

fourth
edition

English File

Upper Intermediate

Extra grammar material –
defining and non-defining
relative clauses



This material has been developed in collaboration with Instituto Cambridge Argentina and should only be used to complement *Adults 5* courses by IC teachers, students and followers.

4 GRAMMAR DEFINING AND NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

1 Look at the photo and the title of the text. What do you think it is about?

Is time running out for Europe's ski resorts?

At the ski resort in Saint-Firmin, France, mechanics are taking down the ski lifts.

The mayor of the town of Saint-Firmin, which used to be covered in snow for several months each winter, is finally giving up. Although the situation in Saint-Firmin is extreme, ski resorts all over the Alps may face a similar future. Over 200 million visitors visit mountain regions in the Alps, which cross eight different countries, to ski. For decades, the thousands of ski resorts in the region were covered in white snow from late November until early March. In recent years, dry winters and warmer temperatures mean less snow. Some ski resorts, which depend on snow levels, open later and close earlier than ever before. Experts blame climate change, which is causing warmer temperatures in both the summer and winter.

In places where the ski slopes are higher in the mountains, there are fewer problems with snow levels.

The Nordic countries, which have high mountain elevations and are further north, are unlikely to suffer.

The least snow is found in areas that are lower, generally in Italy, Slovenia and Germany. These are the ski resorts that are most popular with European tourists. They are often towns that depend on ski tourism.

Without it, restaurants and hotels will close, and many people will lose their jobs. Sophie Carter is a student who cleans guest bedrooms in a hostel in the Austrian Alps. 'This is the fourth year that I have worked here. I used to come here when I was a child and I've noticed a big difference in the snow levels. I'm lucky because my job here is just casual. I get free food and accommodation at the hostel where I work, but I don't earn a lot. It's really a way that I can ski every season without spending a lot of money. But I know that the hostel owners, whose income depends on the ski season, are worried.'

Emmanuel Perrier is an experienced French skier. He is taking his young grandchildren, who are aged four and six years old, to the slopes for the first time. However, he is pessimistic about their opportunities to ski where he did as a child. 'I have skied on glaciers that my grandchildren will never get to see because they are melting so quickly,' he says sadly.



2 Now read the text and complete the sentences with the correct word or number.

- 1 More than _____ million skiers go to the Alps every year.
- 2 You can visit the Alps in _____ European countries.
- 3 In the past, winters didn't use to be as _____ or _____.
- 4 Ski resorts can't open without _____.
- 5 There are fewer problems with snow in countries in the _____.
- 6 Some _____ in Europe are melting.

3 Look at the **highlighted** sentences in the text. Which sentences have extra information that is not essential to the sentence? What is the extra information?

The Austrian Alps are a mountain range.
Many people go skiing there.
The Austrian Alps are a mountain range **where** many people go skiing.
My dad is an experienced skier. He has visited this resort many times.
My dad is an experienced skier **who** has visited this resort many times.
Marta is a shop owner. Her ski equipment is very cheap.
Marta is a shop owner **whose** ski equipment is very cheap.

- Relative clauses provide more information about a noun. We often use them to combine two sentences using relative pronouns (*who/that* for people, *where* for places, *when* for time, *which* for things and *whose* for possession).

defining relative clauses

- Mont Blanc is a glacier **that** is melting.
- Grindelwald is the ski resort **where** I learned to ski.
- Nobody listened to the man **who/that** warned about the snow levels.

1 We use defining relative clauses to give essential information about the noun it refers to.

- Sometimes we can use *that* instead of *which* or *who* in the defining relative clauses.
- If *who/that* or *which/that* is the object of a verb in a defining relative clause, we can omit it. We can't omit it if it's followed by a verb. Compare:
The ski resort (that) we used to visit is closed.
The ski resort that closed was our favourite.

non-defining relative clauses

- Dry winters, **which** have little snow or rain, are common.
- The hikers, **who** take this trip every year, were surprised.
- The restaurant, **whose** owners are locals, doesn't get many customers.

1 We use non-defining relative clauses to give extra information about the noun or clause. If we remove the non-defining relative clause, it doesn't affect how we understand the main sentence. Compare:

Sophie, who studies environmental science, warned us about the snow levels.

Sophie, who studies environmental science, warned us about the snow levels.

- Non-defining relative clauses are always placed between two commas.
- We can't omit the non-defining relative pronouns or use the relative pronoun *that*.

4 Write the sentences in the correct order.

- that / home / report / heard / the / everyone / news / stayed / at

- it / the / ever / thunder / that / heard / I'd / loudest / was

- the / road / struck / where / the lightning / that's / place / the

- is / the / floods / when / there / are / often / autumn / season

- who / science / you / just / saw / is / my / teacher / man / the

- the / that / hotel / room / freezing / we / stayed / in / was

5 Cross out the relative pronoun that you can omit in the sentences in Exercise 1.

6 Write sentences with defining and non-defining relative clauses.

- Last year, there was a drought. The drought lasted for five months.

- Monsoon seasons usually last three months. They are found in southeast Asia.

- Pedro is a meteorologist. I love his podcast.

- The hurricane is getting close to our city. It's a category four.

- Mount Waialeale is an island in Hawaii. It rains the most in the whole world.

- The light breeze blew in through the window. It was very pleasant.
