

Defining Relative Clauses VS. Non-defining relative clauses

>Non-defining Relative Clauses

They provide interesting additional information which is not essential to understanding the meaning of the sentence.

Example: Mrs. Jackson, **who is very intelligent**, lives on the corner.

"Mrs Johnson lives on the corner" provides a good piece of information. We also know that she is very intelligent, thanks to the relative clause (another interesting piece of information).

NB: YOU MUST USE COMMAS!

>Defining Relative Clauses

- their information is crucial in understanding the meaning of the sentence.
- if you remove them, the sentence has a different meaning or no meaning at all.

Examples:

The woman **who lives in apartment No. 34** has been arrested.

What woman? The woman who lives in apartment n°34, not another woman.

A defining relative clause clearly defines who or what we are talking about. Without this information, it would be difficult to know who or what is meant.

NB: NO COMMAS!

Defining Relative Clauses

	Person	Object
Subject	who, that	which, that
Object	Ø, that (also: who, whom)	Ø, that (also: which)
Possessive	whose	whose, of which

Examples:

>Subject:

Example: Children **who (that) play with fire** are in great danger of harm.
The man **who bought all the books by Hemingway** has died.

Which is better? which/who OR that?

- > who and which: written English
- > that: oral English

>Object:

Example: That's the boy (Ø, that, who, whom) **I invited to the party**.
There's the house (Ø, that, which) **I'd like to buy**.

>Possessive:

Example: He's the man **whose car was stolen last week**.
They were sure to visit the town **whose location (OR the location of which) was little known**.

 **TEST**

Choose the right pronoun:

1. It is the book I've just read.
2. She is the girl sat next to me in the bus.
3. They are the people helped me.
4. This is the dog scared me.

Build one sentence (containing a defining relative clause) with these two sentences:

5. A robot is a machine. It can replace human workers.
6. A vet is a doctor. He treats animals.
7. Pets are animals. They are kept at home as companions.
8. A robot is a machine. It looks like a human being.

ANSWERS: 1. Ø / that / which | 2. that / who | 3. that / who | 4. that / which | 5. A robot is a machine which/that can replace human workers. | 6. A vet is a doctor who/that treats animals. | 7. Pets are animals that/which are kept at home as companions. | 8. A robot is a machine which/that looks like a human being.