

Definitions of Syntax and the Sentence-level Worksheet Assignment (scroll down for the Worksheet)

Compound and Complex Sentences

We already discussed simple sentences. The simple sentence pertains to a basic Subject + Predicate pattern (same as S + V + Completed Thought). For review, please refer to that document.

Useful Definitions

Independent clause = complete sentence

Dependent clause = incomplete sentence (needs to be connected to an independent clause)

Compound Sentences

- A simple sentence is an independent clause, which means it can stand alone, is a complete thought, and contains one subject and one verb (S + V + Complete Thought).
- A compound sentence combines two independent clauses that are joined together by a coordinating conjunction, a semi-colon, or a conjunctive adverb.

Three ways to create a compound sentence:

1. **Coordinating conjunctions:** For And Nor But Or Yet So (FANBOYS). You know all about these conjunctions.
2. **The semicolon.** This is similar to a period, but writers misuse this frequently. What comes before and after a semicolon HAS TO BE an independent clause (complete sentence). A semi-colon highlights the connection between the two sentences; this punctuation mark replaces a conjunction; this punctuation mark ensures the reader that you are still talking about the same subject. However, there is a little more to the semicolon than meets the eye.
 - a. Ex: My grandmother seldom goes to bed early; she's afraid she'll miss out on something.

“The semicolon allows the writer to imply a relationship between nicely balanced ideas without actually stating that relationship. (Instead of saying *because* my grandmother is afraid she’ll miss out on something, we have implied the *because*. Thus the reader is involved in the development of an idea—a clever, subliminal way of engaging the reader’s attention.)”

- b. Semicolons are also used in longer lists to separate the items. The list often follows a colon. Ex: We have come to expect several issues with this program; there is no guarantee of service; the payment process takes too long; the communication with students is awkward; and, finally, there is evidence that the program is plagued by both sexism and racism.
3. **Conjunctive adverbs.** Google “conjunctive adverbs” for a list, but these include words like: however, therefore, accordingly, consequently, for example, in contrast, meanwhile, nevertheless, furthermore, similarly, etc. These, again, connect two sentences. Either a semicolon or a period goes in front of this word and a comma comes afterwards. These are great “markers” or guides for the reader that help clarify a connection between ideas or a point the writer is trying to make.



Conjunctive Adverbs

- accordingly
- furthermore
- moreover
- similarly
- also
- hence
- namely
- still
- anyway
- however
- nevertheless
- then
- next
- thereafter
- certainly
- indeed
- nonetheless
- therefore
- consequently
- instead
- now
- thus
- finally
- likewise
- further
- meanwhile
- subsequently
- yet
- equally
- elsewhere
- thereafter
- therefore
- conversely
- in addition
- anyway
- undoubtedly
- besides
- incidentally
- otherwise
- undoubtedly
- otherwise
- regardless

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Complex Sentences

Complex sentences involve connecting one independent clause with one dependent clause. Look at the definitions of independent and dependent clauses at the top of the previous

page. An independent clause is a complete sentence; a dependent clause is an incomplete sentence, a sentence fragment that will not work, will not without the help of an independent clause. You use these kinds of sentences often when you write, hopefully correctly.

1. Subordinate Conjunctions.

Here are some examples of subordinate conjunctions.



This is a more complicated syntax that adds that variety to your writing we talked about earlier (see “A level” in rubrics), which can suggest more command of the language, and a more complicated thought process, as well.

Here are two independent clauses:

Students go beyond basic classroom instruction because our program has superb facilities.

There is a relationship between these two sentences. Identifying these relationships or connections, the different kinds of logic that you are using in your writing, can be enhanced by constructing these kinds of complex sentences.

The punctuation tip: if the subordinate conjunction is at the beginning of the sentence, there is a comma between the two clauses; if the subordinate conjunction goes between the two clauses, you do not need a comma.

Because our program has superb facilities, students go beyond basic classroom instruction.

Students in our program go beyond basic instruction because we have superb facilities.

There is a cause and effect relationship between those two clauses. The subordinate conjunction “because” enhances that relationship, which clarifies the meaning for the reader. Put a period between those two sentences, and you will see the syntactic complexity. Also, in either sentence, what is the point the writer is trying to emphasize? How do you know?

Note the potential for a fragment: Because we have superb facilities.
That’s NOT a complete sentence.

• Below is the Assignment you are to complete and turn-in on Canvas by 9/4 @11:59pm

Note: In order to receive the maximum points for the Sentence-level Worksheet homework assignment (see Canvas to-do list), follow the instructions carefully.

In the examples below, fix each sentence in TWO different ways: create a compound sentence and a complex sentence with each run-on (all of the sentences below are run-ons). Re-read what determines a compound and complex sentence.

1. Cassandra left the park it started to rain.
2. You might enjoy the feel of raindrops falling on your face I do not enjoy standing in this light drizzle.
3. You read through the instructions carefully. You should have no problem answering the questions in the correct format.

4. There is the slightest chance she will say no Bill decides not to ask Nancy to the dance.
5. The silence grows too heavy Laura starts singing one of her favorite songs out loud.
6. Lance tends to do well on most tests, he was really worried about his calculus exam.
7. There are 950,000 species of insects it will take a long time to identify each one.
8. The clock doesn't work you should check the battery.
9. The captain seems indifferent about his team's level of play, the rest of the players are unmotivated.
10. The writer has several really effective examples, his personal story proves to be his strongest evidence.

Below, each number contains a sentence fragment (hopefully you can see this, which can be a common and concerning issue). Fix the fragment (this Worksheet provides you with several options. Hint: you need to finish the sentence/thought. You only need to fix the fragment one way. Make sure the resulting sentence is complete, works (grammatically and syntactically) correctly.

1. Whereas the summer months in San Diego can get quite warm.
2. Especially the pool area.
3. Since you are so opposed to taking online classes.
4. Taking the right supplements consistently.
5. Furthermore, with respect to your career choice.

Lastly, write three compound sentences and three complex sentences. I can quickly determine a correct or incorrect answer. See above where compound and complex sentences are explained.

Compound Sentences

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Complex Sentences

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.