

Essential (Restrictive) Clauses

An essential clause provides important information that is necessary to define the noun it describes. These clauses are **not set off by commas**.

Examples:

1. **The student who studies hard will pass the test.**
 - Explanation: The clause "who studies hard" is essential because it specifies which student will pass the test. Without this clause, the meaning of the sentence would be unclear.
2. **The book that I borrowed from the library is overdue.**
 - Explanation: The clause "that I borrowed from the library" is essential because it identifies which book is overdue.
3. **People who live in the city enjoy fast internet access.**
 - Explanation: The clause "who live in the city" is essential because it tells us which people enjoy fast internet access.

Non-Essential (Non-Restrictive) Clauses

A non-essential clause provides extra information that can be left out without changing the meaning of the sentence. These clauses are **set off by commas**.

Examples:

1. **My brother, who lives in New York, is coming to visit.**
 - Explanation: The clause "who lives in New York" is non-essential because it adds extra information. If you remove it, the main point "My brother is coming to visit" remains clear.
2. **The Eiffel Tower, which is in Paris, is one of the most famous landmarks in the world.**
 - Explanation: The clause "which is in Paris" is non-essential because we already know what the Eiffel Tower is. It adds extra information but isn't necessary to understand the sentence.
3. **Our teacher, who loves reading, recommended a new book.**
 - Explanation: The clause "who loves reading" is non-essential because the sentence makes sense without it. It just adds extra information about the teacher.

Essential and Non-Essential Clauses Quiz

Instructions: Some sentences below contain essential (restrictive) clauses, and others contain non-essential (non-restrictive) clauses. Add commas where needed. If the sentence does not need commas, leave it as is.

1. **The teacher who always wears glasses gave us extra homework today.**
2. **My dog which has a fluffy tail loves to chase squirrels.**
3. **The car that I bought last year is already having issues.**
4. **Paris which is known as the City of Light is a popular travel destination.**
5. **The students who completed the assignment on time received extra credit.**
6. **Our principal who recently got an award gave a speech at the assembly.**
7. **The dress that I wore to the party got stained.**
8. **My friend John who lives in Chicago is visiting next week.**
9. **The park that we visited last summer is near the beach.**
10. **My sister who is an excellent cook made dinner for us last night.**

Answer Key:

- 1. The teacher who always wears glasses gave us extra homework today.**
 - *No commas needed (essential clause).*
- 2. My dog, which has a fluffy tail, loves to chase squirrels.**
 - *Add commas (non-essential clause).*
- 3. The car that I bought last year is already having issues.**
 - *No commas needed (essential clause).*
- 4. Paris, which is known as the City of Light, is a popular travel destination.**
 - *Add commas (non-essential clause).*
- 5. The students who completed the assignment on time received extra credit.**
 - *No commas needed (essential clause).*
- 6. Our principal, who recently got an award, gave a speech at the assembly.**
 - *Add commas (non-essential clause).*
- 7. The dress that I wore to the party got stained.**
 - *No commas needed (essential clause).*
- 8. My friend John, who lives in Chicago, is visiting next week.**
 - *Add commas (non-essential clause).*
- 9. The park that we visited last summer is near the beach.**
 - *No commas needed (essential clause).*
- 10. My sister, who is an excellent cook, made dinner for us last night.**
 - *Add commas (non-essential clause).*