

Relative Pronouns

A **relative pronoun** introduces a subordinate clause. A relative pronoun generally relates the descriptive information found within a subordinate clause to a noun or pronoun found in the main clause. The relative pronouns are *that*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*.

EXAMPLES	<p>Mario owns a Great Dane, which is a very large dog. [<i>Which</i> introduces the subordinate clause <i>which is a very large dog</i> and relates this descriptive information to <i>Great Dane</i>.]</p> <p>Mario, who owns a Great Dane, lives next door. [<i>Who</i> introduces the subordinate clause <i>who owns a Great Dane</i> and relates this descriptive information to <i>Mario</i>.]</p> <p>Mario, whom neighbors often see outside, has a large yard. [<i>Whom</i> introduces the subordinate clause <i>whom neighbors often see outside</i> and relates this descriptive information to <i>Mario</i>.]</p> <p>The Great Dane that Mario owns is almost always with him. [<i>That</i> introduces the subordinate clause <i>that Mario owns</i> and relates this descriptive information to <i>Great Dane</i>.]</p>
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REMINDER A **subordinate clause** has a subject and a verb, but the clause cannot stand alone as a sentence. Information contained in a subordinate clause is generally less important than the information contained in a sentence's main clause. *Which fell from the sky* is a subordinate clause. *Ted found a meteorite, which fell from the sky* is a complete sentence.

EXERCISE A Underline the relative pronoun in each of the following sentences.

Examples	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do you enjoy stories <u>that</u> are about time travel? [<i>That</i> begins the subordinate clause <i>that are about time travel</i>.]2. You may enjoy <i>The Time Machine</i>, <u>which</u> was written by H. G. Wells. [<i>Which</i> begins the subordinate clause <i>which was written by H. G. Wells</i>.]
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- 1.Chen is reading *Animal Farm*, which is about power and betrayal. [Which word begins a subordinate clause?]
- 2.George Orwell, who wrote this fable, used animals as main characters. [Which word begins a subordinate clause?]
- 3.The plot is about farm animals that chase away their owners!
- 4.Try reading a book by J.R.R. Tolkien, an author whom many readers admire.
- 5.Bilbo Baggins, whom readers meet in *The Hobbit*, is the hero of this story.
- 6.A hobbit is a creature whose life centers on family, food, and a good home.
- 7.In many classrooms, students read books that explore the dark side of human nature.
- 8.Have you read *Lord of the Flies*, which is about human nature?
- 9.A group of boys, whose airplane crashes, must survive on a lonely island.
- 10.What do you think of these boys, who become savage?

EXERCISE B Underline the relative pronoun in each of the following sentences. Then, draw an arrow from the relative pronoun to the word to which the relative pronoun relates.

Examples	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Li's trumpet, <u>which</u> is silver, always sparkles in the sunlight. [<i>Which</i> begins the subordinate clause <i>which is silver</i> and relates the information to <i>trumpet</i>.] 2. How often should I water the plants <u>that</u> are in the front room? [<i>That</i> begins the subordinate clause <i>that are in the front room</i> and relates the information to <i>plants</i>.]
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- 11.The pep rally, which began at one o'clock, lasted almost two hours! [Which relative pronoun begins a subordinate clause? To which noun does the relative pronoun relate?]
12. When should we pick up the uniforms that Ms. Baraka ordered? [Which relative pronoun begins a subordinate clause? To which noun does the relative pronoun relate?]
13. Marie, whom the community greatly admires, planted four trees in a local park.
14. Try finding a puzzle piece that is shaped like an *H*.
15. Ernesto's brother, who enjoys good conversation, makes it a point to visit us once a day.

16. We saw a whooping crane, which is one of the rarest birds in North America!
17. That short story, which talks about the love of a grandmother for her grandson, is excellent.
18. Is Leroy, whom our customers love, going to get this month's bonus?
19. Julia constructed this model volcano from clay that she found in her own backyard.
20. The choir's leaders, who are looking for a new sound, have been listening to Caribbean music.

Answer Keys:

EXERCISE A

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EXERCISE B

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