RELATIVE CLAUSES 1

A

Look at this example sentence:

The woman [who lives next door] is a doctor.
relative clause

A *clause* is a part of a sentence. A *relative clause* tells us which person or thing (or what kind of person or thing) the speaker means:

- The woman **who lives next door** ... ('who lives next door' tells us which woman)
- People **who live in the country** ... ('who live in the country' tells us what kind of people)

We use **who** in a relative clause when we are talking about people (not things):

the woman – she lives next door – is a doctor
→ The woman **who lives next door** is a doctor.

we know a lot of people – they live in the country
→ We know a lot of people **who live in the country**.

- An architect is someone **who designs buildings**.
- What was the name of the person **who phoned**?
- Anyone **who wants to apply for the job** must do so by Friday.

You can also use **that** (instead of **who**), but you can't use **which** for people:

- The woman **that lives next door** is a doctor. (*not* the woman which)

Sometimes you must use **who** (*not* that) for people – see Unit 95.

B

When we are talking about things, we use **that** or **which** (*not* who) in a relative clause:

where is the cheese? – it was in the fridge
→ Where is the cheese { **that** / **which** } **was in the fridge?**

- I don't like stories **that have unhappy endings**. (*or* stories **which** have ...)
- Grace works for a company **that makes furniture**. (*or* a company **which** makes furniture)
- The machine **that broke down** is working again now. (*or* The machine **which** broke down)

That is more usual than **which**, but sometimes you must use **which** – see Unit 95.

C

Remember that in relative clauses we use **who/that/which**, not **he/she/they/it**.
Compare:

- 'Who's that woman?' '**She** lives next door to me.'
  I've never spoken to the woman **who** lives next door. (*not* the woman she lives)
- Where is the cheese? **It** was in the fridge.
  Where is the cheese **that** was in the fridge? (*not* the cheese it was)

D

What = 'the thing(s) that'. Compare **what** and **that**:

- **What happened** was my fault. (= the thing that happened)

but

- Everything **that happened** was my fault. (*not* Everything what happened)
- The machine **that broke down** is now working again. (*not* The machine what broke down)

LIVEWORKSHEETS

92.1 In this exercise you have to explain what some words mean. Choose the right meaning from the box and then write a sentence with **who**. Use a dictionary if necessary.

he/she	steals from a shop	he/she	buys something from a shop
	~~designs buildings~~		pays rent to live in a house or apartment
	doesn't believe in God		breaks into a house to steal things
	is not brave		expects the worst to happen

1 (an architect) An architect is someone who designs buildings.
2 (a burglar) A burglar is someone .....
3 (a customer) .....
4 (a shoplifter) .....
5 (a coward) .....
6 (an atheist) .....
7 (a pessimist) .....
8 (a tenant) .....

92.2 Make one sentence from two. Use **who/that/which**.

1 A girl was injured in the accident. She is now in hospital.
The girl who was injured in the accident is now in hospital.
2 A waitress served us. She was impolite and impatient.
The .....
3 A building was destroyed in the fire. It has now been rebuilt.
The .....
4 Some people were arrested. They have now been released.
The .....
5 A bus goes to the airport. It runs every half hour.
The .....

92.3 Complete the sentences. Choose from the box and make a relative clause.

invented the telephone	~~**makes furniture**~~
runs away from home	**gives you the meaning of words**
stole my wallet	**can support life**
were hanging on the wall	**cannot be explained**

1 Helen works for a company that makes furniture.
2 The book is about a girl .....
3 What happened to the pictures .....?
4 A mystery is something .....
5 The police have arrested the man .....
6 A dictionary is a book .....
7 Alexander Bell was the man .....
8 It seems that Earth is the only planet .....

92.4 Are these sentences right or wrong? Correct them where necessary.

1 I don't like stories who have unhappy endings. stories that have
2 What was the name of the person who phoned? OK
3 Where's the nearest shop who sells bread? .....
4 The driver which caused the accident was fined £500. .....
5 Do you know the person that took these pictures? .....
6 We live in a world what is changing all the time. .....
7 Dan said some things about me that were not true. .....
8 What was the name of the horse it won the race? .....

LIVEWORKSHEETS