

SENTENCE BASICS

THINK WRITE BOOK: A SENTENCE COMBINING WORKBOOK FOR ELL STUDENTS ©

DEFINITIONS:

1. A **sentence** is a group of words that has
 - a subject,
 - a verb, and
 - expresses a complete thought.
2. A **sentence** has two major parts:
 - the subject and
 - the predicate.

PARTS OF A SENTENCE:

3. The **subject** of a sentence names the person, place, or thing that the sentence talks about.
4. The **predicate** of a sentence tells what the subject is, what the subject did, or what happened.
5. The **simple predicate** is the verb.
6. The **simple subject** is also called the subject of the verb.
7. The verb, and all the words that describe or modify the verb, is called the **complete predicate**.
8. The subject, and all the words that describe or modify the subject, is called the **complete subject**.
9. The **complete subject** can be one word or more than one word.
The **complete subject** can have adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and pronouns.
10. The **complete predicate** can be one word or more than one word.
The **complete predicate** can have one or more verbs, objects (nouns and pronouns), adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, and conjunctions.
11. All the parts of the sentence (the subject, the verb, the object, and other predicate words may be **compound** (two or more).
This means that each part of a sentence may be compound (compound subject, compound verb, compound object, compound adjectives, and compound adverbs).

12. The subject of a sentence may be written in different positions in the sentence. This means that the order of the subject and the verb may be written in **two different orders**.

The usual order of sentences (the one that we usually use in speech to make a statement or give information) is called the **natural order**. This means that the subject usually comes first or near the beginning of a sentence. A sentence written in the natural order will have the verb come after the subject in the sentence.

The second order of sentences is called the **inverted order**. This means that the sentence will begin with the verb, and the subject will follow or come later on in the sentence. A question (which is an interrogative sentence) is written in inverted order.

13. A **fragment** is a group of words that does not have

- a subject, or
- a verb, or
- a complete thought.

There are four reasons (or conditions) why a group of words is a fragment:

- a. If a group of words has no subject but has a predicate (verb) and does not express a complete thought;
- b. If a group of words has no predicate (verb) but has a subject and does not express a complete thought;
- c. If a group of words has no subject and no predicate (verb) and does not express a complete thought;
- d. If a group of words begins with a subordinating conjunction, has a subject and a predicate (verb), but does not express a complete thought.

CATEGORIES OF SENTENCES:

1. A **simple sentence** is a sentence that contains only one subject, one predicate (verb), and one complete thought.

However, in a **simple sentence**, the subject and the predicate, or any part of the subject or predicate, may be **compound**.

A **simple sentence** is also an **independent clause**.

2. A **compound sentence** consists of two or more independent clauses joined together (connected) by a **coordinating conjunction**. Usually a comma comes before the coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. Sometimes, a **semicolon** is used to connect the independent clauses instead of a comma and coordinating conjunction.

Since a **simple sentence** is an independent clause, a compound sentence may have two or more independent clauses joined together.

The parts of a compound sentence (which are the independent clauses) may be joined:

- a. by a semicolon (;)
- b. or by a comma and one of the coordinating conjunctions, which are:

- for
- and
- nor {
- but {These are the conjunctions known as the FANBOYS.}
- or {
- yet
- so }

3. A **complex sentence** consists of one independent (main) clause and one or more dependent (subordinate) clause.

A **clause** is a group of words that has

- a subject,
- a verb, and
- may or may not express a complete thought.

An **independent (main) clause** has a subject, a verb and expresses a complete thought.

An **independent (main) clause** can stand as a sentence by itself.

A **dependent (subordinate) clause** has

- a subject,
- a verb, and
- does not express a complete thought.

A **dependent (subordinate) clause** cannot stand as a sentence by itself. It must always be joined to an independent (main) clause. A subordinating conjunction (or word that acts like a subordinating conjunction) subordinates the clause by making it depend on an independent (main) clause to complete the thought.

A **dependent (subordinate) clause** usually begins with a subordinating conjunction.

Usually, dependent (subordinate) clauses begin with a **subordinating conjunction**. The following words are subordinating conjunctions:

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

after	because	so that	whatever
although	before	than	when
as	if	though	whenever
as if	in order that	till	where
as long as	provided	unless	wherever
as though	since	until	while

The following words are not subordinating conjunctions; they are **relative pronouns**, but they act like subordinating conjunctions. Relative pronouns can also begin dependent (subordinate) clauses.

that	who, whom, whose	which
what	whoever, whomever	how

4. A **compound-complex sentence** consists of at least one dependent (subordinate) clause and at least one compound sentence. This means that a compound-complex sentence must have two (or more) independent clauses and one (or more) dependent clauses.

KINDS OF SENTENCES:

There are four kinds of sentences, and each kind has a different function or purpose.

1. **Declarative Sentence:** A declarative sentence makes a statement or gives information. A declarative sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period.
2. **Interrogative Sentence:** An interrogative sentence asks a question. An interrogative sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a question mark.
3. **Imperative Sentence:** An imperative sentence gives a command or makes a request. An imperative sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period. The subject of an imperative sentence is **(you)**, which means you understood. Sometimes, when an imperative sentence is used to make a request, it will also include the word **please**. This is the polite form of an imperative sentence.
4. **Exclamatory Sentence:** An exclamatory sentence shows surprise, fear, happiness, and other strong feelings or emotions. An exclamatory sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with an exclamation point.

A sentence can sometimes be **imperative and exclamatory** at the same time. Usually, when this happens, the imperative sentence can end with an exclamation point.