



Defining and Non-Defining Relative Clauses — B1 exercises

Printable worksheet · 23 questions · answer key with explanations on the last page
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Name _____ Date _____ Score _____ / 23

A. Multiple choice

10 questions

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. The woman ____ lives upstairs plays the violin at midnight.
A) which B) whose C) who D) whom
2. My car, ____ I bought last year, has already broken down twice.
A) which B) that C) what D) who
3. In which sentence can the pronoun be left out?
A) The man who called you is waiting. B) The book which I read was excellent.
C) My sister, who lives in Rome, is visiting. D) The house which has a red door is theirs.
4. That is the café ____ we first met.
A) where B) which C) that D) when
5. The student ____ essay won the prize is only sixteen.
A) who B) who's C) whose D) which
6. Which sentence is punctuated correctly?
A) My father who is a doctor, works nights. B) My father, who is a doctor works nights.
C) My father who is a doctor works nights. D) My father, who is a doctor, works nights.
7. 1969 was the year ____ humans first walked on the Moon.
A) which B) where C) that time D) when
8. What is the difference between 'My brother who lives in Perth' and 'My brother, who lives in Perth'?
A) No difference
B) The second is informal
C) The first implies you have more than one brother
D) The first is incorrect
9. The people ____ we met on holiday have sent us a card.
A) which B) who C) whose D) what
10. He gave me a book ____ changed the way I think.
A) who B) whose C) where D) that

B. Fill in the blank

8 questions

Write the missing word or words in the gap.

1. The man _____ repaired our boiler left his tools behind.
2. This is the village _____ my grandparents were born.
3. My neighbour, _____ dog barks all night, has finally apologised.
4. The parcel _____ arrived this morning was addressed to you.
5. Vienna, _____ I lived for three years, is the city I miss most.
6. Do you remember the summer _____ it never stopped raining?
7. Everything _____ could go wrong did go wrong.
8. She is the only person _____ I really trust.

C. Sentence building

5 questions

Put the words in the correct order and write the sentence on the line.

1. The / who / here / a / vet. / woman / is / lives

Identify a person with a defining clause.

2. My / brother, / Perth, / visiting. / is / who / lives / in

Add extra information between two commas.

3. This / first / where / the / we / café / is / met.

Use the pronoun for places.

4. changed / The / my / short. / that / was / book / life

Use a subject pronoun that cannot be dropped.

5. won. / the / essay / whose / is / She / student

Show possession inside the clause.

Answer key

Every answer carries the reason behind it. Read the reason for the questions you got right as well — that is where you find out whether you were right for the right reason.

A. Multiple choice

1. **C) who** — Who is the relative pronoun for people in a defining clause.
2. **A) which** — Non-defining clauses cannot use that. Which is the only option for a thing.
3. **B) The book which I read was excellent.** — The pronoun can be dropped only when it is the object of a defining clause: the book I read.
4. **A) where** — Where introduces a relative clause about a place.
5. **C) whose** — Whose shows possession — the essay belongs to the student.
6. **D) My father, who is a doctor, works nights.** — A non-defining clause is fenced by commas on both sides, never on one only.
7. **D) when** — When introduces a relative clause about a time.
8. **C) The first implies you have more than one brother** — A defining clause distinguishes one brother from others; the comma version says you have just the one.
9. **B) who** — Who is correct for people as the object, though it could also be dropped entirely here.
10. **D) that** — That is the subject pronoun for a thing in a defining clause, and cannot be omitted here.

B. Fill in the blank

1. **who** — Who introduces a defining clause about a person acting as the subject.
2. **where** — Where introduces a relative clause about a place.
3. **whose** — Whose marks possession inside a non-defining clause.
4. **that** — A defining clause about a thing as the subject takes that or which.
5. **where** — A non-defining clause about a place still uses where, with commas around it.
6. **when** — When introduces a relative clause about a period of time.
7. **that** — After everything, English uses that rather than what.
8. **who** — After only, that is common, but who is also accepted for a person as object.

C. Sentence building

1. **The woman who lives here is a vet.**
2. **My brother, who lives in Perth, is visiting.**
3. **This is the café where we first met.**
4. **The book that changed my life was short.**
5. **She is the student whose essay won.**