



## Relative Clauses, Appositives, and Participles

### An Overview

You can use relative clauses, appositives, and participles to expand your sentences. Use the following information and chart on the back of this sheet to help you understand what each does and where to use them.

### Expanding with Relative Clauses

A relative clause begins with a relative pronoun—**who, which, that, whose, whom**. Most often, the relative clause adds descriptive information about a noun in the sentence.

Look at the following examples:

1. The man, **who looked old enough to be my grandfather**, looked longingly at the red sports car.
2. The man **who lives next door** looked longingly at the red sports car.
3. The man looked longingly at the red sports car, **which was a sleek Porsche**.
4. The man looked longingly at the red sports car **that belonged to his neighbor**.
5. The man, **whose own car was a battered station wagon**, looked longingly at the red sports car.

### Expanding with Appositives

An appositive, like a relative clause, come *after* a noun. Like the relative clauses, it describes or identifies the noun that it follows. That is, it tells us who or what something is. Unlike the relative clause, it doesn't start with a relative pronoun, and it almost always is extra, unnecessary information; thus it is set off from the rest of the sentence with commas.

Here are some examples:

1. The man, **a tired old geezer in a blue coat**, looked longingly at the red sports car.
2. The man, **a man I had seen many times before**, looked longingly at the red sports car.
3. The man, **my uncle Louis**, looked longingly at the red sports car.
4. The man looked longingly at the red sports car, **a sleek Porsche**.
5. The man looked longingly at the red sports car, **a car that he would never own**.

### Expanding with Participles

While relative clauses and appositives generally give us extra information about **who** or **what** something is, participles are verb forms that give us extra information about what one of the nouns in the sentence is **doing**. Most commonly, they are **-ing** forms, and they are set off from the core

sentence by commas. Unlike relative clauses and appositives, they can come before or after the noun they describe.

Here are some examples:

1. **Sighing pitifully**, the man looked at the sleek red sports car.
2. The man, **sighing pitifully**, looked at the sleek red sports car.
3. **Wishing he didn't have a station wagon**, the man looked at the sleek red sports car.