

Relative Clauses

Defining vs. Non-Defining Relative Pronouns

LEVEL B2

TEEN ESL

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

1. QUICK GRAMMAR REFERENCE

Defining Clauses (Essential Info)

- Gives **essential information** needed to identify the person or thing.
- **No commas** are used.
- You **can use "that"** instead of *who* or *which*.
- Can drop pronoun if it's the *object*.

The gamer **who won the tournament** practiced daily.
(Which gamer? The one who won!)

Non-Defining Clauses (Extra Detail)

- Gives **extra, non-essential details**. Sentence makes sense without it.
- **Must use commas** around the clause!
- You **cannot use "that"**.
- You **cannot drop** the relative pronoun.

Zendaya, **who stars in Dune**, is a great actor.
(Extra info – you already know Zendaya!)

Feature	Defining Clause	Non-Defining Clause
Is information essential?	Yes (Identifies the noun)	No (Extra detail)
Use Commas?	✗ No commas	✓ Separate with commas , . . . ,
Can replace with "that"?	✓ Yes (for <i>who/which</i>)	✗ No
Can omit the pronoun?	✓ Yes (when object)	✗ No

2. ACTIVITY 1: CHOOSE & ADD COMMAS

Circle the correct relative pronoun. Add commas if the relative clause gives non-essential (extra) information.

1. My best friend (**who** / **that** / **which**) lives next door loves playing basketball.
2. The laptop (**who** / **that** / **whose**) I use for schoolwork was a birthday present.
3. Billie Eilish (**who** / **that** / **which**) was born in Los Angeles won another Grammy award.
4. The sneakers (**where** / **that** / **whose**) you were wearing yesterday look amazing.
5. Tokyo (**which** / **that** / **where**) hosted the Olympic Games is a vibrant metropolis.

3. ACTIVITY 2: COMBINE SENTENCES

Combine each pair into one sentence using **who**, **which**, **whose**, or **where**. Decide if you need commas!

1. I met a streamer yesterday. Her channel has over one million followers.

2. My older brother works at a game studio. He is studying software engineering.

3. That is the new skatepark. We spent our entire summer there.

4. ACTIVITY 3: SPOT AND CORRECT THE ERROR

Each sentence below contains **ONE** mistake. Identify the error and rewrite the sentence correctly.

1. Taylor Swift, that is a world-famous singer, released a brand new album.
.....
2. The neighborhood café, where serves the best boba tea, closed down last week.
.....
3. My only cousin who lives in Paris speaks three languages fluently. (*Hint: You only have one cousin*)
.....
4. The multiplayer game who I bought yesterday has incredible graphics.
.....

5. ACTIVITY 4: TEEN LIFE STORY EXPANSION

Expand the basic statements below by adding your own defining or non-defining clause to create a single complex sentence.

1. (*Add non-defining clause*) Smartphone social media apps _____ can sometimes be distracting.
2. (*Add defining clause*) The teacher _____ gave us extra time on our project.
3. (*Add non-defining clause*) My favorite music group _____ is going on world tour next year.

COMMON B2 EXAM PITFALL!

Remember: You cannot use **where** or **when** directly as the subject of a clause! Use **which** or **that** if the place or time is doing the action.

 *The school where was built in 2010...* →  *The school **which/that** was built in 2010...*

TEACHER / SELF-CHECK ANSWER KEY

Activity 1:

1. My best friend, **who** lives next door, loves...
2. The laptop **that** I use...
3. Billie Eilish, **who** was born in L.A., won...
4. The sneakers **that** you were wearing...
5. Tokyo, **which** hosted the Olympic Games, is...

Activity 2:

1. I met a streamer **whose** channel has...
2. My older brother, **who is studying software engineering**, works at...
3. That is the new skatepark **where** we spent...

Activity 3: 1. ...singer, **who** is a... (No *that* after commas) | 2. ...café, **which** serves... (Subject needs *which*, not *where*) | 3. My only cousin, **who lives in Paris**, speaks... (Requires commas) | 4. The multiplayer game **which/that** I bought... (Use *which/that* for things)