

LATIN GRAMMAR I

Wheelock 17: Relative Pronouns (and Relative Clauses)

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1. Relative Clauses

1.1. Relative clauses are subordinate/dependent clauses that modify a noun; thus, they are *adjectival in function*. The noun they modify is called *the head* of the relative clause (some call it the *antecedent*).

1.2. In English we have relative words/pronouns that introduce relative clauses: *who*, *which*, *that*. For each of the following let's identify the independent clause, the relative clause, the head/antecedent, and the relative pronoun.

The woman who sang at my birthday party is Adele.

We buried the man whom the crowd mobbed and killed.

Cicero wrote the speeches¹ that changed the world.

The highway that I use is the Appian Way.

1.3. In English (and Latin), the relative words/pronouns serve both as conjunctions to introduce a modifying, relative clause, and as pronouns that serve a syntactic/grammatical function within the relative clause.

1.3.1. The relative pronoun and the head/antecedent always have the same referent (they are co-referential). The relative pronoun is sometimes described as “resumptive” since it resumes the referent of the head within the relative clause. Therefore, the referent for the head will always have a role to play in the main/independent clause (as the head noun) as well as a role to play in the subordinate/dependent relative clause (as the relative pronoun).

1.3.2. What determines the case/gender/number of the relative pronoun?

¹ *ōrātiō*, *-ōnis*, *f.* speech

- Gender/Number: determined by the gender/number of the head
- Case: determined by the rel pronoun's function *inside the relative clause*.
- In English, rel pronouns do not have gender (m, f, n) or number (s, p) marking, but they do have case. Latin has all three. Let's review the samples above.

1.4. Important: Keep the grammatical structure of the relative clause separate from the grammatical structure of the main clause. Each clause has its own subject, verb, objects, modifiers, etc. Don't make the S of the main clause the S of the relative clause. To help, I always recommend bracketing the relative clause so that you can see where it begins and ends (allowing you to assign roles of words outside the brackets to the main clause).

Now let's look at the Latin relative pronouns and how they function in some sample sentences.

2. Relative Pronouns (quī, quae, quod = who, which, that)

2.1. Chart of Latin Relative Pronouns. Generally, these follow the pattern of the near demonstratives we learned in Wheelock Ch. 9 (hic, haec, hoc). I have placed them to the right just to give you both a review and a point of reference. (There are some differences, too!)

	2	1	2		2	1	2
SING.	MASC	FEM	NEUT	GLOSS	MASC	FEM	NEUT
NOM	quī	quae	quod	<i>who</i>	hic	haec	hoc
GEN	cuius	cuius	cuius	<i>of whom</i>	huius	huius	huius
DAT	cui	cui	cui	<i>to whom</i>	huic	huic	huic
ACC	quem	quam	quod	<i>who</i>	hunc	hanc	hoc
ABL	quō	quā	quō	<i>by whom</i>	hōc	hāc	hōc
PL.							
NOM	quī	quae	quae	<i>who</i>	hī	hae	haec
GEN	quōrum	quārum	quōrum	<i>of whom</i>	hōrum	hārum	hōrum
DAT	quibus	quibus	quibus	<i>to whom</i>	hīs	hīs	hīs
ACC	quōs	quās	quae	<i>who</i>	hōs	hās	haec
ABL	quibus	quibus	quibus	<i>by whom</i>	hīs	hīs	hīs

2.2. Sample Latin sentences with relative clause. The English gloss of these sentences from Wheelock are provided. Let's analyze them by answering the following question:

- What is the head?
- What is the relative pronoun?
- What is the rel pronoun's case/gender/number, and why?

Diligō puellam quae ex Italiā vēnit.

I admire the girl who came from Italy.

Homō dē quō dicēbās est amīcus cārus.

The man about whom you were speaking is a dear friend.

Puella cui librum dat est fortunāta.

The girl to whom he is giving the book is fortunate.

Puer cuius patrem iuvābāmus est fortis.

The boy whose father we used to help is brave.

Vitam meam committam eīs virīs quōrum virtūtēs laudābās.

I shall entrust my life to those men whose virtues you were praising.

Timeō idem perīculum quod timētis.

I fear the same danger which you fear.