

12 COMMON QUESTIONS

ADJECTIVE CLAUSES

1. Why do we use adjective clauses?

- to give more information about a noun or noun phrase

I saw the movie. (“Which one???”)

- to give more specific information about a noun or noun phrase

I saw the movie [that you suggested].

- to give additional information about a noun or noun phrase

I saw Avatar, [which is a science fiction movie].

- to create more complex sentences

Becoming more proficient in English is something [which you can all aspire to].

- to avoid redundancy

The movie was excellent. You suggested that movie.



The movie that you suggested was excellent.

2. How do we create adjective clauses?

- use relative pronouns — WHO, WHOM, THAT, WHICH, WHOSE to replace pronouns in simple sentences (e.g. she, it, him, her, its...)

He is the person WHO(M) I was talking about. (I was talking about him.)

America is a country WHOSE politics can be confusing. (It is hard to follow its politics.)

- use WHERE for places: to replace ‘there’ or prepositional phrases of place

Do you know a place WHERE I can buy electronic cigarettes? (I would like to buy one at that store.)

- use WHEN or THAT for times: to replace ‘then’ or prepositional phrases of time

Do you remember the time WHEN we first met? (We didn't know each other at that time.)

3. What is the function of a relative pronoun?

- subject, object, adjective, or adverb depending on its function in the relative clause

She is the person who bought me this.



subject

They saw something which they had not expected.



object

They are the people whose daughter graduated.



adjective

That is the corner where the accident happened.



adverb

4. Can an adjective clause be a sentence?

- no, it is dependent

Whose son is a pianist



fragment

They are the people whose son is a pianist.



sentence

Whose parents are they?



question

5. Is a relative pronoun plural or singular?

- depends on the noun
- that it is modifying

We met some people who were/are travelling around Canada

I talked to someone who was/is planning to study abroad.

I know a woman who has climbed several mountains.

We met three children who have been learning French at school.

6. When can we drop a relative pronoun? ... Ø

- when it is an object in the relative clause

He told me a joke that I had never heard before.

He told me a joke I had never heard before.



- not if it is a subject in the adjective clause

I read a book that was really interesting.

I read a book was really interesting.



7. When do we use commas in an adjective clause?

- when they are not necessary for identifying the noun that is being modified
- with specific nouns that do not require more explanation
- this type of clause is called:
 - ❖ a non-identifying clause
or
 - ❖ a non-restrictive clause
or
 - ❖ a non-defining clause

8. So, what is a restrictive or defining clause?

- modifies a general noun to make it more specific or identifiable

I met a person.

(“Wow! That’s really interesting... NOT!!!”)



I met a person that used to go to high school with you.

- does not require a comma

Which one describes all the boys?

The boys who were playing soccer had excellent skills.

The boys, who were playing soccer, had excellent skills.



9. What are the rules for reducing clauses?

- ❖ drop the relative pronoun; simple present or simple past converts to the verb in 'ing' form

Any students [who wanted extra marks] could do an additional assignment.

→ Any students wanting to get extra marks could do an additional assignment.

- ❖ drop the relative pronoun and verb 'be' for continuous tense or past participles

Some of the people [who were given injections] had reactions.

→ Some of the people given injections had reactions.

- ❖ drop relative pronoun and verb if followed by prepositional phrase

The children [who are in the hallway] are my son and daughter.

→ The children in the hallway are my son and daughter.

10. What is an appositive?

- a reduced non-restrictive adjective clause with a comma

VIU, a university on Vancouver Island, is popular with International students.

- the noun being modified and appositive are equal in value and can be interchangeable in a simple sentence

Ian, an English Language Centre instructor, is giving grammar workshops today.

(An English Language Centre instructor is giving grammar workshops today.)

or

(Ian is giving grammar workshops today.)

11. Can 'which' be used to represent a whole idea?

- yes, when used with commas
- can be used to add a comment about a complete idea in the main clause
- can replace the word "this" in separate, unjoined sentence

Secondhand smoke is more dangerous than filtered smoke. This is why smoking is banned in public places.

→ *Secondhand smoke is more dangerous than filtered smoke, which is why smoking is banned in public places.*

12. What is the difference between an adjective clause and a noun clause?

- adjective clause gives more information about a noun or noun phrase
- noun clause acts as a subject, direct object, or object of the preposition

• Which kind of clause am I? N or A?

1. *[Whose book this is] may remain a mystery.*

2. *He is the teacher [whose student won the scholarship].*

3. *I wonder [whose book this is].*

4. *He is the person [under whose direction we completed the special project].*

N

A

N

A

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTIPATION!

I hope you understand adjective clauses a little better than before.

Did I answer all of your questions?

