RULE SHEET

Relative clauses and contact clauses



A **relative clause** gives more information about a person or a thing. It starts with a **relative pronoun**: who, which, that or whose.

Relative pronouns

pronoun	for	example
who	people	the girl **who** lives next door
which	things, animals	the bus **which** goes to the airport
that	people and things	the film **that** won the prize
whose	possession (his, her, their)	the boy **whose** bike is red

Contact clauses: relative clauses with no who, which or that

word after who / which / that	leave out?	example
a verb	no	the man **who** sells fish
a noun or pronoun: I, you, Mum, the boy …	yes	the cake (**that**) Mum made → the cake Mum made

Examples

- Nora is the girl **who** plays the fiddle in our band.
- Kinsale is a town **which** has colourful houses.
- Mr Khan is the teacher **that** helped me most last year.
- Finn is the boy **whose** dad drives the school bus.
- The song **we sang in class** was in Irish. (= the song which we sang in class)

> **Watch out!** Do not add a second object: The cake Mum made was great. (not: The cake Mum made **it** was great.) When a verb comes after the pronoun, you cannot leave it out: The girl **who** won the race is Nora. (not: The girl won the race is Nora.) You can never leave out **whose**. These relative clauses have no commas.

PRACTICE 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

who, which or whose?

1 Tick the correct word.

1. My aunt is a nurse _____ works at the hospital in Limerick.
   ○ who ○ which ○ whose
2. Is this the train _____ goes to Dublin? ○ who ○ which ○ whose
3. I know a girl _____ mum is a pilot. ○ who ○ which ○ whose
4. We need a box _____ is big enough for the cake. ○ who ○ which ○ whose
5. The man _____ lives above us plays the piano at night. ○ who ○ which ○ whose
6. That's the boy _____ phone fell into the river. ○ who ○ which ○ whose
7. Where is the umbrella _____ was next to the door? ○ who ○ which ○ whose
8. Do you know the woman _____ runs the café on the corner?
   ○ who ○ which ○ whose

2 Match the sentence halves. Write the letter.

1. ☐ A vet is a person
2. ☐ A fridge is a machine
3. ☐ A twin is a person
4. ☐ A library is a building
5. ☐ A pilot is a person
6. ☐ A dictionary is a book

a. which keeps food cold.
b. who flies planes.
c. which explains words.
d. who looks after sick animals.
e. which has a lot of books for people to borrow.
f. whose brother or sister is exactly the same age.
g. who teaches children at a school.