Dear Friend,

I wanted to share something exciting with you. This year, I've been focusing on improving myself, and I've realized that the things that matter most to me are the qualities I've developed over time. I've always been someone who likes to challenge themselves, and this year, I took on a project that really pushed me out of my comfort zone.

The project, which involved learning a new language, wasn't easy at all. It was something I'd wanted to do for years, but I never had the courage to start. The journey was long and difficult, but I'm proud of the progress I've made. I've met a lot of people who shared similar goals, and we've supported each other.

One of the best parts of this experience is that I've learned a lot about patience. I've realized that I need to take more time for the things I care about, and that's something I'm continuing to work on. I hope you're doing well, and I'd love to hear about what you've been working on.

Best,

Sarah

Comprehension Questions:

1. What self-improvement project did Sarah take on?
2. What has Sarah learned from this experience?
3. Why was the project challenging for Sarah?
4. Who did Sarah meet during her journey?
5. How does Sarah feel about the progress she's made?

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Grammar Focus: Relative Clauses

Explanation:

Relative clauses are used to give more information about a noun without starting a new sentence. The two main types are:

Defining Relative Clauses (Essential Information)

1. Provide **necessary** details to understand which noun we're talking about.
2. **No commas** are used.

Examples:

- **The movie that we watched was amazing.** (The clause "that we watched" tells us which movie. Without it, we wouldn't know which movie is being referred to.)
- "The project *that* I started was difficult." (Here, "that I started" is essential to understand which project Sarah is talking about.)

Non-Defining Relative Clauses (Extra Information)

1. Add **extra** details but are not essential to the meaning of the sentence.
2. **Commas** are used.

Examples:

- **The movie, which was directed by a famous filmmaker, was amazing.**
  (The clause "which was directed by a famous filmmaker" gives extra info, but we still know the movie was amazing without it.)
- "Sarah, *who* I met last year, is very kind." (Here, "who I met last year" adds extra information but is not essential to the meaning of the sentence).

Key Differences:

- **Defining**: Essential, no commas (e.g., **The person who called me is my friend**).
- **Non-Defining**: Extra info, commas needed (e.g., **My friend, who called me yesterday, is very kind**).

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Are these Defining Relative Clauses or Non Defining Relative Clauses?

1. My brother, who lives in New York, is visiting us next week.
2. The book that I borrowed from the library is interesting.
3. The restaurant where we had dinner was fantastic.
4. The car, which is red, belongs to my neighbor.

Grammar Practice:

Exercise 1: Fill in the gaps with the correct relative pronoun (who, which, that, where, when).

1. The people _____ I met during the language course were very friendly.
2. The project _____ I worked on was really challenging.
3. It was a place _____ I could meet like-minded people.
4. The time _____ I spent learning the language felt really rewarding.
5. The teacher _____ taught me was very experienced.
6. The book _____ I'm reading is really interesting.
7. The restaurant _____ we had dinner last night was amazing.
8. The time _____ we traveled together was unforgettable.
9. The person _____ I spoke to at the event gave me great advice.
10. The company _____ I work for is expanding rapidly.

Exercise 2: Combine the sentences into one using a relative clause.

1. Sarah is a woman. She enjoys self-improvement.

   _____

2. The project was difficult. Sarah worked on it for months.

   _____

3. I met a man. He was a great mentor.

   _____

4. The class was amazing. We learned so much.

   _____

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5. The house is beautiful. I grew up in it.

_____

6. The person was kind. She helped me with my studies.

_____

7. The movie was fantastic. We watched it last night.

_____

8. The book is fascinating. He recommended it to me.

_____

9. The city is known for its culture. I visited it last summer.

_____

10. The company is successful. He works for it.

_____

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