

DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

We use defining relative clauses to give essential information about someone or something – information that we need in order to understand what or who is being referred to. A defining relative clause usually comes immediately after the noun it describes.

Look at the following examples:

- ♣ They're the people **who** want to buy our house.
- ♣ Here are some cells **which** have been affected.
- ♣ They should give the money to somebody **who** they think needs the treatment most.

To form relative clauses we use relative pronouns:

WHO

It is used to refer to people

Example: The man **who** works at the Theater is very kind.

WHICH

It refers to animals and objects

Example: Tina has a bunch of flowers **which** his fan bought.

WHOSE

It is used to refer to possession

Example: Have you seen the girl **whose** favorite singer died last week?

THAT

It is used to refer to people, animals,

It can replace WHO or WHICH

Example: The blue jacket **that** she is putting on belongs to her friend.

WHERE

It used to refer to places

The arena **where** they performed was excellent

WHEN

It is used to refer to time

That was the day **when** Ed Sheeran started the tour.

Subject or object

The relative pronoun can define the subject or the object of the verb:

- ♣ They're the people **who/that bought our house**. (The people bought our house. The people is the subject.)
- ♣ They're the people **who/that she met at Jon's party**. (She met the people. The people is the object.)
- ♣ Here are some cells **which/that show abnormality**. (Some cells show abnormality. Some cells is the subject.)
- ♣ Here are some cells **which/that the researcher has identified**. (The researcher has identified some cells. Some cells is the object.)



Now, let's practise!



A. Fill in the gaps with the appropriate relative pronoun.

1. He is the singer _____ won three Grammys last year.
2. She's the supermodel _____ face appeared in the last music video.
3. That was the year _____ Billie Eilish's first song was released.
4. The album cover _____ she designed wasn't very successful.
5. The band _____ my sister used to follow on Instagram is from Korea.

B. Turn these pairs of sentences into one. Use relative pronouns.

1. This is the place. Elvis was born here.
2. A songwriter is a person. He/she writes songs
3. It was a terrible concert. I will never forget it.
4. She's the lady. She lent me her phone yesterday.