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Relative clauses

Darling, I want the cocktail dress **which** has ruffles! It is the dress **that** Kelly Cheung wore to the film award ceremony.

Are you joking?
Kelly Cheung, **who** is a famous actress, is much thinner than you...



Usage

A relative clause is a clause beginning with a **relative pronoun** such as *which* or *who*. It gives us information about the subject or object. We put it immediately after the subject or object it modifies.

There are two types of relative clauses, namely **defining relative clause** and **non-defining relative clause**. We use a:

1. defining relative clause to give essential information.

e.g. The lady **who has long curly hair** is Jody's class teacher.
(= The lady with short straight hair is not Jody's class teacher.)



e.g. Peggy loves the cat **which has dark patches**.
(= Among the three cats, Peggy only likes the one with dark patches.)

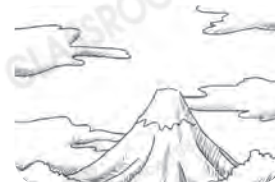


2. non-defining relative clause to give extra information.

e.g. I love Jay Chou, **who is a singer and an actor**.



e.g. Mount Fuji, **which is a famous tourist attraction in Japan**, is visited by thousands of people every year.





Part 1 Relative Pronouns

We need a relative pronoun to form a relative clause. We use the relative pronoun **who** for people and **which** for things and animals.

	Usage	Example
Who	for people	The <u>girl</u> who is crying has got lost. (= The girl has got lost. She is crying.)
Which	for things and animals	Annie bought <u>the house</u> which has a balcony. (= Annie bought a house. The house has a balcony.)

Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks with 'who' or 'which'.

- The lady _____ is holding a black umbrella is my sister.
- Percy doesn't like food _____ is very spicy.
- Is the man _____ is in a grey suit your boyfriend?
- The books _____ were written by J.K. Rowling are popular among children.
- Mr Wong works at an industrial building _____ is in Kwun Tong.
- I like the Korean singers _____ are performing on stage.
- My parents keep two kittens _____ are Persian cats.



Educator's Tips



We can use *that* to replace *who* and *which* in defining relative clauses. We put *that* **immediately after** the noun we describe.

e.g. The jeans **that / which** Jack bought are very trendy.

e.g. The runner **that / who** came first in the marathon is my brother.

The relative pronoun already replaces the subject or object in a relative clause, so don't repeat words like *he*, *her* or *it*.

✗ She's got a new boyfriend **who he** works in Ocean Park.

✓ She's got a new boyfriend **who** works in Ocean Park. (The relative pronoun **who** already replaces the subject pronoun *he*.)



Part 2 Defining Relative Clauses

We use a defining relative clause to give **essential information** about the people or things we are talking about. Without the defining relative clause, the meaning of the sentence will be **incomplete**. We **cannot use a comma** with a defining relative clause.

e.g. *Kenny likes the film **which / that** stars Andy Lau.*

e.g. *The robbers **who / that** robbed the bank have been caught.*

e.g. *The candidates **whom / who / that** the interviewer met just now are fresh graduates.*

Exercise 2.1

Complete the sentences by writing the correct letters in the spaces provided.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| A. who is drinking milk | B. which I need to hand in tomorrow |
| C. which is near his home | D. who was injured in the car accident this morning |
| E. that fell down yesterday | F. that I have borrowed from the public library |
| G. that is wearing a pink blouse | H. which were held by your school |

- Do you know the man _____? He is in hospital now.
- I haven't finished the work _____.
- The tree _____ hit a passer-by.
- Jay is working at a convenience store _____.
- The book _____ is in good condition.
- The woman _____ is Eddie's mother.
- Have you ever joined any football competitions _____?
- Is the baby _____ your daughter?



Educator's Tips



We can drop the relative pronoun only if it is the **object** in a defining relative clause:

e.g. *The doctor met the patient (who) he treated last week.*

(= He treated the patient. **object**)

e.g. *Pamela really likes the handbag (that) she bought on the e-shop.*

(= She bought the handbag. **object**)

Exercise 2.2

Complete the sentences with the correct relative pronouns and the words in brackets.

1. Which boy is your brother?



(hold / sandwich)

The boy who / that is holding a sandwich is my brother.

2. Which dress costs \$1000?



(have / polka dots)

The dress that has polka dots costs \$1000.

3. Which man looks serious?



(wear / black tie)

The man who is wearing a black tie looks serious.

4. Which shirt is Jack going to wear?



(have / five buttons)

Jack is going to wear the shirt that has five buttons.

5. Which student is the captain of the sports team?



(practise / roller-skating)

The student who is roller-skating is the captain of the sports team.

6. Which woman is the wife of the millionaire?



(own / pearl necklace)

The woman who owns a pearl necklace is the wife of the millionaire.



Part 3 Non-defining Relative Clauses

We use a non-defining relative clause to give **extra information** about the noun. The meaning of a sentence is still clear even if we take it away.

A non-defining relative clause also starts with a relative pronoun, but we **cannot use that**. We also need **commas** for it.

A non-defining relative clause with 'who'

- e.g.** Mr Wong, **who always wears a suit**, is the principal of my school. (We know that Mr Wong is the principal. Wearing a suit is additional information.)



A non-defining relative clause with 'which'

- e.g.** Disneyland, **which is full of cartoon characters and interesting rides**, is a famous tourist attraction in Hong Kong. (We know that Disneyland is a famous tourist attraction. Cartoon characters and rides are additional information.)



Educator's Tips



A non-defining relative clause can also come at the end of a sentence. If so, only one comma is needed.

- e.g.** I met Miss Liu, **who taught me English two years ago**.

Exercise 3

Rewrite the following sentences using non-defining relative clauses. Use the sentences in brackets to form the relative clauses.

1. Joey Yung is a famous pop star in Hong Kong. (She first appeared in 1998.)

Joey Yung, who first appeared in 1998, is a famous pop star in Hong Kong.

2. *The Da Vinci Code* was written by Dan Brown. (It is a novel.)

The Da Vinci Code, _____

3. Mr and Mrs Wong are both great doctors. (They have been married for 10 years.)

Mr and Mrs Wong, _____

4. Lai Chi Kok Amusement Park was a famous theme park in the 70s. (It was open in 1949.)

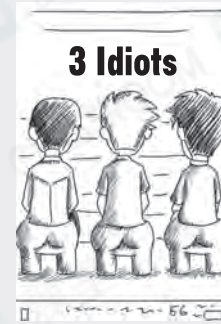
Theme: Growing up
Text Type: Film review

Unit Recap

Jacqueline wrote a film review of an Indian film. Rewrite the underlined sentences with the defining or non-defining relative clauses.

Film Review of March: *Three Idiots*

Three Idiots is an Indian comedy film in 2009. (1) It is a story about three students, Farhan, Raju and Rancho. They study in the same engineering college.



(2) Farhan wants to become a photographer. He has to follow his parents' expectation. (3) Raju often relies on charms. They will bring him luck and success in exams as he believes. However, Rancho believes that one can only succeed by following his or her talent and interest. He often helps the other two. (4) The three friends face many challenges. These challenges make their friendship grow strong.

I like the film very much because the story is inspiring. (5) It shows the problems of poor education and the wide wealth gap. They are some of the biggest problems in India. Many young people have to give up their dreams, but Rancho's positive attitude gives hope to society. Also, the story is told in flashback. It makes the film more attractive.

(6) *Three Idiots* is a must-see for teenagers. They are also studying at school. You will find that your future depends on your attitude, not your grades.

1. It is a story about three students, Farhan, Raju and Rancho, _____

2. Farhan, _____
3. Raju often relies on charms _____
4. The three friends face many challenges _____
5. It shows the problems of _____

6. *Three Idiots* is a must-see for teenagers _____



Vocabulary:

charm (n.): an object which is thought to have magical power to bring luck

attitude (n.): the way that you think and feel about something or someone