you expect to arrive

The hotel *where* we stayed was excellent



# Compare the two!

- Alan is the student **who** is wearing blue
- Alan, **who is not paying any attention in class**, lives in East Ham



# Do these sentences have the same meaning?

- The passengers who came out of the bus went home
- The passengers, who came out of the bus, went home



# Non-Defining Relative Clauses

- Gives us **EXTRA** information about a person, animal or thing.
- The Relatives go between **commas**.
- Without this **extra** information the sentence **will still** make complete sense.



# Example

- Your brother, **who gave me the news,** saw the accident.
- Your brother saw the accident. **(still makes sense)**



# WHICH

- Refers to the whole of the sentence before
- Can be used to *make a comment* about the whole situation described in a main clause

*The teacher arrived on time, which amazed everybody*

*They had everything ready for us, which was nice*





# What's the reason for using Non-Defining Clauses?

## Example

- Sheila is a student...
- What can we do to make it more interesting?



# In Non-Defining Relative Clauses

- We can't use 'THAT'
- We can't omit the Relative Pronouns



# Example

- I liked '*Spiderman*, **which I've seen recently**. (not "that", no Omission)
- I've found my keys, **which I had been looking for**. (not "that", no Omission)



**List the differences?**

**Defining Relative Clauses:**

**Non-Defining Relative Clauses:**



**LinguaLike**

**Read the sentences. Then decide which option, a or b, is correct. Why?**

1) My sister, **who lives in Pakistan**,  
is a doctor.

a) I have one sister.

b) I have more than one sister.



2) Flat screen televisions, which are very expensive, have a better picture quality.

a) All flat screen televisions are very expensive.

b) Some flat screen televisions are cheap.



3) The athletes who tested positive for taking drugs were suspended.

a) All the athletes tested positive for taking drugs.

b) Some athletes didn't test positive for taking drugs.



4) The teachers at this school who arrive late for class will be dismissed.

a) Only some teachers arrive late for class.

b) All the teachers in the school arrive late for class.





- 5) The students, who had tickets, went into the museum
- a) Some of the students had tickets and some did not. Only the students with tickets went into museum
- b) All the students had tickets and all the students went into the museum



- 6) The students who had tickets went into the museum
- a) Some of the students had tickets and some did not. Only the students with tickets went into museum
- b) All the students had tickets and all the students went into the museum



# Defining/Non-defining Relative Clauses

- 1) Can you use 'that' in non-defining relative clauses?
- The Queen, \_\_\_\_\_ lives in Buckingham Palace, has three sons.
- Some say that Gordon Brown, \_\_\_\_\_ is Prime Minister, should resign.



## 2) Can you use 'that' in defining relative clauses?

- The book \_\_\_\_\_ I bought yesterday cost over £10 pounds
- The house \_\_\_\_\_ I live in now is smaller than the old one.



# Defining or Non-Defining?

**Remember:**

**Defining Relative Clauses:**

Don't have commas.

“**That**” can replace Who, Which and When.

You can omit Who, Which, When and That when they are not the Subject of the Relative Clause.



# Non-Defining Relative Clauses:

- Go between commas.
- You can't use "That".
- You **can't** omit the Relatives.



# Summary

## Defining Relative

- No commas
- Omit the relative pronoun except when SUBJECT

## Non-Defining Relative

- Between commas
- No omission

## Relative Pronouns

WHO: refers to people  
WHICH: refers to things  
WHOSE: for possession  
WHEN: for time  
WHERE : for places.

