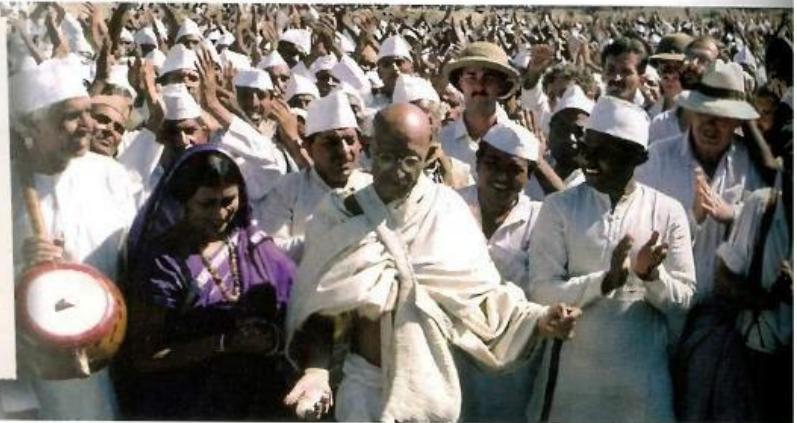


# 91 Relative clauses and prepositions

*Gandhi* is a famous film from 1982. It was filmed in the UK and India, and the actor Ben Kingsley played Mohandas Gandhi, the Indian lawyer that the film is about. It was a remarkable film with a lot of famous actors in it, and for the scene of Gandhi's funeral, there were over 300,000 people, which is amazing.



## 1 Prepositions in relative clauses

Verbs often have prepositions after them (e.g. *look for*, *talk about*, *go to*).

In relative clauses, we usually put the preposition at the end of the clause:

*I'm looking for a book.* → *This is the book (that) I'm looking for.*

*I was talking about Maria.* → *Maria is the woman (who) I was talking about.*

*We went to that beach.* → *That is the beach (which) we went to.*

## 2 *when*, *where*, *why*

We can also use *when*, *where* and *why* for relative clauses

- *When* is for a relative clause about time, days, years, etc:  
*We met on the day when I passed my final exam.*
- *Where* is for a relative clause about places:  
*That's the bank where Joan works.*
- *Why* is for a relative clause about reason:  
*She's working. That's the reason why she can't come.*

There is always a subject after *when*, *where* or *why*. It is a different subject from the one in the main clause:

main clause subject | relative clause subject

*That's the building where we do our exams.*



When the relative clause begins with *when* or *where*, we do not include a place or time preposition:

✗ ~~*September 20th is the day when we got married on.*~~

✓ *September 20th is the day when we got married.*

✗ ~~*That's the house where we spent our childhood in.*~~

✓ *That's the house where we spent our childhood.*

## 3 Using *which* to make a comment

We can use *which* to make a comment on the idea in a clause:

*For the scene of Gandhi's funeral, there were over 300,000 people, which is amazing.*

(The fact that there were over 300,000 people is amazing.)

*We took the children to the seaside on Sunday, which was really relaxing.*

(Taking the children to the seaside was really relaxing.)

With these relative clauses we need a comma (,) before *which*.

## Practice

### 1 Choose the correct words in *italics*.

- 0 The reason *which / why* I can't come with you is that I don't have enough money.
- 1 It was really sunny on the day *when / where* we had our last exam.
- 2 2007 was the year *when / which* there were a lot of floods.
- 3 Have you chosen the date *on when / when* you want to have your party?
- 4 I've just read the new book by Orhan Pamuk, *that / which* I really enjoyed.
- 5 I'm sure this is the place *when / where* we agreed to meet.
- 6 Mrs Coles, I've got the DVD *for which / which* you were looking for.

### 2 Match the two parts of the sentences.

- 0 Last weekend I saw my first football match,
- 1 David's grandmother died last week,
- 2 We had to drive 800km in one day last week,
- 3 My cousin in Canada called last night,
- 4 We had to wait in the queue for two hours,
- 5 We won the top prize of 10,000 euros,

A which was very tiring.  
B which was fantastic news!  
C which was really boring.  
D which was very sad.  
E which was exciting.  
F which was a real surprise.

### 3 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the conversation with the phrases from the box.

A Excuse me. I'm looking for Jeremy Trent.  
B I'm the person (0) ..... *you're looking for* .....  
Why do you want me?  
A I've got lunch for some people, some sandwiches.  
B Oh, right. Well, put the box down there.  
A Where?  
B There! On the chair where (1) ..... !  
OK, who are the sandwiches for?  
A This is for Carol Holmes.  
B She's the woman over there (2) ..... and a black jacket.  
A OK. And these are for Peter Davis.  
B That's him – the man (3) .....  
A And the salad is for Alicia Keane.  
B Alicia's the woman (4) ..... that boy over there.  
A OK, and finally, George Andropoulos.  
B George is the boy (5) .....  
A And I've got the bill. Are you the person (6) ..... ?  
B Yes, I'll pay it.  
A Are you the director?  
B Yes, I'm the director, (7) ..... !

I should give it to I'm pointing  
who's wearing a leather skirt  
which means I pay for everything  
that Alicia's shouting at  
who's shouting at  
who's got a red beard  
*you're looking for*

### 4 Use the ideas below to write sentences. Add a comment using *which*.

- 0 something you did last week *I went to the cinema, which wasn't very exciting.* .....
- 1 something you did last weekend .....
- 2 your last holiday .....
- 3 a recent piece of news .....
- 4 a recent celebration .....