

# 107 Relative clauses (1)

1 If we use a sentence like:  
*The police have found the boy.*

it may not be clear which boy.  
We can make it clear like this:  
*The police have found the boy who disappeared last week.*

Who links the relative clause (who disappeared last week) to the main clause (The police have found the boy).

2 When we talk about people, we use **that** or **who**:  
*I talked to the girl that (OR who) won the race.*

When we talk about things or animals, we use **that** or **which**:  
*I like the car that (OR which) won the race.*

3 **That, who or which** can be the subject of the relative clause, like this:

	SUBJECT	
<i>I talked to the girl</i>	<b>who</b>	<i>won.</i>
	<i>The girl</i>	<i>won.</i>
<i>That is the dog</i>	<b>that</b>	<i>attacked me.</i>
	<i>The dog</i>	<i>attacked me.</i>

There is no other pronoun (e.g. **it, they**):  
NOT *That is the dog that it attacked me.*

4 **That, who or which** can be the object of the relative clause, like this:

	OBJECT	
<i>The card</i>	<b>which</b>	<i>Ken sent was nice.</i>
<i>Ken sent</i>	<i>the card.</i>	
<i>The man</i>	<b>that</b>	<i>I saw was very rude.</i>
<i>I saw</i>	<i>the man.</i>	

There is no other pronoun (e.g. **him, them**):  
NOT *The man I saw him was very rude.*

When **that, who or which** is the object of the relative clause (e.g. *The card which Ken sent*), we can leave them out:  
*The card Ken sent was nice.*  
*The man I saw was very rude.*

5 Now look at this sentence with **whose**:  
*Susan is the woman whose husband is an actor.* (= Susan's husband is an actor.)

We use **whose** in place of **his, her, their**, etc. We only use it with people, countries and organizations, not things. It has a possessive meaning. Here is another example:

*The man whose dog bit me didn't apologize.*  
(= The man didn't apologize. His dog bit me.)

## Practice

**A** Complete the sentences using the information in brackets ( ) and **who** or **which**.

- ▶ (I went to see a doctor. She had helped my mother.)  
I went to see the doctor *who had helped* ..... my mother.
- 1 (A dog bit me. It belonged to Mrs Jones.)  
The dog ..... belonged to Mrs Jones.
- 2 (A woman wrote to me. She wanted my advice.)  
The woman ..... wanted my advice.
- 3 (A bus crashed. It was twenty-three years old.)  
The bus ..... was twenty-three years old.
- 4 (Ann talked to a man. He had won a lot of money.)  
Ann talked to the man .....
- 5 (Mary was wearing the red dress. She wears it for parties.)  
Mary was wearing the red dress .....
- 6 (He's an architect. He designed the new city library.)  
He's the architect .....

**B** Complete the sentences using the information in brackets ( ) and **that**.

- ▶ (Jack made a table. It's not very strong.)  
The table *that Jack made* ..... is not very strong.
- 1 (I read about a new computer. I had seen it on TV.)  
I read about the new computer .....
- 2 (Jane made a cake. Nobody liked it.)  
Nobody liked the cake .....
- 3 (Mary sent me a letter. It was very funny.)  
The letter ..... was very funny.
- 4 (My sister wrote an article. The newspaper is going to publish it.)  
The newspaper is going to publish the article .....
- 5 (I met an old lady. She was one hundred and three years old.)  
The old lady ..... was one hundred and three years old.
- 6 (I saw a house. My brother wants to buy it.)  
I saw the house .....

**C** Complete the sentences with one of the phrases in the box and **who** or **whose**.

interviewed me	had	has visited so many different countries
had saved their son		wives have just had babies
book won a prize last week		divorce was in all the papers
car had broken down		complain all the time

- ▶ The parents thanked the woman *who had saved their son* .....
- ▶ The couple *whose divorce was in the newspapers* ..... have got married again.
- 1 It is very interesting to meet somebody .....
- 2 The person ..... asked me some very difficult questions.
- 3 In my office there are two men .....
- 4 What's the name of that writer .....
- 5 I don't like people .....
- 6 We helped a woman .....

**D** Put in **who** or **that** only if necessary.

- ▶ The match ..... we saw was boring.
- ▶ Did I tell you about the people *who* ..... live next door?
- ▶ The horse *that* ..... won the race belongs to an Irish woman.
- 1 I love the ice cream ..... they sell in that shop.
- 2 The book ..... I'm reading is about jazz.
- 3 The woman ..... came to see us was selling magazines.
- 4 We'll go to a restaurant ..... has a children's menu.
- 5 The factory ..... closed last week had been there for seventy years.
- 6 Have you read about the schoolgirl ..... started her own business and is now a millionaire?
- 7 Ethel says that the house ..... Tom has just bought has a beautiful garden.



# 108 Relative clauses (2)

1 In informal English, in defining relative clauses, when **who**, **that** or **which** is the object of the verb, it can be omitted:  
*The name of the woman I interviewed was Mrs Norris.*  
*The car they bought was quite expensive.*

Notice that there is no pronoun in the relative clause:  
*The name of the woman I interviewed ~~her~~ was Mrs Norris.*  
*The car they bought ~~it~~ was quite expensive.*

2 When the verb has a preposition, in formal English the preposition goes with **whom** or **which**:  
*That is the young man to whom I spoke.*  
*The job for which she's applied is in Paris.*

Informally, we can omit the relative word and then the preposition goes at the end of the relative clause:  
*That is the young man I spoke to.*  
*The job she's applied for is in Paris.*

3 Informally, we often omit the relative word when after **day**, **year**, etc.:  
*That was the year I finished university.*

We often omit the relative word **where** after **place**, **somewhere**, etc.:  
*Do you know a place / somewhere we can get a good sandwich?*

We often omit the relative word **why** after **reason**:  
*The real reason she came was to speak to my father.*

We often omit a relative expression after **way**:  
*That's the way they make beer in Germany.*

## Practice

A In the following sentences cross out the words that are not possible or not necessary. If there are no such words, mark the sentence with a tick (✓).

- ▶ The first book which she wrote it was *Lost Steps*. .....
- ▶ This is the boy who broke the window. ✓.....
- Do you know the woman that my father's talking to? .....
- They're going to close the factories that they make too much smoke. ....
- People who live in flats shouldn't have dogs. ....
- An animal that comes out at night must have good eyes. ....
- The boat that my cousins sailed in it was hit by a bomb. ....
- An amphibian is an animal which can live on land or in water. ....
- People who are from Manchester are called Mancunians. ....

B In the following, if a sentence is incomplete, indicate where a word is necessary and write the word at the end. If the sentence is correct, mark it with a tick (✓).

- ▶ Is there a shop near here sells stamps?  
 Is there a shop near here ~~sells~~ stamps? *that*.....
- ▶ Mrs Thomas is the teacher my sister likes best. ✓.....
- 1 The referee is the person takes the decisions. ....
- 2 The bus they were waiting for never came. ....
- 3 The old lady we saw was wearing a pink dress. ....
- 4 Is this the train goes to Nottingham? .....
- 5 There's a place near here you can get a good hamburger. ....

- 6 It took a long time to find the doctor we wanted to see. ....
- 7 Do you know anybody plays the piano really well? .....

C In each case combine the two sentences into one. Put in **who**, **that**, **which** or **where** only if it is necessary.

- ▶ I lent you a book. Have you read it?  
 Have you read *the book I lent you*.....?
- ▶ My mother works in a factory. It makes parts for cars.  
 The factory *where my mother works*..... makes parts for cars.
- 1 Sharon's got a new mobile. It takes photos.  
 Sharon's got a new mobile .....
- 2 They lived in a block of flats. It was struck by lightning.  
 The block of flats ..... was struck by lightning.
- 3 The hotel had a magician. He was very clever.  
 The hotel had a magician .....
- 4 The porters are paid a salary. They can't live on it.  
 The porters can't live on the salary .....
- 5 Nobody else wanted the food. My father ate it.  
 My father ate the food .....
- 6 We ran out of petrol in a little village. It didn't have a petrol station.  
 The village ..... didn't have a petrol station.

D Freda and Len are packing to go on holiday. Complete the conversation with the expressions from the box and include **that** if it is necessary.

you can take onto the plane      go with my green dress      has a lock  
 have just been mended      I knitted myself      needs a film  
 you can walk all day in      covers all the Mediterranean islands  
 we bought in that second-hand bookshop

- Len: We'd better take two cases. The one (▶) *that has a lock*..... and that smaller one .....
- Freda: Which camera do you want to take? The digital one or the one .....
- Len: Let's take the digital one. How about the travel guide? There's that big one ..... and that smaller one – the one just about Corsica .....
- Freda: Perhaps the small one will be enough.
- Len: I think I'll take my shoes ..... How many pairs of shoes are you taking?
- Freda: Well, we'll need some comfortable ones ..... and perhaps for the evenings I'll take the new green ones, the ones .....
- Len: It might be cool in the evenings. I suppose you're taking a sweater.
- Freda: Yes, the white one. You know, the one ..... Anyway, let's have a break. I feel like a drink.



# 109 Relative clauses (3)

1 Look at these two sentences:



London has over 6 million inhabitants.  
 London, which is the capital of Britain, has over 6 million inhabitants.

The clause which is the capital of Britain gives us more information about London, but we do not need this information to define London. We can understand the first sentence without this extra information. which is the capital of Britain is a non-defining relative clause. It has commas (,) to separate it from the rest of the sentence.

2 For things or animals, we use **which** (BUT NOT **that**) in non-defining relative clauses:

Fred sold his computer, which he no longer needed, to his cousin. (NOT ... ~~that he no longer needed~~...)  
 In the summer we stay in my uncle's house, which is near the sea.

3 For people, we use **who** (but not **that**) in non-defining relative clauses. We use **who** when it is the subject of the relative clause:



Elvis Presley, who died in 1977, earned millions of dollars. (Presley died in 1977.)

We use **who** (or sometimes **whom**) when it is the object of the relative clause:

My boss, who (or whom) I last saw before Christmas, is very ill. (I last saw my boss before Christmas.)

4 We use **whose** to mean 'his', 'her', or 'their':



Marilyn Monroe, whose real name was Norma Jean, was born in Los Angeles. (Her real name was Norma Jean.)

5 We can also use **which** (BUT NOT **that**) to refer to a whole fact:

Ann did not want to marry Tom, which surprised everybody.

Here, **which** refers to the fact that Ann did not want to marry Tom.

## Practice

A Make one sentence from the two that are given. Use **who** or **which** with the underlined words.

- ▶ Mont Blanc is between France and Italy. It is the highest mountain in the Alps.  
 Mont Blanc, which is between France and Italy, is the highest mountain in the Alps.
  - ▶ Alfred Hitchcock was born in Britain. He worked for many years in Hollywood.  
 Alfred Hitchcock, who was born in Britain, worked for many years in Hollywood.
- 1 The sun is really a star. It is 93 million miles from the earth.
  - 2 John F. Kennedy died in 1963. He was a very famous American President.
  - 3 Charlie Chaplin was from a poor family. He became a very rich man.
  - 4 The 1992 Olympics were held in Barcelona. It is in the north-east of Spain.

5 We went to see the Crown Jewels. They are kept in the Tower of London.

B From the notes, make one sentence. Use **who**, **whose** or **which** with the words in brackets ( ).

- ▶ Greta Garbo. (She was born in Sweden.) She moved to America in 1925.  
 Greta Garbo, who was born in Sweden, moved to America in 1925.
  - ▶ Darwin. (His ideas changed our view of the world.) He travelled a lot when he was young.  
 Darwin, whose ideas changed our view of the world, travelled a lot when he was young.
- 1 Football. (It first started in Britain.) It is now popular in many countries.  
 Football, .....
  - 2 Margaret Thatcher. (She was the Prime Minister of Britain for 11 years.) She studied science at university.  
 .....
  - 3 Michelangelo. (He lived until he was 90.) He is one of Italy's greatest artists.  
 .....
  - 4 Bill Clinton. (His wife is a brilliant lawyer.) He became President of the USA in 1993.  
 .....
  - 5 The Nile. (It runs through several countries.) It is the longest river in Africa.  
 .....
  - 6 Madonna. (Her parents were born in Italy.) She is a famous American singer.  
 .....
  - 7 Gandhi. (He was born in 1869.) He was assassinated in 1948.  
 .....
  - 8 Elephants. (They are found in Africa and India.) They are hunted for their ivory.  
 .....
  - 9 The Beatles. (Their music is still popular.) They were probably the most famous pop group in the world.  
 .....
  - 10 Brands Hatch. (It is not far from London.) It is famous for its motor races.  
 .....

C Complete this text about Lewis Carroll by putting **who**, **which** or **whose** in the gaps.

Alice in Wonderland, (▶) which ..... is one of the most popular children's books in the world, was written by Lewis Carroll, (1) ..... real name was Charles Dodgson. Carroll, (2) ..... had a natural talent as a story-teller, loved to entertain children, including Alice Liddell, (3) ..... father was a colleague of Carroll's at Oxford University. One day Carroll took Alice and her sisters for a trip on the River Thames, (4) ..... flows through Oxford. After the trip, Carroll wrote in his diary that he had told the children a wonderful story, (5) ..... he had promised to write down for them. He wrote the story, illustrated it with his own drawings, and gave it to the children. By chance, it was seen by Henry Kingsley, (6) ..... was a famous novelist, and he persuaded Dodgson to publish it.