

# Clauses and Sentence Types

# Clauses

- A **clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb.

Ex.1 Whenever I see your smiling face

Ex. 2 He loves snorkeling at the beach.

- Every clause must contain both a subject and a verb, but **not every clause can stand by itself as a complete sentence.**

If you like to sing

(clause that can not stand alone)

She sings to her baby.

(clause that is a complete sentence)

## **Clauses** – guided practice

Which of the following groups of words is a clause?

- a. To know about the world
- b. I want to learn about fencing
- c. Although summer seemed short
- d. After school is out today
- e. The movie of *The Great Gatsby*

# Clauses build sentences.

- A **simple sentence** is made up of **one independent clause**.

The baby slept peacefully.

I have a challenging schedule this year.

- The **number and types of clauses** included determine the type of sentence.

An **independent clause**, also known as a **main clause**, can stand by itself as a complete, simple sentence.

The students love grammar.

They love taking notes and learning.

**A subordinate clause** (also called a **dependent clause**), although it has a subject and a verb, cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence; it can only be PART of a sentence.

***Because the athlete sprained her ankle,*** she could not play for weeks.

***Unless we buy more eggs,*** we will be eating cereal for breakfast tomorrow.

Subordinate or dependent clauses can  
begin with

**relative pronouns** : that, which, who,  
whom, or whose

or

**relative adverbs** : before, since, once,  
when, where, or why

or

whichever, whoever, whomever, how,  
if, what, whatever, whether

# or

## subordinating conjunctions:

After	Even though	Unless
Although	If	Until
As	In order that	when
As if	Since	Whenever
As long as	So that	Where
Because	Than	wherever
Before	Though	while



Subordinate clauses may function as:

nouns

(introduced by relative pronouns, they are used as subjects or objects.)

or

adjectives

(introduced by relative pronouns or relative adverbs)

or

adverbs

(introduced by subordinating conjunctions)

# Identify the subordinate clauses in the sentences below:

- a. After we read Homer's *Iliad*, we will study Dante's *Inferno*.
- b. I think of Sarah whenever I see a redhead.
- c. Pound is the Modernist author who uses imagery most skillfully.
- d. "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree." [Kilmer]
- e. As long as you follow the instructions, you can easily assemble Swedish furniture.

And here are the subordinate clauses:

- a. after we read Homer's *Iliad*
- b. whenever I see a redhead
- c. who uses imagery most skillfully
- d. that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree
- e. As long as you follow the instructions

Identify the underlined portion as a dependent/  
subordinate clause or an independent/main clause:

1. After we finish our work, we will go to lunch.
2. She bought the birthday balloons when she was on the way to the party after work.
3. Whoever knows the answer should raise his or her hand.
4. If you understand the material, you will do well on the test next week.
5. Once we finish learning about clauses, we will look at sentence types.

# Clause identification

1. We will go to lunch – independent/main
2. When she was on the party way to the party after work – dependent/subordinate
3. Whoever knows the answer – dependent/subordinate
4. You will do well on the test next week – independent/main
5. We will look at sentence types – indep./main

## **Elliptical Clauses -**

are dependent clauses in which the verb or subject and verb are understood but not actually stated.

I am taller than she.

[than she is tall]

You gave her a better grade than me.

[than you gave me]

# Identify the elliptical clauses:

1. Tenth graders know more about achieving success in high school than ninth graders.
2. Eleventh graders want to do just as well on the SAT as the seniors.
3. Seniors are often more interested in applying to college than passing classes in the spring.
4. Some seniors are more dedicated to high school achievement than others.

# And here are the elliptical clauses ...

1. than ninth graders [know].
2. as the seniors [want to do].
3. than [they are interested] in passing classes in the spring.
4. than others [are].



# Determine whether the underlined portions of the sentences below are independent/main or dependent/subordinate.

1. Odysseus encounters many interesting characters on his ten year journey.
2. He survives the Cyclops, who eats several of his men and tries to destroy Odysseus's ship by throwing boulders at it.
3. He is captured by the beautiful Circe, who turns his men into pigs.
4. Before Odysseus leaves Circe's island, she tells him that he must travel to Hades to seek the advice of Tiresias.
5. Tiresias, in turn, informs Odysseus about many challenges that he will face.
6. Odysseus, if he wants to return home successfully, must return to Circe's island and bury Elpinor, who died when he fell off of the roof.
7. In addition, Tiresias, who is a great prophet, also warns Odysseus about the Sirens and Scylla and Charybdis.

# Sentence Types

The number and types of clauses determine the structure of the sentence.

**A simple sentence** consists of one independent clause.

Most dogs are loyal to their owners.

**A compound sentence** is made up of two or more independent clauses.

Most dogs are loyal to their owners, but cats are more independent.

Most dogs are loyal to their owners; most cats are more independent.

# Punctuating compound sentences

- Two independent clauses that are closely related can be joined with a semi-colon to form a compound sentence.

We want to visit the coast this summer; our family loves swimming in the ocean and walking on the beach.

- Use a comma before the coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS - for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) that separates two independent clauses in a compound sentence.

We want to vacation at the coast, for we love the sea.

# **A complex sentence**

is made up of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

Although most dogs are loyal to their owners, cats are more independent.

Note that introductory dependent clauses are followed by a comma if they are nonessential clauses.

# Punctuating complex sentences

Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses.

I understand that you dislike grammar, that you would rather be reading, and that you think this is unimportant.

Use commas to set off an introductory adverb clause.

After we finish lunch, we will begin painting the bedroom.

Do not use a comma to set off adverb clauses in other positions. We are going to paint the bedroom after we finish eating lunch.

**A compound-complex sentence**  
is made up of two or more  
independent clauses and one or more  
dependent clauses.

Cats and dogs have very different  
personalities; while dogs are loyal to  
their owners, most cats are more  
independent.



# Classify the following sentences:

1. October is the month when the weather changes in Georgia.
2. After I learn to drive I will be able to go to the mall whenever I want to.
3. I want to know where you went yesterday, and you need to be honest about it.
4. Understanding clauses will help you to write more effectively.

Classifying sentences – S, Cx, Cd, Cd-Cx  
red for independent/main clauses; blue for  
dependent/subordinate clauses

1. October is the month when the weather changes in Georgia. Complex
2. After I learn to drive, I will be able to go to the mall whenever I want to. Complex
3. I want to know where you went yesterday, and you need to be honest about it. Cd-CX
4. Understanding clauses will help you to write more effectively. Simple

# Determine whether the following sentences are simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

1. Scylla is a six-headed monster, and Charybdis is a raging whirlpool.
2. Scylla can only eat six people as a ship passes her, but Charybdis can devour the ship and all of its occupants.
3. The Sirens, who are part woman and part bird, have beautiful voices that lure sailors towards their island.
4. Once the sailors approach the island, they crash on the rocks, and they are eaten by the Sirens.
5. Odysseus avoids this fate by lashing himself to the mast so that he cannot go towards the Sirens; in the meantime, his sailors stuff their ears with beeswax to avoid hearing the music.
6. Once Odysseus arrives home after twenty long years, he is unrecognizable because Athena disguises him as an old beggar.
7. Penelope is surrounded by suitors who want to replace Odysseus and usurp his throne.
8. Telemachus stands with his father against the suitors and learns patience as he waits for the right time to get revenge for their many offenses.

red for independent main clauses / Dependent clauses are in blue.

1. Scylla is a six-headed monster, and Charybdis is a raging whirlpool.

Compound

2. Scylla can only eat six people as a ship passes her, but Charybdis can devour the ship and all of its occupants. Compound-complex

3. The Sirens, who are part woman and part bird, have beautiful voices that lure sailors towards their island. Complex

4. Once the sailors approach the island, they crash on the rocks, and they are eaten by the Sirens. Compound-complex

5. Odysseus avoids this fate by lashing himself to the mast so that he cannot go towards the Sirens; in the meantime, his sailors stuff their ears with beeswax to avoid hearing the music. Compound-complex

6. Once Odysseus arrives home after twenty long years, he is unrecognizable because Athena disguises him as an old beggar. Complex

7. Penelope is surrounded by suitors who want to replace Odysseus and usurp his throne. Complex

8. Telemachus stands with his father against the suitors and learns patience as he waits for the right time to get revenge for their many offenses. Complex