

LESSON 189

1175 Reduced relative clauses

prepositional phrase

omit

Sometimes, we can reduce the length of a relative clause that contains the verb "be" by omitting the relative pronoun and the verb "be". Three common situations in which we can do this are:

- 1) When the main verb in the relative clause is in the continuous form. For example, instead of saying "The girl **who is wearing** the yellow hat is my sister", we can say "The girl **wearing** the yellow hat is my sister".
- 2) When the main verb in the relative clause is in the passive voice. For example, instead of saying "The teenagers **who were arrested** will probably go to prison", we can say "The teenagers **arrested** will probably go to prison".
- 3) When the relative pronoun and the verb "be" are followed by a prepositional phrase. For example, instead of saying "The pen **which is on the table** is mine", we can say "The pen **on the table** is mine".

How can we sometimes reduce the length of a relative clause that contains the verb "be"?

We can ... by omitting the relative pronoun and the verb "be"

What's the first common situation in which we can do this?

The first ... is when the main verb in the relative clause is in the continuous form

So, what can we say instead of "The children **that are going** on the trip tomorrow are very happy"?

Instead of ..., we can say "The children **going** on the trip tomorrow are very happy"

- 1176 What's the second common situation in which we can reduce a relative clause?
The second ... is when the main verb in the relative clause is in the passive voice

So, what can we say instead of "You get a discount on any purchases *that are made* before the end of the month"?
Instead of ..., we can say "You get a discount on any purchases made before the end of the month"

What's the third common situation in which we can reduce a relative clause?
The third ... is when the relative pronoun and the verb "be" are followed by a prepositional phrase

So, what can we say instead of "I'll do everything *that is within my power* to solve the problem"?
Instead of ..., we can say "I'll do everything within my power to solve the problem"

Note that, although there are exceptions, we normally reduce defining rather than non-defining relative clauses. For example, we would not choose to reduce the (non-defining) relative clause in the following sentence: "My mother, who is taking piano lessons now, clearly has no talent".

Would we choose to reduce the relative clause in the following sentence: "My mother, who is taking piano lessons now, clearly has no talent"?

No, we wouldn't ...

Why not?

Because we normally reduce defining rather than non-defining relative clauses

Also note that, when we reduce a relative clause, we can only omit the verb "be" when the relative pronoun is the subject. For example, the sentence "The picture *that is hanging* on the wall looks great" can be reduced to "The picture hanging on the wall looks great" because the relative pronoun "that" is the subject. However, in the sentence "The picture *that John is painting* looks great", the subject of the relative clause is the word "John" (the word "that" is, in fact, the object). Therefore, we cannot reduce the relative clause by omitting the verb "be" (and so we cannot say "The picture John painting looks great").

- 1177 In the sentence "The picture that John is painting looks great", why can we not reduce the relative clause by omitting the verb "be"?

In ... , ... because the subject in the relative clause is the word "John", and we can only omit the verb "be" when the relative pronoun is the subject

bring about

radical

Name an invention in history that brought about a radical change in the way people lived their lives.

The name of ...

try one's hand at

craft

If you tried your hand at a traditional craft such as furniture-making, do you think you'd be any good at it?

Yes, if I ... ~ No, if I ...

inflation

soar

Do the prices in shops soar when inflation in a country is very high? Yes, ...

throb

pulse

vein

What can we feel our blood doing when we put our finger on our pulse?

We can feel our blood throbbing through our veins ...

rehearse

rehearsal

run through

If you had to make a speech at a wedding, would you rehearse it beforehand?

Yes, if I ... ~ No, if I ...

1178 What do we call a rehearsal for a play in which the actors run through the entire performance in their costumes?

We call ... a dress rehearsal

outgoing

mingle

Do people tend to mingle more at parties if they're naturally outgoing?

Yes, ...

good

frantic

If I told you I lived a good 45 minutes from here, what would I mean?

If ..., you'd mean that it took you at least 45 minutes to go home from here, and probably more than 45 minutes

When travelling, do you do all your packing in good time or do you shove everything frantically into a suitcase at the last minute?

When .., I ...

insight

Which museum in your country would you say provided the best insight into the nation's history?

I'd say ... provided ...

perk

caffeine

childcare

healthcare

Why do many people drink coffee to perk themselves up in the morning?

Many ... because it contains a lot of caffeine

1179 Tell me some common perks that companies offer employees?

Some common ... free childcare, healthcare, gym membership etc.

grudge

For what reason might someone bear a grudge against another person?

Someone ... either because they resent something the person has done in the past, or just because they are envious of them

smear

What am I pretending to do?

You're pretending to smear something over your face

bystander

What's the difference between a bystander and a spectator?

The difference ... a bystander is usually someone who witnesses an event by chance – a fight in the street, for example; a spectator, on the other hand, is usually someone who has deliberately gone to see an event – a boxing match, for example.

motive

Would you become suspicious of a work colleague's motives if they suddenly started acting in a much friendlier manner with you than usual?

Yes, I'd become ... – No, I wouldn't become ...

1180

withstand

What happens to a hut that cannot withstand a storm? A hut that ... gets blown to pieces, or falls to pieces

come off**fall through**

Is an optimistic person more likely to expect their plans to come off or fall through? An optimistic ... come off

conscientious

Were you a conscientious student at secondary school? Yes, ... ~ No, ...

enterprise**sector**

Do you believe in private enterprise or do you believe everything should be owned and run by the state? I believe ...

Is education in your country provided mainly by the private sector? Yes, ... ~ No, ...

smoulder**smother****extinguish**

When a fire's burning but there are no visible flames, what do we say it's doing? When ..., we say it's smouldering

Why does smothering a kitchen fire with a damp towel often succeed in extinguishing the fire? Smothering ... because it prevents oxygen from reaching the flames, so the fire cannot continue burning

1181

horrified

Give me an example of the adjective "horrified", please. When I saw the mess the decorators had made in my lounge, I was horrified!

picturesque

Would you describe this region of the country as picturesque? Yes, ... ~ No, ...

stand by

Who do you think would be more likely to stand by you in a crisis:
your family or your friends?

I think my ...

orphan

What do we call a child who has neither a mother nor a father?

We call ... an orphan

panel

debate

current affairs

Do you enjoy watching TV programmes in which a panel of experts
debate current affairs?

Yes, ... ~ No, ...

timid

How are the words "shy" and "timid" different from each other?

The words "shy" and "timid" have a similar meaning, but "shy" generally means self-conscious and uncomfortable in the company of other people, whereas "timid" means easily frightened

1182 Give me an example of each, please.

The little boy felt very shy in the company of so many adults. The actor looked as timid as a mouse when he walked on stage to perform.

Dictation 128

Her bike was parked outside the building/ but there was no trace of her inside./ In the distance,/ I could just make out my train/ pulling out of the station./ I sighed and turned back;/ perhaps someone would give me a lift./ The catering company acknowledges/ that there's a hygiene issue/ in their kitchens./ The twins were dizzy and thirsty/ from playing in the sun,/ but gulping down all that milk/ only made them sick./ I was startled when he showed up/ because he looked nothing like/ his online profile!/ Theoretically, I could finance/ my university course myself/ but, even so,/ a scholarship covering my tuition fees/ would help./ Harry confessed,/ and led the officers down to the cellar,/ insistent that printing the forgeries/ had not been his idea./ Tackle, clumsy, occurrence, soggy, munch.