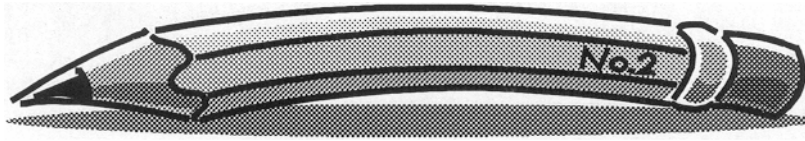


Your Name: _____



GRAMMAR PRACTICE

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Restrictive vs. Non-Restrictive Clauses

Relative clauses can be broken down into two types: (1) restrictive and (2) non-restrictive.

A **restrictive clause** provides information that is pertinent or essential to the meaning of the sentence.

A **non-restrictive clause**, also called a parenthetical or an appositive, contains information that is extra. Information contained in a non-restrictive clause may be removed from the sentence altogether without changing the overall meaning of the sentence. Because this information is not crucial to the meaning of a sentence, it is set apart with commas, or, more emphatically, with dashes, or parentheses.

Both kinds of clauses can be signaled by the use of *wh* word (*which*, *when*, *where*, and *who*). *That* is used to signal a restrictive clause. Because a restrictive clause contributes to the basic meaning of the sentence, it is not separated from the rest of the sentence with commas or other surrounding punctuation.

The meaning of a sentence can be altered by whether a clause is punctuated so as to show that it is a restrictive clause (giving crucial information) or a non-restrictive clause (giving extra information).

A summary table follows.

Restrictive	Non-Restrictive (appositive/parenthetical)
a. begins with <i>wh</i> words or <i>that</i>	may begin with <i>wh</i> words
b. presents highly relevant information	gives “extra” information
c. is not separated from the sentence	is separated by commas, dashes, or parentheses

Examples of non-restrictive clauses:

Bill Clinton, who was the former President, cheated on his wife.

Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights*, which I read in my Victorian novels class this semester, is a classic.

We know that these are non-restrictive clauses because the subjects' names are given; therefore the *wh* clauses are just giving extra information so it is appropriate that these clauses be set off by commas.

Examples of restrictive clauses:

The woman whom I met at the baseball game was wearing my same shirt.

The on-screen kiss that I like the best is the one at the end of the movie *Clueless*.

We know that these are restrictive clauses partly because they are not set aside by commas, but also because we need the information to know what is being talked about.

PRACTICE EXERCISE

Read the following sentences and put commas around the non-restrictive clauses. Put an *N* after the sentences that are non-restrictive. Put an *R* after the sentences that contain a restrictive clause. Leave those sentences without internal punctuation. A few of the sentences could be either, but the meaning would change.

1. Charles Dickens who was great writer in the late 19th Century is the author of Little Dorrit.
2. The piece of chocolate cake which probably has a million calories in it was delicious.
3. My favorite place to ski is Snow Basin in Utah which is one of the least crowded resorts.
4. The guy that my old roommate married is boring.
5. He reads and studies maps for fun which is no exaggeration.
6. I love the weather which has been so nice lately in Arizona.
7. My graduation from Arizona State University this August which I am extremely elated about has been hard earned.
8. I am jealous of the guy in my neighborhood who drives a hot 1969 Chevy Camaro.
9. Methods of Teaching English which is my favorite class this semester meets on Tuesday nights.
10. I had the answer that made the most sense.

Answers: 1. N, 2. N, 3. N, 4. R, 5. N, 6. R, 7. N, 8. R, 9. N, 10. R

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