

Defining and Non-defining Relative Clauses – Test 1



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Choose the one correct answer for each question.

Part 1: Relative pronouns and adverbs

Choose the word that correctly completes each sentence.

1. The woman _____ lives next door is a nurse.
 A who B which C whose D what
2. Is this the book _____ you were talking about?
 A who B what C whose D which
3. I have a friend _____ brother plays in a jazz band.
 A who's B whose C who D which
4. That's the café _____ we first met.
 A which B where C when D what
5. I'll never forget the day _____ I passed my driving test.
 A when B where C which D who
6. Do you know the reason _____ she left early?
 A why B which C because D what
7. Lagos, _____ is the largest city in Nigeria, is home to over 15 million people.
 A that B which C where D who
8. My grandmother, _____ is 92, still goes swimming every morning.
 A that B who C whom D which
9. Everything _____ he told us turned out to be true.
 A what B that C who D whose
10. The man to _____ I spoke on the phone was very helpful.
 A who B whom C that D which

Part 2: Defining or non-defining? Form, meaning and errors

Choose the correct sentence, meaning, answer or error in each question.

11. Sam has only one brother. Which sentence is correct?
 A My brother, that lives in Toronto, is an engineer.
 B My brother, who lives in Toronto, is an engineer.
 C My brother who he lives in Toronto is an engineer.
 D My brother, who he lives in Toronto, is an engineer.

12. In which sentence can the relative pronoun be left out?
- A The film that we watched last night was brilliant.
 - B The film that won the award was brilliant.
 - C The new museum, which we visited last week, was brilliant.
 - D The girl who sits next to me speaks four languages.
13. "The students who passed the exam received a certificate." What does this sentence mean?
- A All the students passed and received a certificate.
 - B Only the students who passed received a certificate.
 - C None of the students received a certificate.
 - D The students received a certificate before the exam.
14. "The students, who passed the exam, received a certificate." What does this sentence mean?
- A All the students passed and they all received a certificate.
 - B Only some of the students received a certificate.
 - C The students who failed also passed later.
 - D Some students passed but did not receive a certificate.
15. Find the error: "The hotel where we stayed it was very close to the beach."
- A where
 - B it was
 - C very close
 - D to the beach
16. Find the error: "Mr Okafor, that teaches us maths, is retiring this year."
- A Mr Okafor,
 - B that
 - C teaches us maths,
 - D is retiring
17. Which sentence needs commas around the relative clause?
- A The person who found my wallet returned it the next day.
 - B Mount Kilimanjaro which is in Tanzania is the highest mountain in Africa.
 - C The bus that goes to the airport leaves every twenty minutes.
 - D People who exercise regularly tend to sleep better.
18. She failed her driving test three times, _____ really upset her.
- A that
 - B what
 - C which
 - D it
19. In which sentence can 'that' replace the relative word?
- A Our manager, who joined last year, is very supportive.
 - B The laptop which I bought last month has stopped working.
 - C My sister, whose husband is a chef, loves cooking.
 - D Rome, where my parents met, is my favourite city.
20. Which question is correct?
- A Who is the man that you were talking to?
 - B Who is the man that you were talking to him?
 - C Who is the man to that you were talking?
 - D Who is the man which you were talking to?

Part 3: Relative clauses in context

Read the text. Then choose the word that correctly completes each gap. The sentences from the text are repeated in the questions in the same order.

Greenway Community Garden, ___ opened in 2015, is run entirely by volunteers. The idea came from Amara Diallo, a retired teacher ___ had always wanted to grow vegetables in the city. The land, ___ had been empty for years, belonged to the local council, ___ agreed to rent it for a small fee.

Today the garden has around sixty members, most of ___ live in the flats nearby. There is a small shed ___ tools are kept, and a notice board on ___ volunteers write their names for each task. Members ___ plots are not looked after for three months may lose them, ___ seems fair to most people. Amara says the best thing about the garden is the friendships ___ people have made there.

21. Greenway Community Garden, _____ opened in 2015, is run entirely by volunteers.
A that **B** which **C** who **D** what
22. The idea came from Amara Diallo, a retired teacher _____ had always wanted to grow vegetables in the city.
A who **B** whom **C** which **D** whose
23. The land, _____ had been empty for years, belonged to the local council.
A that **B** which **C** where **D** what
24. The land belonged to the local council, _____ agreed to rent it for a small fee.
A which **B** that **C** what **D** whose
25. Today the garden has around sixty members, most of _____ live in the flats nearby.
A them **B** who **C** whom **D** which
26. There is a small shed _____ tools are kept.
A which **B** where **C** in that **D** when
27. There is a notice board on _____ volunteers write their names for each task.
A that **B** which **C** where **D** it
28. Members _____ plots are not looked after for three months may lose them.
A who **B** whose **C** who's **D** which
29. Members may lose their plots, _____ seems fair to most people.
A what **B** that **C** which **D** it
30. Amara says the best thing about the garden is the friendships _____ people have made there.
A what **B** that **C** whose **D** where

Answer key – Defining and Non-defining Relative Clauses – Test 1

1 A	2 D	3 B	4 B	5 A	6 A	7 B	8 B	9 B	10 B
11 B	12 A	13 B	14 A	15 B	16 B	17 B	18 C	19 B	20 A
21 B	22 A	23 B	24 A	25 C	26 B	27 B	28 B	29 C	30 B

Explanations

- A** – We use 'who' as the subject of a relative clause referring to a person.
- D** – 'Which' refers to things; 'what' cannot follow a noun as a relative pronoun.
- B** – 'Whose' shows possession (her brother); 'who's' means 'who is'.
- B** – 'Where' refers to a place and replaces 'in which'.
- A** – 'When' is used after nouns of time such as 'day'.
- A** – 'The reason why' is the standard relative structure after 'reason'.
- B** – Non-defining clauses about things use 'which'; 'that' is not possible after a comma.
- B** – 'Who' is the subject here; 'that' cannot be used in a non-defining clause.
- B** – After 'everything', 'all', 'nothing' etc. we use 'that', not 'what'.
- B** – After a preposition we use 'whom' for people; 'that' and 'who' cannot follow a preposition.
- B** – Sam has only one brother, so the clause just adds extra information and needs a non-defining clause with commas and 'who' (not 'that'), without repeating the subject pronoun 'he'.
- A** – The pronoun can be omitted only in defining clauses where it is the object ('we watched it').
- B** – Without commas the clause is defining: it identifies which students got a certificate.
- A** – With commas the clause is non-defining: it adds information about all the students.
- B** – The relative clause already contains the subject 'hotel', so 'it' must be removed: 'was very close'.
- B** – 'That' cannot introduce a non-defining clause; it should be 'who'.
- B** – Mount Kilimanjaro is already identified, so the clause adds extra information and needs commas.
- C** – Only 'which' can refer back to a whole clause after a comma.
- B** – 'That' can replace 'which' only in defining clauses without commas.
- A** – 'That' works for people in defining clauses, the preposition stays at the end, and no extra pronoun is added.
- B** – This is a non-defining clause about a thing, so 'which' is needed.
- A** – 'Who' is the subject of the clause and refers to a person.
- B** – The clause is between commas and refers to a thing, so 'which' is correct.
- A** – After a comma, 'which' introduces extra information about the council; 'that' is not possible.
- C** – After quantifiers like 'most of', we use 'whom' for people; 'them' would create two joined main clauses.
- B** – 'Where' refers to a place and means 'in which'.
- B** – After a preposition we use 'which' for things; 'that' cannot follow a preposition.
- B** – 'Whose' shows possession: the members' plots.
- C** – 'Which' after a comma refers to the whole previous idea.
- B** – 'That' introduces a defining clause about things ('people have made them'); 'what' cannot follow a noun.

Notes for teachers: Use Part 1 as a warm-up on pronoun choice, Part 2 to check punctuation, meaning and when 'that' or omission is possible, and Part 3 to test relative clauses in a connected text. The test targets frequent B2 errors: using 'that' in non-defining clauses, adding an extra pronoun ('where we stayed it was'), confusing 'whose' and 'who's', and using 'that' or 'what' to refer to a whole clause. As a follow-up, ask students to rewrite pairs of short sentences as one sentence with a relative clause and to explain whether commas are needed.