

FOUNDATIONAL GRAMMAR

LESSON TEN: SENTENCE STRUCTURE & END PUNCTUATION

****We'll talk about what formally makes a sentence next week, but you all probably have a good grasp from previous writing****

sentence = a group of words with a subject and a verb that expresses a complete idea

phrase = a group of words

clause = a group of words with a subject and a verb. If it does not express a complete idea, it is a dependent clause (it depends on a complete sentence in order to exist). If it does express a complete idea, it is known as an independent clause, or as we usually call it, a sentence.

****Simple and compound sentences have no dependent clauses. Advanced Grammar will go more into depth with dependent clauses and the types of sentences that use them.**

What is a sentence?

Review: What is a verb? What is a subject?

Now that we remember about subjects and verbs, we can talk about what a sentence is.

- 1. A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought.**
- 2. Every sentence has two parts: a subject and a verb.**
- 3. A sentence begins with a capital, and ends with a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.**

Remember that:

- The subject is a noun or a pronoun, and tells *who* or *what* the sentence is about.
- The verb tells what the subject is or does. It expresses the main action or state of being in the sentence.

A fragment is an incomplete sentence. It is missing either a subject or a verb, or it does not express a complete thought.

Are these sentences?

- 1) Went to the zoo.
- 2) The girl.
- 3) Driving the car.

- 4) The wonderful man with the black suit and the bouquet of flowers.
- 5) Go home!

- The first sentence has a predicate, but no subject. WHO went to the zoo?
- The second sentence has a subject, but no predicate. WHAT is the girl doing?
- The third sentence has no subject. WHO is driving the car?
- The fourth sentence was meant to trick you! Many people think that just because a sentence is longer, it is a complete sentence. This sentence gives you the subject: “the man.” It gives you all sorts of details about him: he is wonderful, he has a black suit and some flowers. However, we can not answer the question: WHAT is the man doing?
- The fifth sentence is also tricky. In this case, the subject is implied: (You) go home! So yes, it is a complete sentence.

Hint

If you are wondering whether or not a sentence is complete, ask yourself three things:

- i) Who or what is doing something?
- ii) What is being done?
- iii) Does it express a complete thought?

If you can not answer one of the questions, you have a fragment.

Four Different Types of Sentences by **Function**

There are four different kinds of sentences when you consider what function they have. In other words, why were they written?

- 1)A declarative sentence makes a statement. It ends with a period.
eg: I am tall.
- 2)An interrogative sentence asks a question. It ends with a question mark.
eg: Who are you?
- 3)An imperative sentence gives a command or makes a request. It ends with a period.
eg: Work hard in your studies.
- 4)An exclamatory sentence shows sudden or strong feelings. It ends with an exclamation point.
eg: You are so beautiful!

Hint

Declarative: Tells
Interrogative: Asks
Imperative: Commands
Exclamatory: Exclaims

Four Different Types of Sentences by Structure

There are four different kinds of sentences by structure:

1) A **simple sentence** is a sentence with one independent clause and no subordinate clauses
eg: Great literature stirs the imagination.

What's the subject? What's the verb?

What are some other examples of simple sentences?

2) A **compound sentence** is a sentence composed of two or more independent clauses but no subordinate clauses.

Eg: Great literature stirs the imagination, and it challenges the mind.

There are two independent clauses joined here by a coordinating conjunction:

Great literature stirs the imagination (what's the subject and verb here?)

and

it challenges the mind (what's the subject and verb here?)

What are some other examples of compound sentences joined by coordinating conjunctions?

Note: Don't get confused by compound subjects or verbs and think that makes the whole sentence compound.

Eg: *Great literature stirs the imagination and it challenges the mind.*

What's the change here? "it" is gone!

Since "it" was the subject of our second clause, we are now left with a simple sentence.

There is only one independent clause with one subject [Literature] and a compound verb [stirs and challenges].

What are some examples of a simple sentence with a compound subject?

What are some examples of a simple sentence with a compound verb?

Now what are some examples of a compound sentence in comparison joined by a coordinating conjunction?

3) A **complex** sentence is a sentence that contains one independent clause and at least one subordinate clause.

Eg: Great literature stirs the imagination because great writers use excellent descriptions.

Here we have an independent clause and a subordinating conjunction which introduces the subordinate clause:

Great literature stirs the imagination (independent clause – what’s the subject and verb?)

because great writers use excellent descriptions (subordinate clause – what’s the subject and verb? Why is it not independent?)

What are some other examples of complex sentences?

4) A **compound-complex** sentence is a sentence that, just like it sounds, is both compound and complex at the same time. It contains two or more independent clauses and at least one subordinate clause.

Eg: Great literature stirs the imagination because great writers use excellent descriptions, but it is sometimes difficult to read.

What are the independent clauses here?

Great literature stirs the imagination

It is sometimes difficult to read

What are the subordinate clauses?

Because great writers use excellent descriptions

Practice: Are the following sentences *simple*, *compound*, *complex*, or *compound-complex*?

After we closed the door, we heard a loud noise.

The class liked to make jokes until one student cried.

We like to go hunting.

We like to go hunting and fishing.

I want to go riding, but I am afraid I will fall off the horse.

I like to bake cakes and I love to eat them.

Everyone jumped off the trampoline when mom called, but it still took a while to get inside.

I like to go fishing since I love the outdoors, yet sometimes I don’t catch anything.

PUNCTUATION INTRO

Knowing how to write complete sentences is necessary to good writing. As such, we will be going over punctuation marks over the next couple weeks and discussing how they can help us fix problematic sentences.

We'll then go over fragments again, but we will also talk about another problem some students come up against: run-on sentences.

End Marks

There are three different types of end marks that can be used to end a sentence: periods, question marks, and exclamation marks.

You've already been using these. But to summarize more formally:

Periods end declarative sentences:

Eg. My dad is the best man I know.

Periods can also end imperative sentences:

Eg. Go to the store tomorrow.

Question marks end interrogative sentences when you ask questions or sometimes to end a statement of disbelief:

Eg. Why do you want to work here?

That is your answer?

Exclamation marks end exclamatory sentences and are used for emphasis or emotion.

They can also be used after interjections:

Eg. I can't believe you did that!

Oh no! This is a disaster!

*Try not to overuse exclamation marks. They lose their impact when you use them too often or put more than one exclamation mark after a sentence:

Eg. I want to go there!!!

I love pizza!!