Lesson 12 – Writing Emails

**Part 1 – Defining and Non-defining Relative Clauses**

Previously we’ve looked at the relative pronouns: *who, whom, whose, which, that.*

Relative clause can either be *defining* or *non-defining.*

**Defining relative clauses** give us additional information that is essential. This information is needed to understand what or who is being referred to. In the following examples, the relative clause is in **bold** and the person or thing referred to is underlined.

* *They’re the people* ***who want to buy our house****.*
* *Here are some cells* ***which have been affected by the drug treatment****.*

When writing, defining relative clauses do NOT use commas:

**Non-defining relative clauses** give us additional information that is non-essential. The additional information is not needed to understand who or what is being referred to. In the following examples, the relative clause is in **bold** and the person or thing referred to is underlined.

* *Jessica,* ***who I don’t like****, is going to the concert tonight.*
* *Doctors use the testing kit for regular screening for lung and stomach cancers,* ***which account for 70% of cancers treated in the western world.***

When writing, non-defining relative clauses use commas.

**Part 2 - Practice**

Take the quiz on defining and non-defining relative clauses here.

**Part 3 – Email Styles**

Like other types of writing, emails can be written in both *formal* and *informal* style. We will add the third category – *neutral*.

**Informal style emails:**

We write informally when writing to friends and family members. Informal emails can include contractions, emoticons, verb phrases, slang words, and abbreviations like *“LOL”* for *“laugh out loud”*, or *“c u soon”* for *“see you soon.”* The greeting can simply be *“Hi!”* or the person’s name. Likewise, the closing may end with solely the person’s name or a more personal ending like *“Love, Mom”*.

**Formal style emails:**

We write formal emails to potential employers. When applying for a job the cover letter should be written in a formal style. As we’ve learned previously, formal writing includes full words (no contractions), no abbreviations, single verbs instead of verb phrases, and more formal or complex words instead of slang. Emoticons should also not be used. Greetings should begin with *“Dear Mr.”* or *“Dear Ms.”* followed by the person’s full name and a comma. If you don’t know the person’s name, you can write *“Dear Sir or Madame,”* or *“To whom it may concern,”*. Closings are usually signed *“Sincerely,”* but also sometimes *“Kind Regards,”* followed by the person’s full name.

**Neutral style emails:**

Most other emails will be written in a mix of informal and formal style which we will call *neutral*. This style will generally be used to communicate with your professors, classmates you are not close with, bosses, and colleagues. This style is also used when requesting information from people we don’t know personally or companies, such as checking hotel room availability or asking more information about a product. It can also be used to write complaints to a company.

Greetings can begin with *“Dear”* or *“Hello”* followed by the person’s name and a comma. Closings can be signed using the formal forms or less formally, such as *“Best,”* and *“Take care,”* followed by the person’s name. Whether full names are used or not will depend on your relationship to the person.

Contractions along with full words will be used throughout the body of the email. Emoticons generally will not be used. Abbreviations like “c u later” should also be avoided.

Since this style mixes both formal and informal, when in doubt, follow the style of the other person if you are the one replying.

**Part 4 – Greetings and Closings**

Place the following greetings in the appropriate boxes:

*Dear Lisa, Dear Ms. Lisa Turner, Lisa! Hi! Hello Lisa, Dear Lisa Turner,*

*Lisa, Hey there, Good morning, Lisa, Dear Ms. Turner,*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INFORMAL | FORMAL | NEUTRAL |
|  |  |  |

Place the following closings in the appropriate boxes:

*Sincerely, XOXOX, Bye! Ttyl! Regards, Best, Thank you,*

*Take care, Hugs, Best Regards, Kind Regards, Love,*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INFORMAL | FORMAL | NEUTRAL |
|  |  |  |

**Part 5 - Practice**

Read the following email:

*Hello Shannon,*

*I saw your ad on Smart Shanghai, and I’m interested in the room you have for rent. However, I have a few questions regarding the room. How many people are currently living in the apartment? Does the monthly rent include utilities as well? Lastly, do you allow small dogs?*

*Thanks,*

*Jess*

Which style is this email written in? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How do you know? Give specific examples \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Part 6 – Subject Line**

The subject line of an email should ALWAYS be filled out.

Do NOT type your whole message in the subject line. The subject line should briefly state what your email is regarding. Abbreviation can and should be used.

Examples:

* To announce a meeting, write *“Meeting”* and the date in the subject line: “*Meeting 13/4”*.
* If you are inquiring about an order place, write *“Inq. order #....”* followed by your order number.
* When replying to a question, write *“Re”* to mean “*Regarding”*, as in, *“Re your order”* or *“Re your email”*.
* To send an assignment to your professor, write the title of the assignment in the subject line: *“Hwrk Lesson 12”.*
* To respond to an invite, write *“Rsvp Christmas party”.* (English uses the French phrase *“répondez s’il vous plaît"* or *“RSVP”* when asking a person to reply to an invite or responding to an invite.)

**Write an appropriate subject line for the following email:**

Subject Line: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email:

*Dear Ms. Lawson,*

*Thank you for your interest in staying at Double Tree Resort. Rooms are available for your requested dates: 3/12-6/12. Kindly let us know if you prefer a room with a queen size bed or two double beds, and we will gladly accommodate your request.*

*We look forward to hearing from you.*

*Kind Regards,*

*Double Tree Resort Staff*

**Part 7 – Formatting**

Look again at the above email. Due to the high volume of emails that people receive, especially through work, it is important to be concise. Include only important/necessary information.

Notice the use of white space (blank spaces) in the above email. Shorter paragraphs and/or spaces between paragraphs/sentences allow the recipient to easily scan (quickly look over) the email for information.

Unlike essay writing or letter writing, emails are generally NOT indented.

**Rewrite the following email so it includes only the most important information and can be scanned for information:**

*To whom it may concern,*

*I have to attend a wedding in three weeks on April 17th. Your website has a lot of great dress styles! I found one dress in particular that I love! It is dress number 35432. I want it in blue, and I’m a size small. However, when I tried to order it, a message saying it was “out-of-stock” came up. I really want this dress. Will the dress be available in the next couple of days? I leave for the wedding in two weeks (it is out of town) so I’d need it to arrive before I leave. I leave on April 10th. Please let me know if the dress will be available by then, and if it could also get sent to me before the 10th. I really appreciate your help!*

*Sincerely, Jane Bridle*

**Part 8 – Practice**

**Write an email that would follow the subject line *“Action re contract”.*  Your email should be written in a neutral/formal style.**

Subject Line: *Action re contract*

Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Look again. Did you include an appropriate opening and closing? Is it formatted properly?