

Clauses

Introduction

A **clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. The subject of a clause may be expressed or understood.

There are two types of clauses.

- (a) A **main clause** (independent clause) contains the main thought of the sentence and makes sense standing alone.

Examples: *I spoke to the teacher* who is our football coach.

The dog that was barking *chased me across the lawn*.

- (b) A **subordinate clause** (dependent clause) cannot make sense standing on its own. To make a sentence, a subordinate clause must be added to a main clause.

Examples: I saw the dog *when I came home*.

They went to the store *so they could buy ice cream*.

Subordinate clauses add information to a sentence and function in the same way as *adjectives, adverbs, or nouns*.

Examples: The woman *who received the prize* is my mother. (adjective)

Our class stops working *when the bell rings*. (adverb)

I think *that we should always do the right thing*. (noun)

Sentences are analyzed by finding and naming the clauses.

- (a) **Simple sentences** consist of one clause.

Example: *Horses run*.

- (b) **Complex sentences** have more than one subject-verb combination and thus have more than one clause. A complex sentence has at least one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses. A subordinate clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun.

Example: I was resting *while he was swimming laps*.

- (c) **Compound sentences** consist of two or more main clauses (independent clauses) joined by a conjunction.

Example: *I washed the dishes, and Billy dried them*.

Teaching Strategies

The main thing

Provide students with practice in finding the main clause in a sentence by having them search through a photocopy of a familiar story, circling the main clauses.

Remind them that a main clause can stand alone and contains the main thought of the sentence. Point out that a simple sentence is, in fact, one main clause.

Clauses (cont.)

Main clause beep

Have children sit in a circle. Choose a child to say a word to start a clause. Each child in turn then adds a word to build a main clause. When the clause is complete, the next child says “Beep.” The game can be extended to add a subordinate clause to the main clause.

Act the clause

Organize children in groups of four. Tell groups that the first child is to provide a verb, the second child is to provide a subject, the third child is to arrange the verb and subject to make a clause, and the fourth child is to act out the clause. Ensure that all children get a turn in each role.

Clause match-up

Have children match main clauses to subordinate clauses. This is also an excellent reading activity.

These are the brave boys

because he was feeling ill.

Bill did not come

where the bus stop was.

The bus driver didn't know

who rescued the drowning child.

Clause call-out

Write a main clause on the chalkboard and challenge children to call out appropriate subordinate clauses.

We went to the park

when we had eaten lunch.

where the banana tree grows.

because we wanted to play.

Verb search

Write some clauses on the chalkboard. Have children search for and identify the verb in each clause.

I saw the boy who broke the glass.

Add the verb

Have children orally add missing verbs to clauses.

I saw the boy who ten goals.

I saw the boy who kicked ten goals.

The police arrested the thief who the jewels.

The police arrested the thief who stole the jewels.

Clauses

Name _____

Grammar BLM

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A clause is a group of words that contains a verb and its subject. A main clause contains the main thought of the sentence and makes sense standing alone. A subordinate clause (dependent clause) does not make sense standing on its own. It adds information to the main clause.

1. Draw a line to match each main clause to its subordinate clause.

Main clause

Subordinate clause

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Where is the book | where the railroad station was. |
| b. Here is the burglar | if we get any hail. |
| c. I asked the stranger | because her uncle has arrived. |
| d. The grape crop will be damaged | which has yellow blossoms on it. |
| e. Winter is the season | that I read yesterday? |
| f. Sally would not come with us | whose dog bit the policeman. |
| g. I know the man | who was arrested by the police. |
| h. This is the tree | when the snow begins to fall. |

2. Underline the main clause and circle the subordinate clause in each sentence. Hint: The main clause might be in two parts with the subordinate clause between them.

- The student who stayed away from school was punished.
- The lady who is in charge of the school spoke to the teachers.
- I broke the bottle that had juice in it.
- The farm where the grapes are grown belongs to my uncle.
- The shed that houses the equipment was burned to the ground.
- The cupboard that is used to store glasses is made of mahogany.
- The food that is fit to be eaten is in the refrigerator.
- We visited the place where stone is mined.

Clauses

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A clause is a group of words that contains a verb and its subject. Subordinate clauses add information to a sentence and function in the same way as adjectives, adverbs, or nouns.

The woman *who received the prize* is my mother. (adjective)

Our class stops working *when the bell rings*. (adverb)

I think *that we should always do the right thing*. (noun)

1. Draw lines to match each main clause with an adjectival subordinate clause.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| a. The farmer found the dogs | which began Easter Day |
| b. Our holiday . . . was very restful. | that likes to chase its tail. |
| c. We admired the garden | whose father is from Paris. |
| d. I spoke to the boy | that killed the sheep. |
| e. I have a new puppy | which is in the museum |
| f. The dinosaur . . . was found by Sam. | which was planted in spring. |

2. Complete each sentence by completing each adjectival subordinate clause.

- This is the girl who _____.
- The old cow which _____ looked sick.
- The picture which _____ was painted by my friend.
- The old lady who _____ makes great pizzas.
- The brave girl who _____ was awarded a medal.
- I caught the pigeon that _____.

3. Complete each sentence by adding an adjectival subordinate clause.

- Sally found a wallet _____.
- We switched off the music _____.
- I showed John the knife _____.
- I told her to throw away the shirt _____.

Answer Key (cont.)

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- subordinate*
 - that I read yesterday?
 - who was arrested by the police.
 - where the railroad station was.
 - if we get any hail.
 - when the snow begins to fall.
 - because her uncle has arrived.
 - whose dog bit the policeman.
 - which has yellow blossoms on it.
- main/subordinate*
 - The student was punished/who stayed away from school
 - The lady spoke to the teachers/who is in charge of the school
 - I broke the bottle/that had juice in it
 - The farm belongs to my uncle/where the grapes are grown
 - The shed was burned to the ground/that houses the equipment
 - The cupboard is made of mahogany/that is used to store glasses
 - The food is in the refrigerator/that is fit to be eaten
 - We visited the place/where stone is mined

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- that killed the sheep.
 - which began on Easter Day
 - which was planted in spring.
 - whose father is from Paris.
 - that likes to chase its tail.
 - which is in the museum
- Answers will vary.
- Answers will vary.

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- can climb

- punished
 - Meet
 - are going
 - are allowed
 - were
- clause/action*
 - because it was hot/why
 - where there were trees/where
 - as you wish/how
 - when the bell rang/when
 - As our captain is sick/why
 - where two roads cross/where
 - until the rain stops.
 - as if he were very nervous.
 - because he could not find his uniform.
 - since she left to live in the city.
 - even though we will be late.
 - where the roads meet.

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- adjective
 - noun
 - adjective
 - adverb
 - adverb
 - adverb
 - noun
 - adverb
 - adverb

- Answers will vary.

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- I bought the tiger that had black and gold stripes....
 - The baby who had a pacifier in his mouth....
 - The teacher who is married with two children....
 - The train that arrived late....
 - The bull that has two large horns....
 - In front of the house which has a red roof....
- (Answers may vary.)
 - This is the dog that attacked the stranger.
 - This is the girl who lives next door to me.

- The children hurried past the old house which was said to be haunted.
- The big gum tree which stood in our backyard has been cut down.
- I knew well the boy who won a silver medal.
- The family whose home was destroyed by fire was cared for by friends.

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- 3., 4.
 - 7., 8.
 - 1., 2.
 - 11., 12.
 - 5., 6.
 - 9., 10.
- Answers will vary.

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- colored boxes*
 - Michelle
 - England
 - Wednesday
 - Swan Lake
 - Uranus
 - Asia
 - Shamrock Hotel
 - October
 - Pacific Ocean
 - Easter
 - Vietnam
 - Christmas
 - Canada
 - Kansas City
 - Murray River
 - Mount Everest
 - London
 - Rialto House
 - Wattle Street
- Answers will vary.
- Last Saturday Julie went to Chicago.