



# **INTRODUCTION TO RELATIVE PRONOUNS QUI & QUE**

**Twenty-fifth lesson – Vingt-cinquième leçon**

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# 1. DEFINITION

- Relative pronouns (*who, whom, whose, which, that*) link two phrases to reduce repetition.
- They introduce **relative clauses** that describe, define or expand on the main clause.



# 1. DEFINITION

- In English, some relative pronouns can be omitted, thus:
  - *The book **that** Mary bought for Paul is a medieval novel.*
    - *The book Mary bought for Paul is a medieval novel*
- are both acceptable.



# 1. DEFINITION

In French, however, the use of relative pronouns is compulsory.

- *Le livre **que** Paul a acheté est un roman médiéval.*
  - *The book that Paul bought is a medieval novel.*
  
- *Le livre  $\emptyset$  Paul a acheté est un roman médiéval.*
  - **→ This *isn't* acceptable.**



# 1. DEFINITION

- In English we normally use *who/whom* when referring to a person, and *that* or *which* when referring to anything other than a person.
  - *The one **who** arrives first is the winner!*
  - *The letters **that** are on the table are for you.*



# 1. DEFINITION

- There is no such distinction in French: **qui** and **que** is used for a person, animal, object, idea etc.
  - *L'homme **qui** chante est un de mes amis.*
  - *The man who is singing is one of my friends.*
  - *Le canari est un oiseau **qui** chante.*
    - *The canary is a bird that sings.*
  - *L'homme **que** je vois est un chanteur.*
    - *The man that I see is a singer.*
  - *L'oiseau **que** je vois est un canari.*
    - *The bird that I see is a canary.*



# 1. DEFINITION

- A different distinction can be made with **qui** and **que**: that of whether they refer to the subject or object of the main clause.





# 1. DEFINITION

- The same distinction exists in English with *who/whom*. *Whom* is often replaced with *who* in informal speech.
- In French the correct form must always be used.



## 2. ABOUT « QUI »

- The relative pronoun **qui** refers to the subject of the main clause.
- Unlike **que**, which changes form depending on the word that follows it, **qui** does not change.
  - *Le cahier **qui** est dans mon sac n'est pas à moi.*
    - *The book that is in my bag isn't mine.*
  - *Ce sont les professeurs **qui** notent les tests.*
    - *It is the professors that mark the tests.*
- In both of the above examples, **qui** refers to the subject of the main clause: *le cahier, les professeurs.*



### 3. ABOUT « QUE »

- The relative pronoun **que** refers to the object of the main clause. It becomes **qu'** when followed by a vowel or a mute H.
  - - *Est-ce que tu as oublié le film **qu'**on a vu?*
  - *Have you forgotten about the movie that we saw?*
  - - *Ma petite sœur ne lit pas les livres **que** je lui achète!*
  - *My little sister doesn't read the book that I bought her.*



## TO SUMMARIZE :

- As a general rule:
  - **qui** is normally followed by a **verb**.
  - **que** is normally followed by a **noun** or **pronoun**.



## 4. TRANSLATING « WHAT »

- When “what” is used to joint two clauses, it is an **indefinite relative pronoun**.
- There are two basics ways to translate it into French.



## 4. TRANSLATING « WHAT »

### 4.1 « what » is the subject of the verb

- *Je ne sais pas **ce qui** se passe.*
- *I don't know what is happening.*



## 4. TRANSLATING « WHAT »

### 4.2 « what » is the complement of the verb

- *Je ne comprends pas **ce que** vous dites.*
- *I don't understand what you are saying.*



## 5. MORE ABOUT QUI & QUE

- Use qui & que to ask questions
  - *What...?*
  - *Who ... ?*
  - *(To) Whom...?*





## 5. MORE ABOUT QUI & QUE

### 5.1 **Que**: interrogative pronoun

- *Qu'est-ce que vous voulez? / **Que** voulez-vous?*
- *What do you want?*
  
- *Qu'est-ce que tu penses de mon projet? / **Que** penses-tu de mon projet?*
- *What do you think about my project?*
  
- *Qu'est-ce que c'est?*
- *What is that?*



## 5. MORE ABOUT QUI & QUE

- When translating “what + verb with preposition”, **que** changes to **quoi**.
  - *De quoi est-ce que vous parlez? De quoi parlez-vous?*
    - *What are you talking about?*



# 5. MORE ABOUT QUI & QUE

## 5.2 Qui: interrogative pronoun

- *Qui aimez-vous le plus? Votre père ou votre mère?*
- *Who do you like the most? Your father or your mother?*
  
- *Qui veut répondre à cette question?*
- *Who wants to reply to this question?*
  
- *Qui parle? Qui est-ce qui parle?*
- *Who's speaking?*
  
- *Qui est-ce?*
- *Who is this?*



## 5. MORE ABOUT QUI & QUE

- When **translating** the idea of « to whom », **qui** follows a preposition and doesn't change:
  - *À qui est-ce que tu téléphones? À qui téléphones-tu?*
    - *Who are you calling?*



# TO SUMMARISE

## Relative pronouns

- Qui
- Que
- Ce qui
- Ce que

## Interrogative pronouns

- Qui
- Que
- À qui
- De quoi



C'est tout pour aujourd'hui!

Au revoir!

Merci!

