



**Relative Clauses and  
Embedded Clauses**

**What's the Difference?**

# Aim

- I can recognise the difference between relative clauses and embedded clauses.

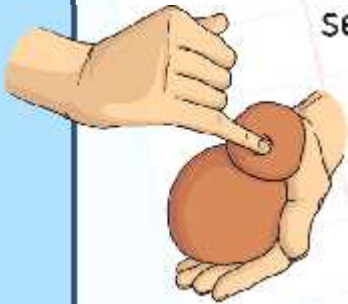
# Success Criteria

- I can identify and use relative pronouns and relative clauses.
- I know that relative clauses can be embedded within a main clause or appear at the end of a main clause to add detail, information and clarification to a sentence.
- I know that embedded clauses are always used in the middle of main clauses to add detail and information (if these clauses begin with a relative pronoun then they are also considered to be a relative clause).

# Relative Clauses and Relative Pronouns

Max was making a clay sculpture.  
He loved art lessons.

The second sentence adds some **extra information** to the first sentence so we can turn it into a **relative clause**, like this:



Max, who loved art lessons,  
was making a clay sculpture.



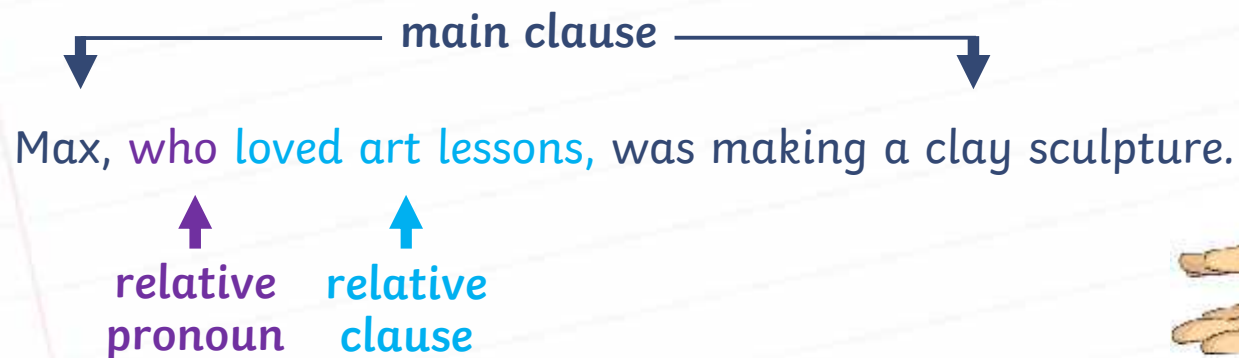
'who' is a **relative pronoun** so this clause of extra information is called a **relative clause**.

As this is extra, non-essential (non-restrictive) information we put the clause between **commas**.



# Relative Pronouns

Max was making a clay sculpture.  
He loved art lessons.



A **relative pronoun** is usually used at the **beginning** of a **relative clause**.

A relative pronoun refers back to an earlier-mentioned **noun** or **pronoun** (in this case, Max).

Other relative pronouns are: **that, who, whom, whose, which**.

## Creating Relative Clauses

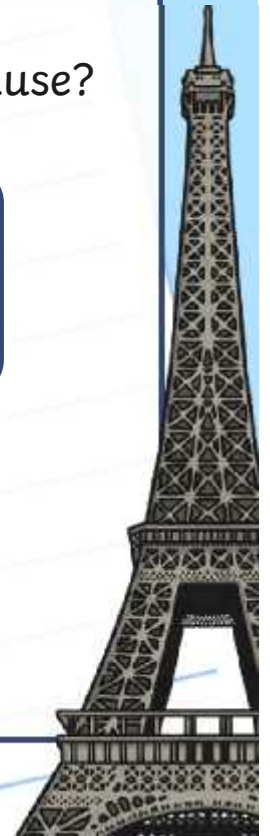
The Eiffel Tower is one of the busiest tourist attractions in the world.  
The Eiffel Tower is in Paris.

Can you turn these two sentences into one sentence with a relative clause?

The Eiffel Tower, **which is in Paris**, is one of the busiest tourist attractions in the world.

'which' is the **relative pronoun**.

As this is again extra, non-essential (non-restrictive) information we put the clause in **commas**.





# Spotting Relative Pronouns

The following are examples of sentences that have **relative clauses** starting with **relative pronouns**.

which

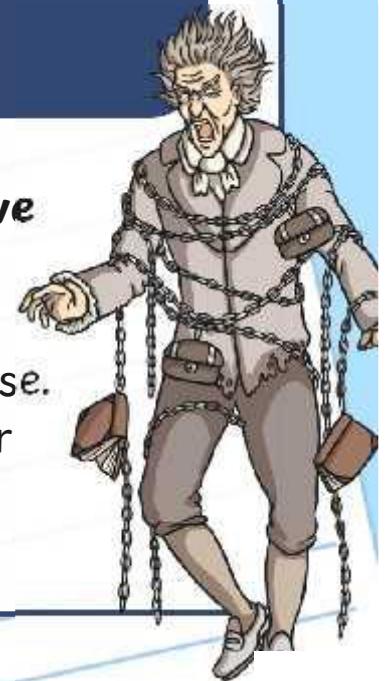
whose

who

**What do you notice about the position of all the relative clauses we have looked at so far?**

They were all **embedded** (in the middle of) the main clause. Therefore, we could also call them **embedded clauses** or **embedded relative clauses**.

Can you identify the relative pronouns?



# The Position of Relative Clauses

The children all did well in the spelling test, which made their teacher smile.

Look at this sentence. **Where is the relative clause now?**  
**How do you know?**

'which' is the **relative pronoun** so this time the **relative clause** is **after** the main clause.

We still need a **comma** before the **relative clause** as this is also extra, non-essential (non-restrictive) information.



# Spotting Relative Clauses

The following are examples of sentences that have **relative clauses** starting with **relative pronouns**.

which made me cry.

which made it feel better.

that owns the cat.

**Where are all the relative clauses this time?**

**Why do you think that the last sentence doesn't need a comma before the relative pronoun?**



Can you spot the relative clause now?



# Essential (Restrictive) Relative Clauses



She went out to tell the neighbour  
that owns the cat.

Here the **relative clause** is **essential** to the meaning of the sentence (which is sometimes called **restrictive**) so it doesn't need a comma before it.

It is **essential** information that she is talking to the neighbour as she is the one who owns the cat.



# More Relative Clause Spotting

Now that you're relative clause experts, can you spot the relative clauses in these sentences?



which is very upsetting.

whose feet were sore and blistered,

that came all the way from Malaysia.

Is this a relative clause? Why or why not?

Luke, as soon as he heard the news, rushed to the hospital.

# Embedded Clauses

Luke, **as soon as he heard the news,**  
rushed to the hospital.

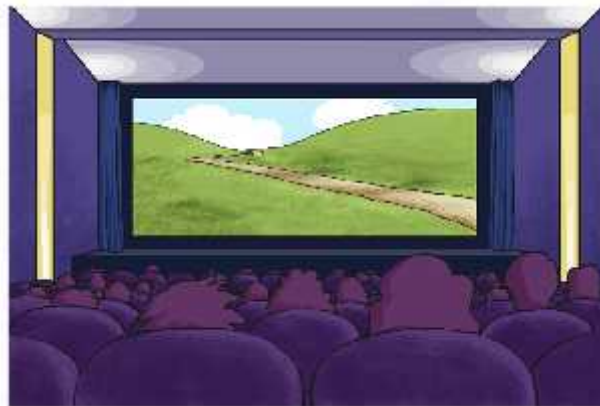
This is **not** a **relative clause** because it doesn't start with a **relative pronoun**.

It can still be called an **embedded clause** as it adds additional detail in the middle of the main clause.

**Can you decide if the clauses in the following sentences are relative embedded clauses or just embedded clauses?**

## Relative Embedded Clause or Embedded Clause?

Reece, even though he hated films,  
went to the cinema.



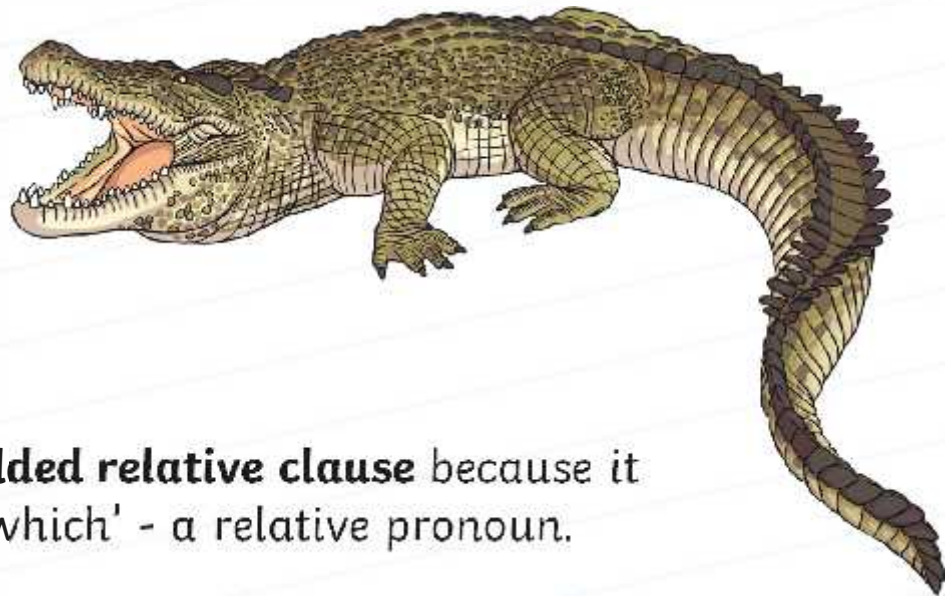
*It's an  
embedded  
clause!*

This is just an **embedded clause** as it does not start  
with a relative pronoun.

## Relative Embedded Clause or Embedded Clause?

The crocodile, which had been lurking under the water, pounced towards its prey.

It's an  
embedded  
relative  
clause!



This is an **embedded relative clause** because it begins with 'which' - a relative pronoun.



## Relative Embedded Clause or Embedded Clause?

The distraught teacher threw the test papers  
onto her desk which she had spent the  
morning tidying.



Did I  
trick you?

This is just a **relative clause**. It isn't embedded  
as it appears **after** the main clause.

# Embedded Relative Clauses Activity

1. Can you add an embedded relative clause to this sentence?

The tree, \_\_\_\_\_,  
smashed the post office window.



Paired  
Discussion

# Embedded Relative Clauses Activity

2. Can you add just an embedded clause to this sentence?

Simon, \_\_\_\_\_,  
reached the top of the mountain.



Paired  
Discussion

# Embedded Relative Clauses Activity

3. Can you add a relative clause after the main clause here?  
Would you need a comma?

Kate sat at the computer

\_\_\_\_\_.



Paired  
Discussion

Let's  
Review!

## Aim

- I can recognise the difference between relative clauses and embedded clauses.

## Success Criteria

- I can identify and use relative pronouns and relative clauses.
- I know that relative clauses can be embedded within a main clause or appear at the end of a main clause to add detail, information and clarification to a sentence.
- I know that embedded clauses are always used in the middle of main clauses to add detail and information (if these clauses begin with a relative pronoun then they are also considered to be a relative clause).



