Chapter 2
Phrases and Clauses

In this chapter, you will learn to identify phrases and clauses. You will also learn about independent and dependent clauses.

We combine the various parts of speech to write "word groups" that express our thoughts. There are 2 major kinds of word groups: **phrases and clauses.**

1. Phrase--a phrase is <u>a group of closely related words</u>. This group of words makes some sense together, although it <u>does not</u> express a <u>complete thought.</u> A phrase is a fragment, or part of a complete thought. One common phrase you are familiar with is a <u>prepositional phrase--</u>to the store, around the corner, in the house, beyond the trees, after the play, etc. Notice how these groups of words make some sense to you, but they express only part of a larger idea.

1. <u>Clause</u>-- A **clause**, like a phrase, is a group of related words. The difference is that a clause is a more complete expression--it contains a <u>subject</u> and a <u>verb.</u>

    There are two kinds of clauses:
    1. **Dependent Clause—has a subject** and **verb** and a **dependent word** (subordinate conjunction). A dependent clause expresses only <u>part</u> of an idea, and relies upon some other information in the sentence for complete meaning (hence the term "dependent").

We usually use **dependent clauses** in sentences to express thoughts that are **additional or accessory** to our main thought <u>in the sentence.</u>

    2. **Independent Clause**--an independent clause is a group of related words that has both a subject (actor) and verb (action) and makes sense to us without needing any additional information. Therefore, an <u>independent clause is also known as a simple sentence.</u> It is not just part of a thought, **but is complete on its own**. When combined with phrases or dependent clauses, independent clauses form the basis of compound and complex sentences. Alone, an independent clause expresses <u>one main complete thought</u>.

Clauses and Simple Sentences

A **clause** is a **group of two or more related words that has a <u>subject and a verb</u>**. There are two kinds of clauses:

        1.   independent
        2.   dependent

PRACTICE 1
Read each of the following groups of words and decide if the group of words is a clause or a phrase. **Place a <u>C</u> beside the groups that are clauses and P by groups that are phrases.**

_____1. In the rain.

_____2. When he finished.

_____3. Because the movie is over.

_____4. Tina screamed.

_____5. While he was jogging home.

_____6. Over the rainbow.

The Independent Clause or Simple Sentence

An **independent clause** is a group of related words that has a subject and a verb and **expresses a complete thought**.   An independent clause is also called a **simple sentence.**

Every sentence you write <u>must</u> have both a subject and verb, and these two parts <u>go together.</u> That is, whatever you identify as the subject must be performing the action of the verb. These two parts are not isolated; they work together to express an idea.

Also remember that verbs or can express actions (walk, see, run, eat, go type, sit, etc.) or states of being (am, is, are, was, were, appear, seem, etc.).

Examples:

I read all day Sunday. (subject = I;   verb = read)

I am very happy.   (subject = I;   verb = am)

The Dependent Clause

A **dependent clause** has a subject and a verb, but it **does not express a complete thought because is has a dependent word**. A **dependent clause is not a sentence**.

Example: While Dan was driving.

This clause does have a subject (Dan) and a verb (was driving), but it does not express a complete thought. We still need more information to understand the whole idea. The writer did not tell us what happened while Dan was driving.

Look at these two versions of the same idea:

Examples: The dog barked all night.
                    Because the dog barked all night.

The first sentence is complete, but the second sentence is not because it does not tell us the result of the dog's barking. We still need more information to understand the whole idea.

Both clauses, *While Dan was driving* and *Because the dog barked all night*, contain subjects and verbs, but do not express complete thoughts; therefore, both are **dependent clauses**.

The list of words on the following page are commonly used **subordinate conjunctions and relative pronouns**. These words are clues to help us identify and write dependent clauses. It may be easier for you to remember these words as "**Dependent Words"** because one of these words **always** appears as the **first word of a dependent clause**. In other words, if a group of

words that has a subject and a verb **begins** with one of these subordinate conjunctions or relative pronouns (dependent words), the clause is a **dependent clause.**

Subordinate Conjunctions
(also called "Dependent Words")

after	although	since	whenever
as	so that	when	even though
as if	though	where	provided that
because	unless	whether	whereas
except	until	while	than
what	before	that	in order that
once (meaning "if" or "when")		if	why

Relative Pronouns

that	whoever	which	whatever

whom	who	whichever

PRACTICE 2

In the space provided, label the word or groups of words as follows: **IC** (independent clause), **DC** (dependent clause), **P** (phrase). You may refer to the list of subordinate words and relative pronouns above to help you.

_____1. before the storm

_____2. Henry who is a sailor

_____3. he gave a dazzling performance

_____4. at the party in the old house

_____5. millions have cable television

_____6. while she was playing golf

_____7. when she took her seat

_____8. nearly every American drives a car

_____9. beyond the blue horizon

_____10. after the clock struck 12

_____11. despite the blizzard

_____12. if he goes

_____13. since she is rich

_____14. in the spring

_____15. on the beach

PRACTICE 3

Read the clauses below. If the clause expresses a complete thought, place an **IC** (for Independent Clause) next to it. If the clause does not express a complete thought, place a **DC** (for Dependent Clause) next to it. Be sure to look at the first word of the clause to determine if the clause is dependent or independent. **For all that you mark "DC," add information to make the clause a complete sentence.**

_____ 1. Although the day was bright and sunny.

_____ 2. Because she is so vain and conceited.

_____ 3. I believe in ghosts.

_____ 4. When we reach our destination.

_____ 5. He completed his work.

_____ 6. If the recession ever ends.

_____ 7. Before the play starts.

_____ 8. The cat climbed the oak tree.

_____ 9. While Anne was driving east.

_____ 10. She received an "A" in English.

Practice 4—More Practice Recognizing Independent Clauses
Underline the Independent Clauses in the following sentences and put parenthesis around the Dependent Clauses. Be sure to look for subordinating words to help you recognize dependent clauses.

1. Nate often visits his mother's house because he likes her homemade dinners.

2. Joe likes to listen while Jeffery likes to talk.

3. School is a challenge although it has its rewards.

4. Nathan plays the guitar while he sings his own songs.

5. Since the freeway was congested, James was late for work.

6. Whenever Jeffery is late for work, he feels very stressed.

7. Most adolescent girls are unhappy with their bodies.

8. Shawna wants to lose weight even though she only weighs one hundred pounds.

9. I used to watch TV until I realized how much time it wasted.

PRACTICE 5--Labeling Dependent and Independent Clauses
In the following sentences, <u>underline</u> **the independent clauses** and label them **"IC"**;
put **parenthesis ( ) around** the **dependent clauses** and label them **"DC."**

1. Although Americans celebrate "Presidents Day" in February, many people do not
 know which presidents are being honored by this holiday.

2.   Americans enjoy celebrating St. Patrick's Day, but hardly anyone
 knows who St. Patrick is.

3. Halloween is another day for celebration in the United States; however, the
 meaning of this "holiday" is a mystery to most people.

4. Maybe it does not matter why we celebrate certain days; the important part is to
 have a good time!