

Relative clauses 3

defining and non-defining relative clauses



A Read the sentences and decide which statement, *a* or *b*, describes the defining relative clause and which describes the non-defining relative clause. Note that where there is a comma (,) in writing there is a pause in speech.

Defining relative clauses

Non-defining relative clauses

Example:

Lambs *that are born early* are given special care. a

Lambs, *which are young sheep*, are usually born in spring. b

The relative clause tells you:	a) which particular group of lambs she is talking about. b) more about lambs in general, ie what lambs are.
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1 Now I'm going to swallow the sword *that my assistant, Julia, is holding*. _____

2 Now I'm going to swallow the sword, *which my assistant, Julia, is holding*. _____

The relative clause tells you:	a) more about the situation, ie where the sword is. b) which sword he is talking about.
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3 Miners *who work underground all their lives* usually have health problems. _____

4 Miners, *who work underground*, usually have health problems. _____

The relative clause tells you:	a) which group of miners have health problems. b) more about miners in general; ie why they have health problems.
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5 The London *I knew 20 years ago* has gone forever. _____

6 London, *which I knew 20 years ago*, has changed forever. _____

The relative clause tells you:	a) more about the situation, ie she used to know London. b) which particular London she means, ie the one she knew 20 years ago.
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B Complete these sentences by writing *defining* or *non-defining* in each space.

- You use a _____ relative clause to tell your listener which one, or which particular group, you are talking about.
- You use a _____ relative clause to add extra information to your sentence; it does not usually help to identify which one/group you are talking about.
- You do not use a comma in writing, or pause in speech, before a _____ relative clause.
- You do use a comma, or pause in speech, before a _____ relative clause.
- You can use *that* in a _____ relative clause.
- You cannot use *that* in a _____ relative clause.
- You can omit *who*, *which* and *that* if it is the object of a _____ relative clause.
- You cannot omit *who*, *which* or *that* in a _____ relative clause.