

# reduced relative clauses

We sometimes **leave out** *who/which/that* + *is/are/was/were* before **participles** (-ing and -ed forms).

*Who is that child **throwing** stones at our house?* (= '... **who is** throwing ...')

*Most of the people **invited** did not even reply.* (= '... **who were** invited ...')

*Books **printed** before 1600 are rare and valuable.* (= '... **that were** printed ...')

This also happens with prepositional phrases and some adjectives (e.g. *possible, available*).

*Can you pass me the papers **on that table**?* (= '... that are on that table?')

*Tuesday is the only date **possible** for the meeting.* (= '... that is possible.')

Note that *who/which/that* + **have cannot** be left out in the same way.

*We need to talk about some problems **that have arisen** during the operation.*

(NOT ... *some problems arisen during the operation*.)

## 1 Change the words in italics.

▶ Ann can't eat *dishes that are made with milk*. *dishes made with milk*

1 *The students who were taught by Oliver* all got excellent results.

2 *Cars that are parked in this street* will be towed away.

3 I thought that *the girl who was talking to Patrick* looked really nice.

4 Whose are *those books that are piled up on the stairs*?

5 I can't hear myself think because of *the birds that are singing outside*.

6 We need to reduce the amount of *plastic that is used for packaging*.

7 There is a special price for *people who are studying full-time*.

8 A letter *that was posted in 1986* has just been delivered to my sister.

9 We do not have all *the books that were requested*; we are sending *those that are in stock*.

10 Please let me have all *the tickets that are available*.

## 2 Put the letters of eight of the participles into the texts.

A applying B applied C hoping D hoped E interviewing F interviewed G planning  
H planned I printing J printed K showing L shown M teaching N taught O using P used

1 Almost half of the young people ... said that they were or had been gang members

2 Books ... in the late 19th century are particularly at risk because of weaknesses in the paper

3 There is a particular emphasis on encouraging women into the traditionally male-dominated subjects ... here.

4 a business adviser, trainer and mentor for people ... to set up businesses in creative industries, such as film, art and design

5 When ... pictures of leaves, 94 per cent were unable to identify the common native trees from which they fell.

6 the amount of plastic ... in supermarket packaging

7 None of the people ... for the job had any relevant experience.

8 The place is full of rich beautiful girls ... that they might bump into a footballer

# prepositions in relative clauses

**identifying relative clauses** In identifying clauses, verb, adjective or noun + preposition combinations usually **stay close together**. This means that **prepositions** can be **separated** from their relative pronoun **objects**.

	OBJECT		V/A/N + PREPOSITION
something	(that/which)	we	<i>talked about</i>
the girl	(who/that)	you were	<i>interested in</i>
a change	(that/which)	there is	<i>no good reason for</i>

## 1 Correct the confusions and write proper definitions for the different things, ending in prepositions.

- ▶ You carry water in a basket. *No. A basket is something you carry shopping in.*
- 1 You keep yourself dry with an extinguisher.  
No. An extinguisher is something you .....
- 2 You play music on an umbrella.  
.....
- 3 You keep things cold in a bucket.  
.....
- 4 You stick things together with an axe.  
.....
- 5 You cut wood with a saucepan.  
.....
- 6 You put out a fire with a piano.  
.....
- 7 You carry shopping in a freezer.  
.....
- 8 You cook soup with glue.  
.....

Prepositions can also go **before their objects**, but this is rather **formal**.  
After prepositions, we normally use **whom**, not **who**.

something **about which** we talked    the people **to whom** I applied

## 2 Rewrite three of your answers from Ex. 1 in a more formal style.

- ▶ *A basket is something in which you carry shopping.*
- .....
- .....
- .....

## 3 Write definitions ending in prepositions for three or more of these words.

- ▶ bedroom *a room you sleep in*
- 1 birthplace .....
- 2 home .....
- 3 library .....
- 4 colleague .....
- 5 employer .....
- 6 wife or husband .....



**non-identifying clauses** In **non-identifying** clauses prepositions often come **before which** or **whom**, especially in a formal style.

There will be a short speech from the President, **after which** drinks will be served.  
In 1956 she met Andrew Carstairs, **with whom** she later made several films.

**4** Join the sentences in the places marked \*, to create more formal sentences using prepositions with **whom** or **which**.

- ▶ His grandfather gave him a new bicycle\*. He was absolutely delighted with it.  
*His grandfather gave him a new bicycle, with which he was absolutely delighted.*
- 1 Joe Peters\* has just opened a restaurant. My father plays golf with him.  
.....
- 2 This bracelet\* is apparently very valuable. I paid £5 for it.  
.....
- 3 Martin Oliver\* is a very successful farmer. I am working for him at the moment.  
.....
- 4 Our little village school\* has been turned into a museum. I learnt to read and write in it.  
.....
- 5 The committee have appointed a new treasurer, Peter Barnes\*. I have no confidence in him.  
.....
- 6 Hutchins had an operation on his knee\*. He was unable to play for three months after that.  
.....

**at which point etc** *Which* can be used as a determiner in relative clauses, with a noun that repeats the meaning of what came before. This structure is mainly used after prepositions, and is rather formal. Note the common fixed phrases **at which point** and **in which case**.

She called me a liar, **at which point** I decided to end the conversation.  
They may wish to spend the night, **in which case** we will have to find them a room.

**5** Complete each sentence with a preposition, **which** and an expression from the box. Different answers may be possible.

case   disturbing experience   point   pleasant post   time   unexciting work ✓

- ▶ I washed dishes from morning to night, *for which unexciting work* ..... I was paid £3 an hour.
- 1 We arrived at midnight, ..... all the restaurants were closed.
- 2 The office may be closed, ..... we will have to come back tomorrow.
- 3 Her handbag was stolen on a day-trip to Calais, ..... she never travelled abroad again.
- 4 John's heart started beating extremely fast, ..... we decided to call the doctor.
- 5 In 1956 he was appointed Ambassador to Uruguay, ..... he spent the next five years.

## relatives: other points

**more about *who*, *which* and *that*** While we often use *that* instead of *who* in identifying relative clauses, it is rather informal, especially as a subject in writing. Compare:

*The people **who** live next door have got eight cats.* (normal)

*The people **that** live next door have got eight cats.* (informal)

Remember that we don't normally use *that* in non-identifying clauses.

*Mr and Mrs Harris, who live next door, ...* (NOT *Mr and Mrs Harris, that live...*)

In both formal and informal styles, *that* is more common than *which* after indefinite subjects like *everything*, *something*, *anything*, and *nothing*.

*Everything **that** he said was crazy.* (More normal than *Everything which he said ...*)

**Whom** is quite formal, and is dying out in informal speech. It is still common in non-identifying clauses, but it is rare in identifying clauses except after prepositions. Compare:

*She was surprised to see Laura, **whom** she had last met at Andrew's wedding.*

*Look! There's the man (**who**) we saw climbing on the bridge!*

(More natural than *There's the man whom we saw ...*)

**whose** Relative *whose* is used before nouns, and can refer back to both **people** and **things**.

*He was a man **whose** face was on posters everywhere.*

*We bought a TV, **whose** main function was to keep the children quiet.*

We can use a structure with *of which* to express the same kind of meaning.

*... a TV, **the main function of which** was to keep the children quiet.*

These are rather formal structures; in informal speech they are less often used.

*I've got some friends **with a house that** looks over a river.* (More natural in conversation than

*I've got some friends **whose house** looks over a river.*)

### 1 Circle the letter of the most informal sentence in each group.

- 1 A The person that told you that was mistaken.  
B The person who told you that was mistaken.
- 2 A I have had a card from those French people whom we met in Moscow.  
B I have had a card from those French people we met in Moscow.  
C I have had a card from those French people that we met in Moscow.
- 3 A He made a speech whose purpose was completely unclear.  
B He made a speech the purpose of which was completely unclear.  
C He made a speech; its purpose was completely unclear.

### 2 Complete these sentences in any way you like, using *whose*.

- An unsuccessful builder is one *whose houses fall down.*
- 1 An unsuccessful gardener is one .....
  - 2 An unsuccessful parent is one .....
  - 3 An unsuccessful doctor is one .....
  - 4 An unsuccessful writer is one .....
  - 5 An unsuccessful teacher is one .....
  - 6 An unsuccessful tourist guide is one .....
  - 7 An unsuccessful cook is one .....
  - 8 An unsuccessful lion tamer is one .....



**which = whole clause** Which can refer back not just to a noun, but also to a **whole clause**.

We replaced **the pump**, **which** wasn't working properly. (*which* = 'the pump')

We replaced **the pump**, **which** took two days. (*which* = 'We replaced the pump')

Note that *what* cannot be used in this way.

He got the job, **which** surprised us all. (NOT ... ~~what surprised us all~~)

### 3 Put in *which* or *what*.

- 1 He lent me his car, ..... was very kind of him.
- 2 I very much liked ..... you wrote about me.
- 3 The shop was closed, ..... was a nuisance.
- 4 Nobody had ..... I wanted.
- 5 He runs three miles a day, ..... keeps him fit.
- 6 This is not ..... I asked for.
- 7 We're going to redecorate the house, ..... will keep us all busy.
- 8 They made Alex Managing Director, ..... pleased everybody.

**when, where etc** After words for **time** and **place**, we can use **when** and **where** as relatives.

I'll never forget **the day (when)** I arrived in Athens. (= '... the day **on which** ...')

Do you know **a garage where** I can get cheap tyres? (= '... a garage **at which** ...')

We can **drop when** after common words for time, and we can **drop where** after *somewhere*, *anywhere*, *everywhere*, *nowhere* and *place*.

the day I arrived    that time we went down to Exeter    the year I worked in Egypt  
somewhere we can get a drink    everywhere she goes    a place I can sleep

We use **why** as a relative after **reason**. It can be **dropped**.

I never found out the **reason (why)** she left. (= '... the reason **for which** ...')

Note also that **in which** is often **dropped** after **way**.

I didn't like the **way (in which)** he spoke to me.

### 4 Finish the sentences as you like, using *when*, *where* or *why*.

- 1 Your birthday is the anniversary of the day .....
- 2 A supermarket is a place .....
- 3 A church is a place .....
- 4 Sunday is a day .....
- 5 I'll never forget the day .....
- 6 I know a place .....
- 7 I'll never know the reason .....

**indefinite expressions** After indefinite expressions like *a man* or *some books*, there is not always a clear difference between 'identifying' and 'non-identifying' clauses. The choice of structure may simply depend on whether the information in the relative clause is an important part of the meaning or not.

My sister married **a famous architect (that) she met** in Australia. OR

My sister married **a famous architect, whom she met** in Australia.

I've got **a new car that goes** like a bomb. OR

I've got **a new car, which goes** like a bomb.

**dropping subject pronouns** In **informal speech**, subject pronouns are sometimes dropped.

Is there **anybody here drives** a white Ford van? It's blocking the entrance.

There's **a guy works** in my office **thinks** he can read minds.