

# **RELATIVE PRONOUNS AND PREPOSITIONS**

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- When we wish to refer to a person, only *whom* (not *that*) can be used directly after a preposition.
- In this position, *whom* cannot be omitted and cannot be reduced to *who* or be replaced by *that*.
- This is very formal and rare in everyday speech:

*He is the man to whom I gave the money*

*Those are the children after whom she's looking*

# **Relative pronouns and prepositions: people**

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- The preposition can be moved to the end-position. If this happens, it is usual in speech to reduce *whom* to *who*; it is also possible to replace *who* **by** *that*:

*She is the woman **who** (or **that**) I gave the money **to***

*Those are the children **who/that** she is looking **after***

- However, the most usual practice in informal style, when the preposition is in the end-position, is to drop the relative pronoun altogether, but only in **defining** clauses:

*They are the people I gave the money to*

*Those are the children she was looking after*

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*This is the pan **in which** I boiled the milk*

*This is the pan (**which**) I boiled the milk **in***

*This is the pan I boiled the milk **in***



# **Relative pronouns and prepositions: things**

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*1979 was **the year in which** my son was born*

*1979 was **when** my son was born*

*This is **the place in which** I grew up*

*This is **the place (which)** I grew up **in***

*This is **the place** I grew up **in***

*This is **the place where** I grew up*

# **When, where and prepositions**

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Combine the following sentences making any necessary changes:

- I´m looking after some children. They´re terribly spoilt
- The bed has no mattress. I sleep on that bed.
- This is a woman. Her son won the championship.
- I was sitting in a chair. It suddenly collapsed.

# Exercises

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- I´m looking after some children who are terribly spoilt.
- The bed I sleep on has no mattress.
- This is the woman whose son won the championship.
- I was sitting on a chair which/that suddenly collapsed.

# Answers

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DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES help us define or identify which particular person or thing we are talking about:

The old man who is sitting in the corner is a famous scientist.

 The clause explains which old man I'm talking about. It's essential.

NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES adds extra information:

Susan, whose daughter won the prize at school, was very happy

 You and me know who Susan is. The clause just adds extra-information.

# DEFINING & NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

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That's the film which I saw

That's the film (~~which~~) I saw

 (object)

That's the film I saw

It's a series which is really popular

  
(subject)

It's a series **which** is really popular

# OMITTING RELATIVE PRONOUNS

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