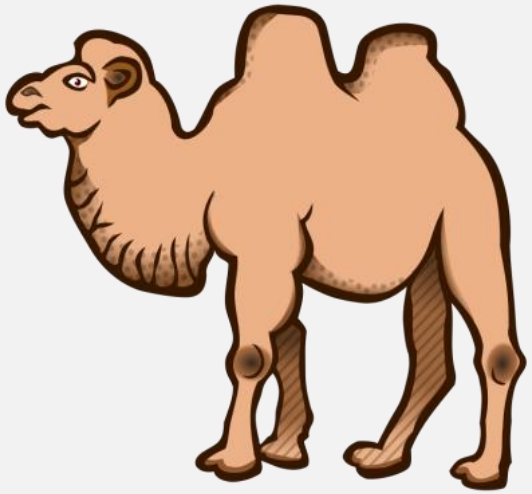
Relative clauses







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Relative clauses

A relative clause is a type of subordinate clause that adds detail to the noun in a sentence.

Examples:

- The castle, **which was the home of Jasper Tudor**, is in Carmarthen.
- Jasper, **who was uncle to the future King Henry VII**, was buried at Keynsham Abbey.



Which nouns do these relative clauses add more information to?

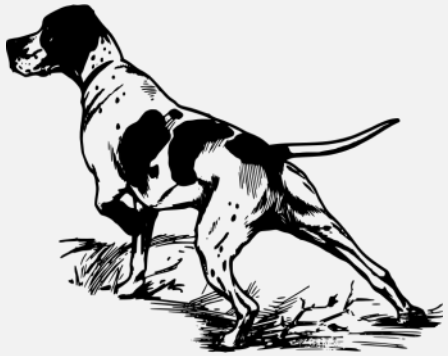
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Subject and object relative clauses

Relative clauses can add information to both subject nouns and object nouns.

Examples:



- The dog, **who was soaking wet**, sprayed me with water.

  (The dog is the subject performing the action.)

- I tried to dry the dog, **who was soaking wet**.

  (The dog is the object receiving the action.)

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Subject or object relative clauses?

In the following sentences, decide whether the relative clause tells us more about a subject noun or an object noun.



1. The tractor, which was over forty years old, was still going strong.
2. The car hit the lamp-post, which is now bent.
3. I was talking to Sally, who is a friend of my sister.
4. The actor that I need for the advert is unavailable.

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Answers

1. The tractor, which was over forty years old, was still going strong. **Subject**
2. The car hit the lamp-post, which is now bent. **Object**
3. I was talking to Sally, who is a friend of my sister. **Object**
4. The actor that I need for the advert is unavailable. **Subject**



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Relative pronouns

Relative clauses are often introduced by relative pronouns:

Relative pronoun	Use	Example
who	for people or pets	The fire-fighters, **who** had worked all day, were exhausted.
which	for animals and things	Jason hunted the tiger, **which** was hiding in the bushes. The watch, **which** was fairly cheap, told the time accurately.
whose	for possession for people, animals and things	The team, **whose** home ground is Anfield, will be playing in red. The house, **whose** roof is leaking badly, will cost you £300,000.
that	for people, animals and things	I couldn't find the key **that** unlocked the chest. James loved driving the car **that** had belonged to his grandfather.



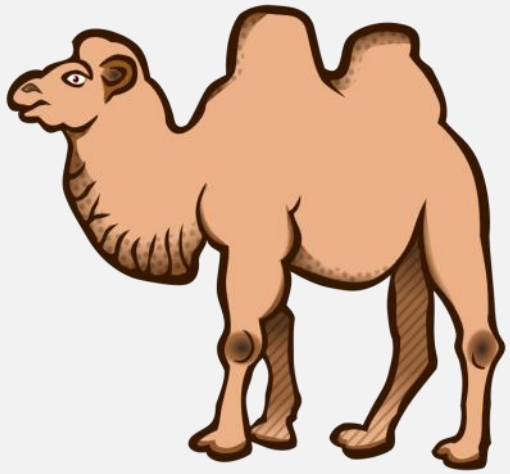




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Add a relative pronoun

1. The camel, …… had not eaten for days, had the hump.
2. The elephants, …… had lost their trunks, couldn't go swimming.
3. The polar bear, …… couldn't ever eat a penguin, had a go at a Twix instead.
4. "Who can feel worse than me?" said the elephant …… had a blocked up nose.
5. "I can!" exclaimed the giraffe, …… had a stiff neck.

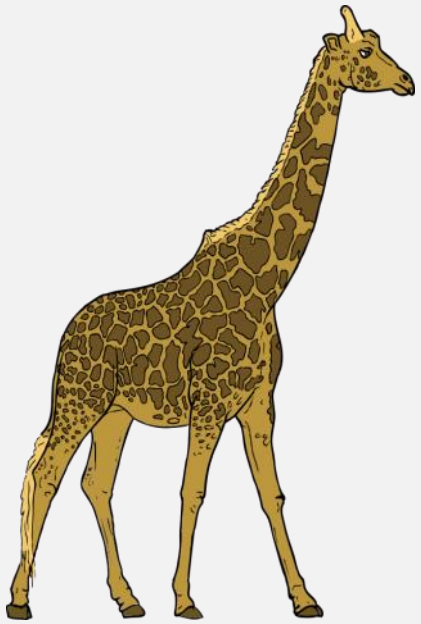


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Answers

1. The camel, **who/which** had not eaten for days, had the hump.
2. The elephants, **who/which** had lost their trunks, couldn't go swimming.
3. The polar bear, **who** couldn't ever eat a penguin, had a go at a Twix instead.
4. "Who can feel worse than me?" said the elephant **who/that/which** had a blocked nose.
5. "I can!" exclaimed the giraffe, **who** had a stiff neck.



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Which versus that

We use ‘which’ when we are adding information which is not essential to our understanding of the sentence.



For example:

- The coat, **which had a rip in it**, was behind the cupboard.

This added information about the rip may be interesting – but is not essential. Without it, we would still understand that the coat was behind the cupboard.

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Which versus that

We can use ‘which’ or ‘that’ when we are adding information which is essential to our understanding of the sentence.



For example:

- The film **that is on at the Roxy** is one that I want to see.
- The film **which is on at the Roxy** is one that I want to see.

This time, the added information is essential. Without it, we would not know which film the writer wants to see!

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Whose

‘**Whose**’ can be used for singular or plural nouns:

- The soldier, ***whose*** regiment was the Somersets, waited for the whistle to blow.
- The soldiers, ***whose*** regiment was the Somersets, waited for the whistle to blow.



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Whose

'**Whose**' can be used to add meaning to both subject nouns and object nouns:

- The **giraffe**, ***whose*** neck was very long, reached up to the tall tree.
- The mum cuddled the **child**, ***whose*** toy had been broken.



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Whose

‘**Whose**’ can be used for people, animals and things:

- The blacksmith, ***whose*** name was Joe Gargery, lived at the Old Forge.
- The lion, ***whose*** home is the savannah, is known mistakenly as the King of the Jungle.
- The house, ***whose*** door is painted green, is set for demolition.



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Where and when

‘**Where**’ is sometimes used to add information to a noun that is a place:

- The ringside, ***where*** Sam had lost the boxing match, was covered in blood.



‘**When**’ is sometimes used to add information to a noun that is a time:

- Yesterday, ***when*** the rocket blasted off, the launch pad was engulfed in flame and smoke.

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Complete the relative clauses

1. The house, …… was shrouded in mist, was undoubtedly haunted.
2. John, …… had eaten three treacle tarts, was feeling queasy.
3. Three days ago, …… Jennifer came to tea, I felt really poorly.
4. The comedian, …… watch was broken, lacked timing.
5. The horizon, …… the sun meets the sky, can be seen clearly today.



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Answers

1. The house, **which** was shrouded in mist, was undoubtedly haunted.
2. John, **who** had eaten three treacle tarts, was feeling queasy.
3. Three days ago, **when** Jennifer came to tea, I felt really poorly.
4. The comedian, **whose** watch was broken, lacked timing.
5. The horizon, **where** the sun meets the sky, can be seen clearly today.



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