

Name _____

Date _____

Relative Clauses

Definition

Relative clauses are dependent clauses that modify nouns or pronouns. They begin with relative pronouns (who, whom, whose, which, that) or relative adverbs (when, where, why).

Example

Example	Relative Word	Modified Noun
The woman who lives next door is a doctor.	who	woman
The book that I borrowed is overdue.	that	book
The house where I grew up was painted blue.	where	house
The reason why she left remains unclear.	why	reason

Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

1. Identify the relative clause in the following sentence:
The Atacama Desert, which stretches along Chile's Pacific coast, is considered the driest non-polar desert on Earth.

- A. The Atacama Desert is considered
- B. which stretches along Chile's Pacific coast
- C. is considered the driest non-polar desert
- D. on Earth

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2. In the sentence "Scientists who study the Atacama have discovered microorganisms that can survive with minimal water," how many relative clauses are present?

- A. None
- B. One
- C. Two
- D. Three

3. Which relative pronoun would correctly complete this sentence? The unique soil composition _____ exists in the Atacama Desert contains high levels of nitrates and perchlorates.

- A. who
- B. whom
- C. whose
- D. that

4. Identify the sentence that contains a relative adverb:

- A. The valleys where the Mars rovers were tested closely resemble Martian terrain.
- B. The Atacama Desert, which receives less than 1 mm of rainfall annually, supports specialized plant life.
- C. The scientists whose research focuses on extremophiles frequently visit the Atacama.
- D. The salt flats that cover parts of the desert create striking white landscapes.

5. In the sentence "The ancient petroglyphs, which were created by indigenous peoples, have been preserved by the extreme dryness," is the relative clause restrictive or non-restrictive?

- A. Restrictive
- B. Non-restrictive
- C. Neither
- D. Both

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Part 2: Fill in the Blank

Complete each sentence with an appropriate relative pronoun or adverb (who, whom, whose, which, that, when, where, why) to create a meaningful sentence about the Atacama Desert.

1. The Atacama Desert, _____ average rainfall is less than 1 millimeter per year, contains some areas that haven't received measurable precipitation in decades.
2. Astrobiologists study the Atacama's extreme conditions _____ help them understand how life might survive on Mars.
3. The ESO observatory, _____ is located in the Atacama Desert, benefits from the exceptionally clear skies and lack of light pollution.
4. Some plants _____ grow in the Atacama have developed specialized adaptations to collect morning fog as their primary water source.
5. The period between 1570 and 1971 _____ the Atacama received virtually no rainfall demonstrates the desert's extreme aridity.

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Relative Clauses – Answer Key

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. B. which stretches along Chile's Pacific coast (This is the relative clause beginning with the relative pronoun "which" that modifies "The Atacama Desert")
2. C. Two ("who study the Atacama" modifies "Scientists" and "that can survive with minimal water" modifies "microorganisms")
3. D. that (The relative pronoun "that" is appropriate for referring to the soil composition)
4. A. The valleys where the Mars rovers were tested closely resemble Martian terrain. ("where" is a relative adverb in this sentence)
5. B. Non-restrictive (The relative clause is set off by commas, indicating it provides additional information rather than essential identifying information)

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

1. whose (showing possession - the rainfall belongs to the desert)
2. that or which (forming a relative clause explaining what the conditions do)
3. which (non-restrictive relative clause providing additional information about the observatory)
4. that or which (identifying which plants are being discussed)
5. when (relative adverb indicating time)