The relative clauses

This WebQuest will help you to identify defining and non-defining relative clauses in a sentece.

For what do we use them?

Relative clauses give us information about the person or thing mentioned

It is divided in 2 types:

Defining

Identifies who or what we are speaking about and is essential in a sentence because we need it in order to know who or what someone is describing.

Non-defining

It gives us more information about who or what we are speaking about. In other words, it is not essential in a sentence.

How to identify them:

- **Defining**

  Usually comes immediately after the noun it describes. It may use: who, that, which, whose and whom.

- **Non-defining**

  We always use who, which, whose, when or where (but not that) to start a non-defining clause. We also use commas to separate the clause from the rest of the sentence.

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Remember!

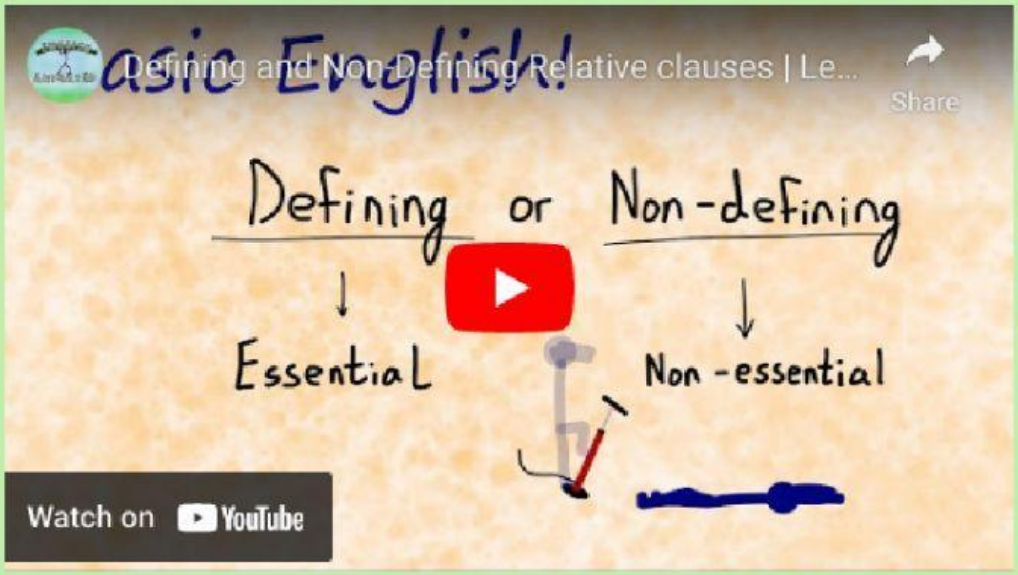
A defining relative clause looks like this:

- Children who hate chocolate are uncommon.
- An elephant is an animal that lives in hot countries.

A non-defining relative clause looks like this:

- My grandfather, who's 87, goes swimming every day.
- The house, which was built in 1883, has just been opened to the public.

Watch this video to help you out!



Now you are prepared for a little exercise, let's go!

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Exercise

Read the sentences and write if they are "defining" or "non-defining".

1. An elephant is an animal that lives in hot countries:

_____

2. Let's go to a country where the sun always shines:

_____

3. The reason why I came here today is not important:

_____

4. The award was given to Sara, whose short story impressed the judges:

_____

5. December, which Christmas is celebrated in, is a summer month for the southern hemisphere:

_____

6. The doctor that I was hoping to see wasn't on duty:

_____

Excellent!, now you know how to differenciate defining and non-defining relative clauses!

Congratulations!

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