Chapter 17

RULE 1: A relative pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number and gender, but **not** case; it derives its case from its use in its own clause.

I. Grammar

If this lesson gives students trouble, it's most often not because the Latin grammar is difficult but because they have an incomplete grasp of English grammar. While they have used—and without doubt *mis*used—relative pronouns all their short lives, they have probably never given an iota of thought to how these pronouns work. Before and even while discussing the Latin relative pronoun, you will have to stop and review the proper use of relative pronouns in English. In light of this deficiency I have found it helpful to insist on the correct use of *who* and *whom*, although *whom* is rapidly becoming outdated. It's an excellent preparation for proper Latin usage.

A. The English Relative Pronoun(s)

Begin by giving a short definition of a relative pronoun and clause, illuminated by a few brief examples drawn from English usage. Note that there are no fewer than five ways to express the relative pronoun in English:

1. **Who**: I have a friend **who** eats fish.
2. **Which**: And I have a fish **which** eats friends.
3. **That**: It's a piranha **that** eats people.
4. **What**: **What** my piranha eats is none of your business.
5. **Zero**: Unless you're my friend, why do you care about the food my piranha eats? [The omission of the relative pronoun here is parallel to the omission of *that* in indirect statement: "I assure you <**that**> this is a friendly fish."]

B. Formation of the Latin Relative Pronoun

The formation of this pronoun in Latin is relatively simple. Point out the following things about the formation of *qui, quae, quod*:

1. *qui* is masculine nominative singular **and** plural;
2. *quae* does double duty, as expected, for feminative nominative singular and neuter nominative/accusative plural (cf. *-a* in first/second declension), but the same form also serves as the feminative nominative plural form (see below, The History of the Relative Pronoun);
3. like *illud*, *aliud*, *istud* and *id*, the neuter nominative/accusative singular *quod* ends in *-d*;
4. the endings, *-ius* and *-i*, of the genitive and dative singular are the expected forms for the pronoun in these cases;
5. the rest of the endings derive from first/second declension (attached to the base *qu-*), except for *quem* and *quibus* which have third-declension endings and *quae* (neuter nominative/accusative plural) which is anomalous (see below, The History of the Relative Pronoun);
6. and finally, there are no mandatory long marks.

C. Syntax

Begin by explaining that a relative clause is a type of subordinate clause. Subordinate clauses have their own "grammar" (subject, verb, possibly also objects and prepositional phrases) and, though linked into a main sentence in some way, they do not serve as part of it. A relative clause is introduced by a relative pronoun which has as its antecedent a word (usually a noun) in the main sentence, for instance:

Judge, here is the student **who** murdered his Latin teacher.

Bear in mind that students are being confronted here with a complex subordinate clause for the first time in their study of Latin so with this lesson you're introducing not only relative clauses but clauses in general. It's important for them to understand that, in the quote above, *Here is the student* is the main sentence which stands on its own grammatically and, while *who murdered his Latin teacher* has its own subject and verb, it is not an independent statement but a (relative) clause. This distinction relies on the presence of the relative pronoun which makes the clause dependent; students must grasp this concept before proceeding.

Some inquiring mind is sure to ask, "But, teacher, 'Who murdered the Latin teacher?' makes sense to me all by itself!," leaving you to distinguish the English interrogative and relative forms of *who*, a task you will have to do soon enough so it might as well be now. Tell them the *who* you are talking about is not the question word *who* but the non-question word *who*. The *who* that asks a question will be part of a main sentence; the relative *who* will not be. For example,

INTERROGATIVE: **Who** is huffing and puffing at my front door?
RELATIVE: It's the Big Bad Wolf **who** is huffing and puffing at my front door.

A handy way to distinguish the interrogative *who* from the relative *who* is that the interrogative *who* will often come at or near the beginning of the sentence and the sentence will end with a question mark, neither of which the relative *who* will do—well, not very often. There are exceptions—"Whom the gods love, they die young, don't they?"—but, in general, you can appeal to the students' common sense.

While strictly not part of the main sentence, a relative clause is linked to the main sentence grammatically through the relative pronoun which straddles both. The relative clause in the example above is *who murdered his Latin teacher*, and its antecedent is *the student* which it describes or modifies (i.e. the relative clause tells you more about the student). The clause has its own subject (*who*), verb (*murdered*) and direct object (*teacher*). The *who* links this mini-sentence to the antecedent (*student*) in the main sentence. In Latin, the verb of the relative clause and everything else in the relative clause except the relative pronoun will be constructed just as if it were in a regular sentence, so Latin students will only need to focus really on the proper formation of the relative pronoun.

Since the relative pronoun functions in both its own clause and the main sentence—it "relates" them, hence its name—it is a creature of two worlds and its loyalties are naturally divided. Pose this dilemma to the students: What case should a Latin relative pronoun take: the case of its antecedent so that like other pronouns (e.g. *hic*, *ille*, *iste*) it agrees in number, gender and case with the noun it goes with; or the case that its own clause requires (i.e. nominative if it's the subject)? Which loyalty is stronger, the outward pull toward its antecedent or the inward attraction of its own clause's grammar? If, as in the case of the sentence above ("Judge, here is the student . . ."), the antecedent happens to be in the same case as that which the relative clause requires, no problem! But what if it's not? Change the example above:

Judge, I accuse this student, **who** killed his Latin teacher, of murder in the first declension!

Now the antecedent (*student*) is the direct object of the main sentence and should therefore be accusative, but the relative pronoun is the subject in its own clause (***who****killed*) and should therefore be nominative. Which case is the better choice? Considering (1) that it is often no problem in actual practice to determine what noun is the antecedent of the relative pronoun—context and common sense frequently make it clear which noun must serve as the relative pronoun's antecedent—(2) that the relative pronoun will agree with its antecedent in number and gender no matter which option is chosen and that alone will often delimit the possible antecedents considerably; and (3) that one has no other guideline for construing the use of a relative pronoun in its own clause except by its case ending, the choice must be to make the relative pronoun reflect its use in its own clause rather than take the case of its antecedent. If for some reason there is difficulty determining what noun is a relative pronoun's antecedent—the problem arises rarely in actual practice—there is an unwritten rule in Latin, just as in English, that relative clauses tend to follow their antecedents directly, as in most of the examples above.

Thus arises the rule, as stated above: "A relative pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number and gender, but **not** case; it derives its case from its use in its own clause." To reinforce this principle there is a worksheet (click here), which allows student to practice determining the proper form of the Latin relative pronoun in different grammatical contexts. Follow these steps for each sentence on the worksheet:

1. have students first locate the relative clause and pronoun;
2. then, have them identify the antecedent and label it by number and gender;
3. next, have them determine the use of the relative pronoun in its own clause and label the case which that use demands;
4. and, finally, have them look up in the book the correct form of the relative pronoun for that context.

Make them label each sentence in the following way:

feminine singular
1. This is the *woman*

/nominative = ***quae***
who caused the war.

That should do it! Practice will make perfect with "relative" ease.

D. History of the Relative Pronoun

The Latin **qu-* base originated in the Indo-European indefinite-interrogative pronoun (cf. Lat. *quis* and (*ali*)*quis*), which is attested in all Indo-European languages, cf. Greek *tis*, *ti*. The use of this base as the relative pronoun developed early in Italic dialects; it spread only much later to other Indo-European languages, e.g. English *who*, *which* were not used as relatives until the twelfth century CE or later.

In Italic, the *i*-stem forms of the *qu-* base (*quis*, *quid*) were generally associated with the interrogative-indefinite pronouns and *a*-stems and *o*-stems (first/second declension) with relative pronouns, but few classical forms actually manifest this distinction: (1) in the nominative singular, *quis*, *quid* was used for interrogative-indefinites exclusively and *qui*, *quae*, *quod* for relatives; (2) the interrogative-indefinites combined masculine and feminine gender (cf. Greek. masculine/feminine *tis*), leaving no *quae*, *quam* or *quâ* in the singular; but (3) the relative pronoun borrowed the accusative masculine singular *quem* (< **quim*) and the dative/ablative plural *quibus* (replacing *quîs*) from the interrogative-indefinite. The original accusative masculine singular of the *o*-stem came to be used as a subordinate conjunction (*quom* > *cum*). The instrumental singular of the *i*-stem, *quî*, became an adverb meaning "how, somehow," as did *quia* ("since"), originally the neuter nominative/accusative plural of this form. The forms *qui* and *quae* can be explained as exhibiting the deictic particle *-i* (*quo* +- *i*; *qua* + *-i*).

II. Vocabulary

- ***amicitia:*** Unlike the suffixes listed in Wheelock's Chapter 7 (page 32, note 2), *-tia* belongs to the first declension. It denotes an abstract concept, here "friendship."
- ***aut:*** Students expect a separate word, like "either," in the first half of the pair *aut* . . . *aut*. They should learn that, in fact, many (if not most) languages do not distinguish *either* and *or*. You might then expand their small horizons and challenge them to explain why English needs a word like *either* at all. [*Either* exhibits the same "comparative" suffix *-ther* seen in ***other*** and ***whether***. Latin *aut* may be related to Greek *au*, "again, on the other hand".]
- ***coepi:*** A defective verb (i.e. it lacks usual forms, in this case all present-stem forms). Students will want to know what *coepisse* is. You will have to say it is the infinitive without explaining the formation of the perfect infinitive. I tell my students that they will understand the form later and for now just to know that it is translated as "to begin"; otherwise it supplies no crucial information about the verb (knowing the thematic vowel is not crucial to the formation of verbs in the perfect system the way it is in the present tenses). In fact, it's only because dictionaries regularly supply infinitives with verbs that *coepisse* is included at all! [*Coepi* was originally a compound of *cum* (*co-*) and the archaic verb **apio* ("to fit" [the perfect passive participle *aptus* was preserved as an adjective]); it means therefore "to fit together" > "to begin." When the verb **apio* fell out of general usage in Latin, *coepi* was no longer felt to be a compound (*co-epi*) and the vowels coalesced into a diphthong, *coepi*, cf. *coegi*, where the base verb (*ago*) was not lost and consequently the vowels did not become a diphthong.]

- ***incipio:*** While it may seem obvious to you, students might not immediately recognize that *incipio* = *in-* + *capio*, with vowel gradation. Just as in English, the literal Latin meaning "to take on" implies "to begin." Both *incipio* and *coepi* take a complementary infinitive. The difference in their meanings is negligible.
- ***neglego:*** A compound of *ne*(*c*) + *lego* ("choose"), literally "not to choose." Like *intellego* (another compound of *lego*) which has a perfect active base *intellex-*, *neglego* shows a sigmatic aorist-type perfect, *neglexi*. Neither of these compounds follow the model of the base verb *lego* (which has *lêg-* as its perfect active base), showing that the classical Romans no longer felt the force of *lego* behind these compounds.
- ***factum:*** This word presents a nice opportunity to reinforce the meaning of the perfect passive participle, "having been *X*-ed". *Factum* is the substantive of that participle in the neuter, meaning literally "a thing having been done."

III. Sentences

Practice and Review

1. Remind students that *quam* as an adverb means "how." It's laudably cruel of Mr. Wheelock to put this into the chapter on relative pronouns.
2. A bizarre sentence! Possibly Wheelock is thinking of Demea in Terence's *Adelphoe*.
3. One of my favorite Wheelock sentences. A mother throwing her sons into traffic will wake up even the sleepiest student!
4. It's best to take *illa* with *femina*, though it can be construed with *pericula*.

IV. Review for Test 3

Test 3: Review

_____
NOMEN TUUM

I. Please give the proper Latin form of the bolded word(s) in each of the sentences below. Include prepositions if they are necessary. (20 pts.)

1. God helps those **who** help themselves.	
2. The troops went across **the sea**.	
3. The rights **which** we once had have now been lost.	
4. The sons **whose** fathers are alive will fight for freedom.	
5. He is the citizen **to whom** we entrusted our liberty.	
6. The force of the troops **themselves** will conquer.	
7. He loved the memory of **his own** mother.	
8. He was helped **by the opinions** of wiser men.	
9. He spoke **with truth** and conviction.	
10. **In an age** like ours no one knows the difference between *who* and *whom*.	

II. Translate the following verb forms -- PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO TENSE! If necessary, write the tense out to the side to show that you know it. (20 pts.)

1. coepistis
2. timent
3. current
4. dicite
5. sentire
6. iuvimus
7. iaciebam
8. traxeras
9. fuisti
10. fugerint

III. Give the proper form of the adjective which agrees (in NUMBER, GENDER AND CASE) with the nouns to the left. (10 pts.)

EXAMPLE:	**LONGUS**	**BREVIS**
morti	longae	brevi
1. urbe		
2. nomina		
3. deorum		
4. iuris		
5. mare		

IV. Fill in the blanks with the correct PRINCIPAL PARTS (PRESENT INDICATIVE, PRESENT INFINITIVE, PERFECT INDICATIVE, PERFECT PARTICIPLE) of the Latin verbs below. (10 pts.)

Pres.	**Inf.**	**Perf.**	**Perf. Part.**
	incipere		inceptum
deleo			deletum
committo	committere		
iungo	iungere		
		ieci	iactum

V. Translate the following sentences into good English which shows that you know the syntax of the Latin sentences. Answer the grammar questions appended. (40 pts.)

1. Post haec **tempora** mala **quibus** ipsi vitam agimus, filii filiaeque nostrae bene **vivere** incipient.

What case is **tempora** and why?	
What case is **quibus** and why?	

What mood is **vivere** and why?	

2. Ex **Italiame**cum fugit, quoniam veritatem ante **Caesarem** dicere non potuimus et iram istius timuimus.

What case is **Italia** and why?	
What case is **me** and why?	
What case is **Caesarem** and why?	

3. Cives quibuscum ad **Asiam** veniebas **regi** isti se commiserunt, et nunc omnes sunt **miseri**.

What case is **Asiam** and why?	
What case is **regi** and why?	
What case is **miseri** and why?	

4. Ei **qui** sunt cari **dis** cum **ratione** animisque se semper gerunt.

What case is **qui** and why?	
What case is **dis** and why?	
What case is **ratione** and why?	

ANSWERS

I.

1. qui
2. mare
3. quae
4. quorum
5. cui
6. ipsarum
7. suae
8. sententiis
9. cum veritate
10. aetate

II.

1. you (pl.) have begun
2. they fear
3. they will run
4. say! (pl.)
5. to feel
6. we have helped
7. I was throwing
8. you had drawn
9. you have been

10. they will have fled

III.

1. longa (urbe) - brevi (urbe)
2. longa (nomina) - brevia (nomina)
3. longorum (deorum) - brevium (deorum)
4. longi (iuris) - brevis (iuris)
5. longum (mare) - breve (mare)

IV.

INCIPIO	incipere	INCEPI	inceptum
deleo	DELERE	DELEVI	deletum
committo	committere	COMMISI	COMMISSUM
iungo	iungere	IUNXI	IUNCTUM
IACIO	IACERE	ieci	iactum

V. 1. After these bad times in which we ourselves are living (lit. lead life), our sons and daughters will begin to live well.

tempora: accusative, object of *post*
quibus: ablative of point in time
vivere: infinitive, complementary with *incipio*

2. He fled with me out of Italy, since we were not able to speak the truth in front of Caesar and feared that (grrr!) man's anger.

Italia: ablative, object of *ex*
me: ablative of accompaniment
Caesarem: accusative, object of *ante*

3. The citizens with whom you came to Asia entrusted themselves to that (grrr!) king, and now they all are unhappy.

Asiam: accusative, object of *ad*
regi: dative, indirect object
miseri: nominative, predicate adjective

4. Those who are dear to the gods always conduct themselves with reason and courage.

qui: nominative, subject (in its own clause)
dis: dative, with *carus* ("dear *to* . . .")
ratione: ablative of manner