



**Expansion Activities**  
Understanding and Using English Grammar, 3rd Edition  
**Chapter 13: Adjective Clauses**

**Activity: Identifying Adjective Clauses in Authentic Text**

**Materials needed:** A short story or other text with a sampling of adjective clauses.

**Description:** In groups of three or four, students look for examples of adjective (relative) clauses in authentic text. Because it's not a good idea to read for both comprehension/pleasure and grammar structure at the same time, read first for pleasure and comprehension, discussing the story or article details. Students may read for homework and discuss in the next class, or with shorter readings, they can do everything in class.

During the post-reading discussion, the teacher can, without great emphasis or grammar terminology, elicit some of the adjective clauses. For example, in *The Open Window*, the teacher could say, "In the beginning of the story, Mr. Nuttel is trying to think of something to say to the niece. What does he want to say?" According to the story, the answer is "something which would flatter the niece." This subtle highlighting will flag the structure for the students.

After a thorough discussion of the story, students can look first for the relative pronouns, but they need to beware that not every use of a specific word is as a relative pronoun. If the students have already studied noun clauses in Chapter 12, they can use two different colored pens or highlighters to distinguish between the adjective clauses and noun clauses, some of which begin with similar words like *who* and *that*. When students have highlighted adjective clauses, they should determine if they are restrictive or non-restrictive and what the clause is modifying. If they have also noted noun clauses, they can determine what role the clause plays in the sentence: subject, object, or object of preposition.

Give sufficient time to this grammar-discovery activity. Let the students refer to their grammar books and discuss within their group. A lot of excellent self-teaching comes out of these analytical small-group discussions.

As a follow-up in the next class, prepare a cloze exercise with the same text by removing various clauses and letting the students select them from a box to fill in the blanks. To make it more of a challenge, leave out the relative pronouns from the adjective clauses so the students will have to come up with them on their own. Placing the clauses in the text will emphasize their use as modifiers because the students will have to pay close attention to meaning to complete the exercise.



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**Recommended texts:**

**Challenging:** *The Open Window* by Saki

[http://www.eastoftheweb.com/cgi-bin/version\\_printable.pl?story\\_id=OpeWin.shtml](http://www.eastoftheweb.com/cgi-bin/version_printable.pl?story_id=OpeWin.shtml)

Contains 2 examples of *who* clauses, 1 *whom* clause, 4 *that* clauses, and 3 *which* clauses, in addition to a few adjective clauses with a missing pronoun.

**High Intermediate:** *Study Hotel Rooms Have Unseen Guests* (USA Today)

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2006-09-29-hotel-germs\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2006-09-29-hotel-germs_x.htm)

Contains 2 *that* clauses, 3 *who* clauses, 3 *which* clauses, 3 *where* clauses