



**APEX ENGLISH**

*Your voice. Global.*

**C1 · GENERAL ENGLISH**

**UNIT 10 · 10A**

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# On your marks, set, go!

*Theme · Sport & Direction*



Unit 10 · 10A

# On your marks, set, go!

*Theme: Sport & Direction*

## Learning objectives

- Expand C1 vocabulary related to **word building: adjectives, nouns, and verbs**.
- Use **relative clauses** accurately and idiomatically.
- Read a discursive text and discuss inferences beyond the literal.
- Speak fluently on the unit's theme with a partner or in a small group.

This booklet accompanies the digital lesson at **alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/10a**. Interactive audio, video and drag-and-drop tasks live online; use this booklet in class and to review.

**Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class**



## Class Book

### Warm-up

*In pairs, talk for about a minute on each prompt before feedback:*

- 1 What comes to mind when you hear the theme **"Sport & Direction"**?
- 2 How comfortable are you using vocabulary about **word building: adjectives, nouns, and verbs**? Give one recent example.
- 3 When did you last use — or misuse — **relative clauses**?

### Reading

#### The runner nobody thought would qualify

For three years, nobody outside her club coach's living room seriously believed Sofia Marín would qualify for anything. She was, in the flat language of the sport, small, late, and technically messy. The story that has since attached itself to her — the one repeated at press conferences and printed in the Sunday supplements — is that she was, all along, a hidden natural. This is, on inspection, complete nonsense.

What she was, over those three years, was persistent in a way that most talented people never manage. She trained at six on winter mornings when her school friends did not. She kept a boring paper notebook, in which she wrote what had, and had not, worked in the previous session. She rebuilt her running action from scratch at seventeen, a decision most athletes with even a modicum of promise refuse to make because it costs them a season. She lost that season, and gained the next four.

Her coach, whose own competitive career was cut short by a knee injury, describes it more soberly. "Sofia had one gift, and it wasn't speed. It was that she was, from a very young age, quite unusually willing to be bored." The gift, in other words, was for the practice — not for the running.

None of which fits neatly into the story a Sunday supplement wants. Sunday supplements want the hero, spotted young. What actually produces a runner nobody thought would qualify is, more often, an ordinary house, a boring notebook, and a coach whose principal skill is convincing a seventeen-year-old to lose a season on purpose.

*Comprehension — choose the best answer.*

1. What is the writer's central claim about Sofia Marín?
  - (A) She was a hidden natural talent
  - (B) She was persistent in an unusual way
  - (C) She was late-developing but very fast
  - (D) She had a famous coach

#### Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. What did she do at seventeen?
  - (A) She won her first national title
  - (B) She rebuilt her running action from scratch
  - (C) She left her club coach
  - (D) She joined a new team
3. According to her coach, what was Sofia's one 'gift'?
  - (A) speed
  - (B) flexibility
  - (C) willingness to be bored
  - (D) technique
4. What does the writer say Sunday supplements want?
  - (A) boring notebooks
  - (B) the hero, spotted young
  - (C) coaches with knee injuries
  - (D) seventeen-year-olds
5. Which cost did Sofia accept at seventeen?
  - (A) losing her club coach
  - (B) losing a whole season
  - (C) losing weight
  - (D) losing her scholarship
6. The writer's tone is best described as:
  - (A) romantic
  - (B) coolly demystifying
  - (C) outraged
  - (D) sentimental

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## Vocabulary

Focus: **word building: adjectives, nouns, and verbs**

Study these C1 items and their meanings.

**achieve (v.) → achievement (n.), achievable (adj.)** — succeed in doing something after effort

**persist (v.) → persistence (n.), persistent (adj.)** — continue firmly, despite difficulty

**compete (v.) → competition (n.), competitive (adj.), competitor (n.)** — try to win something against others

**endure (v.) → endurance (n.), enduring (adj.)** — suffer or last through difficulty

**motivate (v.) → motivation (n.), motivated (adj.), motivator (n.)** — give someone a reason to act

**excel (v.) → excellence (n.), excellent (adj.)** — be extremely good at something

**train (v.) → training (n.), trainer (n.), trainable (adj.)** — practise a skill regularly

**focus (v./n.) → focused (adj.), refocus (v.)** — concentrate attention on one thing

**Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class**



## Grammar

Focus: **relative clauses**

Study the online lesson notes, then complete the interactive tasks at **[alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/10a](https://alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/10a)**.

**Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class**

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## Speaking

- 1 Tell a partner about a personal experience connected to **sport & direction**. Aim for at least two minutes without pausing.
- 2 Compare cultures or generations on this topic. Use at least three items from the *word building: adjectives, nouns, and verbs* list.
- 3 Discuss: *Is it possible to be objective about sport & direction?* Justify your view.

## Writing

Write 220–260 words on: **“Sport & Direction — what has changed in the last twenty years?”** Use at least four items from the vocabulary list and one structure from the grammar focus (*relative clauses*).

**Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class**



## Workbook

### Home practice

*Complete on your own; check answers in class.*

1. Choose the correct relative pronoun: 'That's the coach \_\_\_\_\_ trained her.'  
(A) which  
(B) who  
(C) whose  
(D) where
2. Which non-defining sentence is correct?  
(A) My brother who lives in Rio is a rower.  
(B) My brother, who lives in Rio, is a rower.  
(C) My brother, that lives in Rio, is a rower.  
(D) My brother who, lives in Rio, is a rower.
3. Complete: 'It's a stadium \_\_\_\_\_ capacity is 60,000.'  
(A) who  
(B) which  
(C) whose  
(D) where
4. Which is a correct reduced relative clause?  
(A) The runner who winning the race is 22.  
(B) The runner winning the race is 22.  
(C) The runner, winning, the race is 22.  
(D) The runner which winning the race is 22.
5. Complete: 'The town \_\_\_\_\_ I did my first race is tiny.'  
(A) where  
(B) which  
(C) who  
(D) whose
6. In defining relative clauses we can OMIT the pronoun when it is the:  
(A) subject  
(B) object  
(C) possessive  
(D) adverb

**Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class**

[← Back to C1 General contents](#)

# Workbook · 10A. On your marks, set, go!

*Home practice · relative clauses · word building · answer key included*



## Class Book

Full lesson · in-class material



## Workbook

Home practice · with answer key

### GRAMMAR

10 min

## 1 · Relative clauses

1. Choose the correct relative pronoun: 'That's the coach \_\_\_\_\_ trained her.'

a. which

b. who ✓

c. whose

d. where

2. Which non-defining sentence is correct?

a. My brother who lives in Rio is a rower.

b. My brother, who lives in Rio, is a rower. ✓

c. My brother, that lives in Rio, is a rower.

d. My brother who, lives in Rio, is a rower.

3. Complete: 'It's a stadium \_\_\_\_\_ capacity is 60,000.'

a. who

b. which

c. whose ✓

d. where

4. Which is a correct reduced relative clause?

a. The runner who winning the race is 22.

b. The runner winning the race is 22. ✓

c. The runner, winning, the race is 22.

d. The runner which winning the race is 22.

5. Complete: 'The town \_\_\_\_\_ I did my first race is tiny.'

a. where ✓

b. which

c. who

d. whose

6. In defining relative clauses we can OMIT the pronoun when it is the:

a. subject

b. object ✓

c. possessive

d. adverb

Score: 6 / 6

↺ Try again

## VOCABULARY

### 2 · Complete with a word from the box (word building)

10 min

WORD BANK — DRAG OR TAP, THEN TAP A GAP

persistence

achievable

competitive

endurance

motivation

## excellence

1. Her **persistence** **persistence** over three winters is the whole story.
2. It's an **achievable** **achievable** target with the right plan.
3. She is more **competitive** **competitive** than talented.
4. At this level, what wins is **endurance** **endurance**, not brilliance.
5. Nobody stays this focused without real **motivation** **motivation**.
6. The school has a genuine culture of **excellence** **excellence**.

Score: 6 / 6

Try again

## GRAMMAR

10 min

## 3 · Combine, reduce or rewrite

1. *Combine: 'She has a coach. He was once a marathon runner.'*

Hide answer

She has a coach who was once a marathon runner.

2. *Combine with 'whose': 'She's the swimmer. Her father coached her.'*

Hide answer

She's the swimmer whose father coached her.

3. *Reduce: 'The runners who are trained by Coach Diaz have all improved.'*

Hide answer

The runners trained by Coach Diaz have all improved.

4. *Combine (non-defining): 'Our captain is 34. She has just qualified for her fourth Olympics.'*

Hide answer

Our captain, who is 34, has just qualified for her fourth Olympics.

## VOCABULARY +

8 min

## 4 · Match each form to its word-class

DRAG THE MEANING ONTO THE WORD

Reset

adjective

adjective

abstract noun

person noun

verb (root)

verb (root)

persist

verb (root)

Hide answer

verb (root)

persistence

abstract noun

Hide answer

abstract noun

persistent

adjective

Hide answer

adjective

compete

verb (root)

Hide answer

verb (root)

competitor

person noun

Hide answer

person noun

competitive

adjective

Hide answer

adjective

## LISTENING

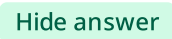
10 min

## 5 · Podcast · What the coach actually said

Listen to a short first-person monologue from an athletics coach reflecting on the athlete she trained the longest.

▶ 0:00 / 0:00   

Audio recording coming soon — transcript-based questions still work with the answer key below.

1. Which relative clause does the coach use about her most successful athlete? 

'The athlete whose paperwork I filled in for eight winters is the one who made it.' (whose / who)

2. What does she say the real gift was? [Hide answer](#)

Not speed — an unusual willingness to tolerate the boring, uncomfortable practice.

3. What decision at 17 does she cite as the turning point? [Hide answer](#)

Rebuilding her running action from scratch and losing a season on purpose.

4. What is her honest advice to a promising fifteen-year-old? [Hide answer](#)

'Find one boring thing to do every day for four years, and stop asking whether it's working.'

## DISCURSIVE WRITING

20 min

### 6 · A short reflection (180–220 words)

Write a short first-person reflection titled: "*The skill I built the boring way.*" Use at least four defining relative clauses, two non-defining relative clauses and three word-family transformations. Do not use the word *talent*.

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Next · 10B No direction home →