



Grammar 2

Relative clauses

1 Read about relative clauses.

Relative clauses give us more information about the subject or the object of a sentence. They are introduced by the following relative pronouns: *who, whom, which, that, where, why, when, whose*.

*The little girl **who/that** I look after during the day is adopted.*

*The laundry **which/that** is in the basket is filthy.*

*That's the place **where** my father met my stepmother.*

*That is the reason **why** Joe is grumbling.*

*That was the time **when** I had an argument with my brother.*

*This is the woman **whose** daughter does our housework.*

Defining and non-defining relative clauses

- A defining relative clause gives us important information which we need in order to understand the meaning of the main clause.
*The chore **which/that** I hate **most** is the washing-up.* (The sentence would not make sense without *which/that I hate most*.)
- When *who, whom, that* and *which* are the objects of a defining relative clause, they can be omitted.
*The men **who/that** I invited to the get-together are my uncles.*
The men I invited to the get-together are my uncles.
- A non-defining relative clause gives us extra information which we do not need in order to understand the meaning of the main clause. We must use commas to separate a non-defining relative clause from the main clause.
*Molly, **who** often gossips, doesn't get along with her peers.*
- We cannot use *that* in a non-defining relative clause and we cannot omit the relative pronoun.

Prepositions in relative clauses

- Prepositions usually come at the end of the relative clause. They can also come before the relative pronoun, but this makes the sentence sound very formal.
*His books about relationships, **for which** he is famous, sell very well.* (very formal)
*His books about relationships, **which** he is famous **for**, sell very well.* (more common)
- We cannot use a preposition before *who* or *that*. We can use one before *whom*, but that makes the sentence sound very formal.
*The woman **who/that** I was talking to is my wife.*
*The woman **to whom** I was talking is my wife.* (very formal)
- When the preposition is before the relative pronoun, we cannot omit the relative pronoun even if it is the object of the relative clause.
*Is this the project **which/that** you won the prize **for**?*
*Is this the project you won the prize **for**?*
*Is this the project **for which** you won the prize?* (*which* cannot be omitted)

2 Read these sentences and underline the relative clauses. Which sentence means that the speaker:

- has more than one brother and that the one who has written a book lives in Scotland?
- only has one brother and that he has written a book and lives in Scotland?

a My brother, who has written a book on personal relationships, lives in Scotland.

b My brother who has written a book on personal relationships lives in Scotland.

Read 1.4-1.7 of the Grammar Reference before you do the tasks.

3 Circle the correct words.

Learning about relationships

The book *Impression Management*, ¹ **which / that** is about the different relationships between people, was written by Barry R Schlenker, ² **whom / who** is an American professor. The main reason ³ **why / which** Schlenker wrote the book was because he felt that people should have more information about relationships.

The main idea of the book, ⁴ **who / which** argues that people try to control how others see them in almost every social relationship, was not particularly popular in 1980, ⁵ **where / when** the book was first published. However, in the universities and colleges ⁶ **where / that** the book was taught, there were many students ⁷ **that / whom** felt that Schlenker's thoughts on relationships were important ones ⁸ **that / to which** people should learn about and discuss. Much of the support ⁹ - / **where** the book received, ¹⁰ **for which / that** Schlenker was very thankful, came from his own students. He was also very thankful to his wife, parents and colleagues ¹¹ - / **whose** advice and encouragement helped him greatly. At the beginning of the book, Schlenker says that it was these people and these relationships ¹² **why / which** made the production of *Impression Management* possible.

