

Subordinate Clauses: The Adjective Clause

Subordinate Clauses

- 6c.** A **subordinate** (or **dependent**) **clause** does not express a complete thought and cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence.

A subordinate clause always has a subject and a verb. In addition, a word such as *which*, *when*, or *after* often signals the beginning of a subordinate clause.

S **V**

EXAMPLES which you can see from here [The subordinate clause begins with the word *which*. The subject is *you*, and the verb is *can see*. The subordinate clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.]

S **V**

when the debate begins [The subordinate clause begins with the word *when*. The subject is *debate*, and the verb is *begins*. The subordinate clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.]

EXERCISE A Identify each of the following underlined clauses as a subordinate clause or not a subordinate clause. Write *S* for *subordinate clause* or *NS* for *not a subordinate clause* on the line provided.

Examples *S* 1. Sailors measure distance in nautical miles, which are equal to 6,076 feet.
[This word group begins with *which*, but the word group does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone. Therefore, the word group is a subordinate clause.]

 NS 2. Although I'm no sailor, I love boats. [This word group expresses a complete thought and can stand alone. Therefore, the word group is not a subordinate clause.]

_____ 1. Anyone whose cat can fetch is all right by me. [Does this word group express a complete thought, and can the word group stand alone?]

_____ 2. Almond trees, which originally grew in North Africa and the westernmost parts of Asia, are now locally grown here. [Does this word group express a complete thought, and can the word group stand alone?]

_____ 3. Just reset the computer when it freezes up.

_____ 4. The valley had fields of grapevines which grow easily in this climate.

_____ 5. Do you remember the time when we got stuck in the snow?

_____ 6. Well, ladies and gentlemen, that was the kind of performance that has made him a star.

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- _____ 7. That was the first day that I went to this school.
- _____ 8. What would happen if everyone voted?
- _____ 9. Since I moved here, I've made a lot of good friends.
- _____ 10. At that time, keelboats, which had no sails, carried most of the freight.

Adjective Clauses

6d. An **adjective clause** is a subordinate clause that modifies a noun or pronoun.

Like adjectives, adjective clauses can describe a person, place, thing, or idea. An adjective clause usually follows the word or words it describes. An adjective clause tells *which one* or *what kind*. Adjective clauses usually begin with connecting words. These connecting words are called **relative pronouns**. A relative pronoun helps connect an adjective clause to an independent clause. Common relative pronouns are *that*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*.

EXAMPLES A girl **who speaks Mandarin Chinese** lives in our neighborhood. [*Who* begins the adjective clause. The adjective clause describes the noun *girl*.]
Have you seen the flower **that Jane bought at the plant store**? [*That* begins the adjective clause. The adjective clause describes the noun *flower*.]

EXERCISE B Underline the adjective clause in each of the following sentences.

- Examples** 1. My grandmother, who was born in Puerto Rico, owns a hair salon. [*Who* begins the adjective clause. The adjective clause describes the noun *grandmother*.]
2. That street is the one where Grandma's shop is located. [*Where* begins the adjective clause. The adjective clause describes the pronoun *one*.]
11. I even remember the day when it first opened. [Which word begins the adjective clause? Does the clause describe a noun or pronoun?]
12. That day was one that will be remembered around here for a long time. [Which word begins the adjective clause? Does the clause describe a noun or pronoun?]
13. Maria, whom Grandma employs as a manager, is my sister-in-law.
14. Maria has just hired Tony, whose daughter goes to school with me.
15. Grandma's shop caters to anybody who needs a great haircut.
16. After school, I sometimes have a snack at Ozzie's Restaurant, which is next door.
17. It is on a street where there are a lot of offices.
18. Ozzie is a well-known man, whose soup and sandwiches draw people from all around town.
19. People like everything that he makes.
20. Some people who have heard of Ozzie's delicious food come from far away.

Subordinate Clauses: The Adverb Clause

- 6c.** A **subordinate** (or **dependent**) **clause** does not express a complete thought and cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence.

A subordinate clause always has a subject and a verb. In addition, a word such as *before*, *until*, or *since* often signals the beginning of a subordinate clause.

EXAMPLES **S** **V**
 before you address the envelope [The subordinate clause begins with the word *before*. The subject is *you*, and the verb is *address*. The subordinate clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.]

S **V**
 until the school year ends [The subordinate clause begins with the word *until*. The subject is *year*, and the verb is *ends*. The subordinate clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.]

S **V**
 since we have known him [The subordinate clause begins with the word *since*. The subject is *we*, and the verb is *have known*. The subordinate clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.]

EXERCISE A Identify each of the following underlined clauses as a subordinate clause or not a subordinate clause. Write *S* for *subordinate clause* or *NS* for *not a subordinate clause* on the line provided.

Example *S* 1. You look as if you had just won a million dollars. [This word group has a subject, *you*, and a verb, *had won*, but the word group does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone. Therefore, the word group is a subordinate clause.]

- _____ 2. Save your money so that you are always prepared for anything. [Does this word group express a complete thought, and can the word group stand alone?]
- _____ 3. The fire should be ready after the coals turn white.
- _____ 4. Our bus driver waited as long as she could.
- _____ 5. While the clothes were drying, we played chess.
- _____ 6. We met after school was over.

- 6e.** An **adverb clause** is a subordinate clause that modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

Like adverbs, adverb clauses describe a verb, an adjective, or an adverb. Adverb clauses answer the following questions: *How? When? Where? Why? To what extent? How much? How long?* and *Under what conditions?*

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Adverb clauses begin with words such as the following:

after	as soon as	in order that	until
although	as though	since	when
as	because	so that	whenever
as if	before	than	where
as long as	how	though	wherever
as much as	if	unless	while

These words connect an adverb clause to the rest of the sentence.

EXAMPLES **Before you answer the question**, you must read the passage in your book. [The adverb clause describes the verb *must read* and tells *when*. The word *before* begins the adverb clause and connects it with the rest of the sentence.]

Call Antonio **so that you can invite him to the concert**. [The adverb clause describes the verb *Call* and tells *why*. The words *so that* begin the adverb clause and connect it with the rest of the sentence.]

EXERCISE B Underline the adverb clause in each of the following sentences.

Examples 1. Go inside where you can cool off. [The adverb clause describes the verb *Go* and tells *where* you should go. The word *where* begins the adverb clause and connects it to the rest of the sentence.]

2. Did Ed work on the engine until the sun set? [The adverb clause describes the verb *Did work* and tells *when* Ed worked on the engine. The word *until* begins the adverb clause and connects it to the rest of the sentence.]

6. Our plane will be early unless there is a delay. [What clause describes the verb *will be*? Which word begins the adverb clause?]
7. Faster than anyone could have imagined, information travels around the world. [What clause tells something about the adverb *Faster*? Which word begins the adverb clause?]
8. Curious because the package rattled noisily, the cat ripped the paper off.
9. Until I had Mr. Johnson's class, I never appreciated classical music.
10. Tomorrow, when I have more information, I'll call you.
11. If you have balloons, I can make balloon animals.
12. Do those little pink lilies bloom whenever it rains?
13. The motor will be ruined unless it has oil.
14. Move quickly so that everyone can be served.
15. You'll be healthier if you eat properly.