

## Complex Sentences Lesson Plan

It is probably best to teach complex sentences after teaching simple and compound sentences, but it may also be taught independently.

The best way to teach complex sentences is by explaining an independent clause with visuals. Then teach subordinate conjunctions. Explain that a subordinate or dependent clause begins with a subordinate conjunction.

The rule is: If an independent clause is first, followed by a dependent clause, there is no comma in the sentences.

If a dependent clause is first, followed by an independent clause, there is a comma after the dependent clause.

I teach this first as a lecture. Then I do samples on the board with student participation. I then use sentence strips that have either dependent or independent clauses on them. I do an activity where students match their clause with someone else's clause to make a complex sentence. They then explain who has the dependent clause, who has the independent clause and if a comma is needed.

I follow up with worksheets to demonstrate mastery.

# The Subordinate Conjunction

Recognize a *subordinate conjunction* when you see one.

Some sentences are *complex*. Such sentences have *two* clauses, one main [or *independent*] and one subordinate [or *dependent*].

The essential ingredient in a complex sentence is the subordinate conjunction:

after	once	until
although	provided that	when
as	rather than	whenever
because	since	where
before	so that	whereas
even if	than	wherever
even though	that	whether
if	though	while
in order that	unless	why

The subordinate conjunction has two jobs. First, it provides a necessary transition between the two ideas in the sentence. This transition will indicate a *time, place, or cause and effect* relationship. Here are some examples:

Louisa will wash the sink full of her dirty dishes *once* her roommate Shane cleans his stubble and globs of shaving cream from the bathroom sink.

We looked on top of the refrigerator, *where* Jenny will often hide a bag of chocolate chip cookies.

*Because* her teeth were chattering in fear, Lynda clenched her jaw muscle while waiting for her turn to audition.

The second job of the subordinate conjunction is to reduce the importance of one clause so that a reader understands which of the two ideas is more important. The more important idea belongs in the main clause, the less important in the clause introduced by the subordinate conjunction.

Read these examples:

*As Samson blew out the birthday candles atop the cake, he burned the tip of his nose on a stubborn flame.*

Burning his nose > blowing out candles.

Ronnie begins to sneeze violently *whenever he opens the door to greet a fresh spring day.*

Sneezing violently > opening the door.

*Even though Dana persevered at the calculus exam, she was only adding another F beside her name in Dr. Armour's grade book.*

Adding another F > persevering at the exam.

**Punctuate a complex sentence correctly.**

Complex sentences follow two common patterns:

**MAIN CLAUSE + Ø + SUBORDINATE CLAUSE .**

*Nicky shook her head and sighed Ø as she puzzled over the algebra problem.*

**SUBORDINATE CLAUSE + , + MAIN CLAUSE .**

*When the doorbell rang, Nicky slammed shut her textbook and rose to pay for her pizza.*

Punctuation gets trickier when the subordinate clause begins with a relative pronoun like *who*, *which*, or *where*. Sometimes you will need a comma, and sometimes you won't, depending on whether the clause is essential or nonessential.

When the information in the relative clause clarifies an otherwise general noun, the clause is essential and will follow the same pattern that you saw above:

**MAIN CLAUSE + Ø + ESSENTIAL RELATIVE CLAUSE .**

*Nicky paid the deliveryman Ø whose rusty hatchback choked and coughed in the driveway.*

*Deliveryman* is a general noun. Which one are we talking about? The relative clause *whose rusty hatchback choked and coughed in the driveway* clarifies the restaurant employee we mean. The clause is thus essential and requires no punctuation.

When a relative clause follows a specific noun, punctuation changes. The information in the relative clause is no longer as important, and the clause becomes nonessential. Nonessential clauses require you to use commas to connect them.

**MAIN CLAUSE + , + NONESSENTIAL RELATIVE CLAUSE .**

*Nicky paid Fernando, whose rusty hatchback choked and coughed in the driveway.*

**Fernando**, the name of a *unique restaurant employee*, lets us know which deliveryman we mean. The information in the relative clause is no longer important and needs to be separated from the main clause with a comma.

Relative clauses can also *interrupt* a main clause. When this happens, use no punctuation for an essential clause. But if the clause is nonessential, separate it with a comma in front *and* a comma behind. Take a look at these examples:

After seeing the cheap tip, the man *Ø who delivered Nicky's pizza Ø* wished that he had driven more slowly.

After seeing the cheap tip, Fernando, *who delivered Nicky's pizza,* wished that he had driven more slowly.



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## 2-82. SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS WORD FIND

Nineteen dependent clauses are listed below the puzzle. The subordinating conjunctions that start each clause are hidden within the puzzle. Some subordinating conjunctions are one word, some are two, and some are three. Circle the 19 subordinating conjunctions. The words are placed backward, forward, diagonally, and vertically. Good luck!

L	F	D	J	C	R	W	A	H	T	K	J	G	T	S	N	S	P	N	X	Y	H	Y	H
C	I	Z	E	R	H	E	D	F	D	J	B	T	N	C	P	N	C	A	F	H	X	P	C
Y	G	T	C	E	W	V	V	J	T	F	F	M	G	A	D	V	B	H	D	H	Z	N	H
W	H	E	N	E	V	E	R	F	K	E	Z	X	N	S	D	N	Z	T	Z	B	F	G	Y
H	H	H	O	U	G	N	N	L	L	C	R	Q	F	J	X	P	A	R	L	I	U	Y	C
E	I	I	P	W	V	T	W	V	L	N	X	K	H	N	X	H	K	E	N	O	X	S	J
R	N	F	L	H	B	H	J	W	W	I	Q	T	Y	X	T	C	N	H	H	K	G	H	N
E	O	L	B	E	F	O	R	E	X	S	T	T	R	X	E	T	N	T	S	B	W	N	G
A	R	T	N	R	R	U	S	V	M	K	X	X	D	S	X	Q	L	A	R	L	A	L	N
S	D	Q	G	E	C	G	L	M	G	D	T	Z	U	S	T	A	R	R	K	H	B	G	F
K	E	N	K	N	M	H	N	C	H	T	Z	A	R	G	S	N	S	G	T	R	M	B	P
J	R	R	L	M	M	P	K	W	H	X	C	N	M	P	V	S	F	V	Z	N	K	X	P
F	T	J	J	Y	J	W	L	L	K	E	F	H	P	V	L	V	W	W	S	R	Z	Z	K
B	H	C	Z	J	L	L	Y	C	B	N	Q	N	H	T	S	F	B	K	V	N	H	M	Z
B	A	Y	P	S	Q	R	Y	Y	H	Z	M	Y	W	H	Q	Y	Q	N	W	M	Z	V	B
P	T	H	M	P	V	Q	F	P	D	H	L	P	C	Z	C	J	G	Q	Z	B	S	X	K
Z	L	G	L	T	K	K	F	T	G	K	J	P	C	C	X	R	Q	L	J	H	T	P	L

AFTER THE GAME CONCLUDED  
 ALTHOUGH HE IS TALLER NOW  
 AS THE RAIN WAS FALLING  
 BECAUSE THEY WILL HELP YOU  
 BEFORE THE FLOOD OCCURRED  
 EVEN THOUGH KYLE IS THE RIGHT  
 CHOICE  
 IN ORDER THAT EVERYBODY IS HAPPY  
 ONCE YOU CAN FIND THE SOLUTION  
 RATHER THAN YOUR SELECTING THE  
 PLAYERS

SINCE I AM THE CAPTAIN OF THIS TEAM  
 THAN I AM  
 THAT HE HAS SOLD YOU  
 TILL YOU SEE THEM AGAIN  
 UNTIL THE CAR WAS BROUGHT TO THE  
 NEXT STATION  
 WHEN THE LAST SLIDE WAS VIEWED  
 WHENEVER I FEEL LONELY  
 WHERE THE TWO ROADS MEET  
 WHEREAS SHE WILL VOUCH FOR YOU  
 WHILE THE PARADE PASSES BY

## 2-85. COMBINING SENTENCES

On a separate sheet of paper, combine the sentences in each group into one sentence. When appropriate, use the co-ordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and relative pronouns listed below. You may delete and/or add words, but keep the same ideas as found in the original sentences. An example is done for you.

### *Coordinating Conjunctions*

and     nor  
but     or  
for

### *Relative Pronouns*

that     whom  
which    whose  
who

### *Subordinating Conjunctions*

after	because	since	until	where
although	before	though	when	wherever
as	if	unless	whenever	while

**Example:** The camcorder is expensive. It was purchased at Selmar's Camera Shop. The camcorder has many interesting functions.

**New Sentence:** The expensive camcorder that was purchased at Selmar's Camera Shop has many interesting functions.

**Group One:** The chef is famous. He has worked at this restaurant for twenty years. He prepares many appetizing dinners.

**Group Two:** The phone rang. My sister did not hear it. She was outside talking to her friends.

**Group Three:** The band was outstanding. The audience applauded. The concert was held at Palmer's Stadium. The concert was a sellout.

**Group Four:** The kindergarten class went to the assembly. The assembly lasted for one hour. Three magicians performed during the assembly. The assembly was last Tuesday morning.

**Group Five:** Maureen enjoys surfing the Internet. She was given a computer. Maureen recently graduated from high school. Maureen will use the new computer at college.

## 2-86. MORE SENTENCE COMBINATIONS

Using each of the ten words (or pairs of words) in the box only once, combine each pair of sentences below. These ten words are the only ones you will need to add to combine these sentences. Write the combined sentence on the lines beneath the sentence pair. Use the proper punctuation.

after      and      either      or      in order that      when  
although      because      if      since      who

1. Keep quiet. Leave.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The car's price is reduced. I am afraid that I cannot afford to buy it.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. She knows it is time for her to eat. My cat sees me going to the food cabinet.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. She has worked hard and has earned better grades than her classmates. She was rewarded for her efforts.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Mr. Lowney is a truck driver. Mr. Morton is a psychologist.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. She is the singer. She has had four hit recordings.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The older man panicked. He heard the blast.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The rain stops. We will perform the play on the outdoor stage.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Both sides act fairly. Mediators will be present at the meeting.  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. I studied very hard for the test. My score was only 74.  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Writing Complex Sentences (Part 1)

A complex sentence has one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses.  
A conjunction joins words and sentences together.  
Conjunctions include; since, until, after, although, because...

Directions: Create a complex sentence with each subordinating conjunction listed below.

*Example A- because*

*Answer- Because he studied, he was able to pass the exam.*

1. after-

\_\_\_\_\_

2. unless-

\_\_\_\_\_

3. as-

\_\_\_\_\_

4. although-

\_\_\_\_\_

5. whenever-

\_\_\_\_\_

6. wherever-

\_\_\_\_\_

7. because-

\_\_\_\_\_