



## Writing Centre

### Adjective Clauses

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An **adjective clause** is a dependent clause that modifies a noun.

Examples:

The teacher, **who has red hair**, is planning to retire soon.

The purse **that I forgot on the bus this morning** is full of money!

Mt. Everest, **where so many people have perished to see its beauty**, is now home to an enormous garbage dump.

Rules: An adjective clause

- contains a *relative pronoun*: **who, whom, whose, that, or which**, or a *relative adverb*: **when, where, or why**.
- is not a complete sentence, so it must be joined to the word it describes.
- answers the questions: **What kind? How many? or Which one?**
- is either *essential* (you **need** the information it provides), or *nonessential* (the information is **not needed**). We use commas to separate *nonessential adjective clauses*.

For example:

Books which have more than a thousand pages are seldom read in one sitting. (*essential*)

Encyclopedias, which have more than a thousand pages, are seldom read in one sitting. (*nonessential*)

**Tip:** *Essential adjective clauses* are typically paired with *non-specific nouns*!