

## UNIT 1

### Lesson: *Sentence Savvy*

#### 1.1 Introduction

A clear understanding of sentence structure is the first step toward effective writing. Most students are familiar with the common sentence types: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory. However, in order to develop the ability to write in an interesting manner, four basic sentence structures must be mastered. By varying sentence structure, good writers emphasize important points, heighten readers' interest, and enhance readability. This unit reviews the four basic sentence structures: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex.

**Simple sentences are composed of a single independent clause.**

#### 1.2 Simple Sentence

The most basic sentence structure is the **simple sentence** consisting of a single **independent clause**. A **clause** is a cluster of words that contains a **subject** and a **predicate**. It can function as a single part of speech within a sentence, or as a sentence by itself. A clause is said to be “independent” when it stands alone as a complete sentence.

*Mary had a little lamb.*

**Clause:**  
A cluster of words with a subject and predicate that can function independently or as a single part of speech.

Even if the above sentence has multiple subjects or multiple verbs, it is still a simple sentence:

Multiple Subjects: *Mary, John, Joe, Bill, Betty, and Lois had a little lamb.*

Multiple Verbs: *Mary herded, fed, watered, and sheared her little lamb.*

Furthermore, if the sentence has multiple subjects and multiple verbs, it is still a simple sentence:

*Mary, John, Joe, Bill, Betty, and Lois herded, fed, watered, and sheared their little lamb.*

**Verb:**  
Shows action or state of being.

#### 1.3 Compound Sentence

A **compound sentence** contains more than one independent clause. Simple sentences become compound when joined to another related independent clause by a coordinating conjunction, a semi-colon, or a semi-colon plus conjunctive adverb. **Coordinating conjunctions** (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) and semi-colons make uncomplicated connections:

**Predicate:**  
Includes the verb and other words used to explain action or condition.

The wavy-underline indicates an independent clause.

**Compound sentences contain two related independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, semi-colon, or semi-colon plus conjunctive adverb.**

Coordinating Conjunction: Jack and Jill went up the hill, but Jack tumbled down.

Semi-Colon: Jack and Jill went up the hill; Jack tumbled down.

**Conjunctive adverbs**, on the other hand, both connect the independent clauses and show how they relate to one another. When used properly, the conjunctive adverb is preceded by a semi-colon and followed by a comma:

Conjunctive Adverb: Jack and Jill went up the hill; then, Jack tumbled down.

Each underlined part in the above sentences is an independent clause which can stand alone without the other. A subject and verb stands on both sides of the “connector.” If a subject *and* verb were not both before and after the connector, the sentence would be simple, having only one independent clause:

Jack and Jill went up the hill, but tumbled down.

Additionally, a compound sentence may contain numerous subjects and verbs in each independent clause:

The driver and passenger suffered injuries in the crash, but the shopkeeper, pedestrian, and onlookers all escaped unharmed.

### 1A - Common Conjunctive Adverbs \*

accordingly	in addition	nevertheless	thereafter
consequently	likewise	otherwise	therefore
furthermore	meanwhile	still	thus
however	moreover	then	

\* See Appendix A (page 213) for a more extensive list.

**Complex sentences have one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.**

Dotted underline indicates a dependent clause.

## 1.4 Complex Sentence

The next level of sentence structure is the **complex sentence**. This type of sentence contains one independent clause and one or more **dependent (subordinate) clauses**. The dependent clause is generally created by using a **subordinating conjunction** to connect two unequal ideas. Thus, one of the ideas becomes *dependent* on the other.

The students did not complete the assigned task since they were out of time.

or,

Since the students were out of time, they did not complete the assigned task.

In the above examples, “since” serves to subordinate the idea of the students’ lack of time to the main idea of the uncompleted task. This structure adds importance to the main idea by linking it to supporting information. Even if additional subordinate (dependent) clauses are added, the sentence remains a **complex sentence**.

*After the ski trip was over, the students did not complete the assigned task since they had run out of time.*

### 1B - Common Subordinating Conjunctions

after	as soon as	so that	where
although	because	than	which
as	before	that	while
as if	if	when	

\* See Appendix A (page 213) for a more extensive list.

## 1.5 Compound-complex Sentence

The fourth sentence structure, **compound-complex**, is created by combining a compound sentence with one or more subordinate clauses. Remember that a compound sentence contains at least two independent clauses.

*While the monkey raced around the enclosure, the zoo onlookers clapped their hands, and one little child let out a delighted squeal.*

*As the bull raged, the matadors raced in every direction seeking to escape, but a small child, oblivious to the danger, wandered into the ring while the crowd watched in horror.*

**Compound-complex sentences are made of two independent clauses with one or more dependent clauses.**

The wavy underline indicates an independent clause, and the dotted underline indicates a dependent clause.

## 1.6 Mastering Variety

Mastery of diverse sentence patterns, combined with a well-developed vocabulary, equips a writer to state his exact point in an interesting and stylish manner. For instance, to communicate that learning to write is both challenging and rewarding, the four different sentence patterns can accomplish this in differing degrees as shown in 1C and 1D below.

### 1C - The Four Basic Sentence Structures

1. Simple:	<i>The pursuit of writing well is very challenging and rewarding.</i>
2. Compound:	<i>Writing well is challenging, but its pursuit produces the benefits of strong communication skills.</i>
3. Complex:	<i>Although writing well is challenging, those who diligently pursue it reap the benefits of strong communication skills.</i>
4. Compound-complex:	<i>Writing well is challenging; however, those who diligently pursue it will reap the benefits of strong communication skills, as it is also rewarding.</i>

### 1D - Above sentences divided into clauses

	Independent	Dependent
1.	<i>The pursuit of writing well is very challenging and rewarding.</i>	
2.	<i>Writing well is challenging, but its pursuit produces the benefits of strong communication skills.</i>	
3.	<i>those reap the benefits of strong communication skills.</i>	<i>Although writing well is challenging, who diligently pursue it</i>
4.	<i>Writing well is challenging; however, those will reap the benefits of strong communication skills,</i>	<i>who diligently pursue it as it is also rewarding.</i>
NOTE: If you cannot clearly identify all subjects and verbs in the above clauses, review these basics in a grammar course.		

Regardless of the topic, a mix of sentence patterns creates interesting variety within the composition. Remember that complex sentences have one or more dependent clauses. Compound-complex sentences contain at least two independent clauses combined with any number of dependent clauses. Regardless of the choice, the ideas must remain clearly stated. With practice, any sentence structure can be expanded significantly beyond the samples presented above.

## 1.7 Emphatic Locations

**Emphatic location** refers to the placement of ideas in a sentence in order to increase or decrease their impact on the reader. The two primary points of emphasis are the beginning of the sentence and the end of the sentence. The end position is the strongest emphatic location because ideas placed here remain foremost in the reader's mind. Writers who understand how to change sentence structure can shift ideas to different locations within the sentence for greater or lesser emphasis. In the following examples, notice how the emphasis changes as the ideas are moved to various locations:

*Nothing but the outer shell of the car was left after the fire was doused.*

*Nothing but the outer shell of the car was left after the firemen doused the fire.*

*After the fire was doused, nothing but the outer shell of the car was left.*

*After the fire was doused, nothing of the car was left but the outer shell.*

Which sentence above has the strongest impact? Which sentence is weakest?

### **Emphatic Locations:**

- 1. End of sentence**
- 2. First of sentence**

## UNIT 1

### Sentence Savvy

## Daily Assignments

(Write answers to all Daily Assignments on a separate sheet of paper.)

### ————— Exercise 1 —————

#### A. Reading Assignment:

*Carefully read the Unit 1 Lesson, Section 1.1 and 1.2. Be certain that you understand the concept of the simple sentence.*

#### B. Grammar Drill:

*Write the following state of being verbs and helping verbs on an index card to use for daily memorization drill. Rehearse them every day with your teacher either orally or by writing them from memory. Knowing them will help you in coming lessons to identify passive voice sentences and avoid over use of these verbs. Begin memorizing the list.*

State of being verbs: am, are, was, were, be, been, being, is

Helping (Auxiliary) verbs: have, has, had, do, does, did, can, could, shall, should, will, would, may, might, must

#### C. Lesson Exercise:

*Copy the following simple sentences onto a separate sheet of paper. Then draw one line under the subject (s) and two lines under the verb(s) in each sentence:*

1. The majestic Columbia River courses through an expansive gorge.
2. White foaming water rushes over Multnomah Falls and Horsetail Falls and cascades to the valley below.
3. Prevailing east winds stream through the Columbia Gorge, making it a world famous destination for windsurfers.

### ————— Exercise 2 —————

#### A. Reading Assignment:

*Carefully read the Unit 1 Lesson, Section 1.3. Be certain that you understand the difference between simple and compound sentences.*

#### B. Grammar Drill:

*Drill the state of being verbs and helping verbs.*

**C. Lesson Exercise:**

*Again, copy these sentences onto a separate sheet of paper. Underline subjects once and verbs twice. Place brackets [ ] around each clause. Circle any coordinating conjunctions that connect clauses. Then indicate whether each sentence is simple or compound.*

1. A trek to the top of Multnomah Falls culminates with a stunning view of the Columbia Gorge.
2. The trail up the face of the cliff can be slippery, and one must watch out for falling rocks.
3. The tour group hoped to see Mount Saint Helens, but clouds obscured the view.
4. Jeff and Jason willingly hosted the out of town visitors and offered their rooms to the welcome guests.

————— **Exercise 3** —————

**A. Reading Assignment:**

*Carefully read Unit 1 Lesson, Section 1.4. Be certain that you understand the distinction between a compound and a complex sentence.*

**B. Grammar Drill:**

*Drill the state of being verbs and helping verbs.*

**C. Lesson Exercise:**

*Again, copy these sentences onto a separate sheet of paper. Underline subjects once and verbs twice. Place brackets [ ] around each clause and circle any coordinating conjunctions that connect clauses. Then indicate whether the following sentences are simple, compound, or complex.*

1. The soggy camping trip, which had begun in the Redwoods, ended at Newport, Oregon.
2. In order to keep the tent from leaking, the family spread tarps over the makeshift structure.
3. Although this precaution was taken, the next morning the family awoke to their tent standing in six inches of water.
4. Mother and Father put the young children in the car, and the parents began to fill the car-top carrier with camping gear.
5. The inclement weather had finally won.
6. After days of camping in the rain and visiting numerous laundromats, the defeated campers headed home.

————— **Exercise 4** —————

**A. Reading Assignment:**

*Carefully read the Unit 1 Lesson, Section 1.5. Take notice of the difference between compound and compound-complex sentences.*

**B. Grammar Drill:**

*Drill the state of being verbs and helping verbs.*

**C. Lesson Exercise:**

*Again, copy the following sentences onto a separate sheet of paper. Underline subjects once and verbs twice. Place brackets [ ] around each clause and circle any coordinating conjunctions that connect clauses. Then indicate whether the sentences are simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.*

1. When the front door swung open, the dog ran for freedom.
2. Before anyone saw the dog's direction, he sneaked into the back yard, and he dodged into the underbrush, chasing a startled black cat.
3. Yes, the black cat was his most hated enemy.
4. Everyone knew that the dog would lose in a fight with his charcoal-colored enemy, so they installed a long chain for restraining the foolish canine.
5. To taunt the dog, the frisky feline stayed just out of the animal's reach.
6. To this day, the dim-witted dog chases the cat to the end of the restraining chain even though he flies through the air like a rocket when he hits the end of the tether.

**D. Writing Exercise:**

Write four sentences that demonstrate each of the basic sentence structures (one simple, one compound, one complex, one compound-complex), using the same general topic in each sentence. Mark all subjects and verbs so that you can clearly see the clauses.

————— **Exercise 5** —————

**A. Reading Assignment:**

*Finish the Unit 1 Lesson by reading the section 1.6 Mastering Variety and 1.7 Emphatic Location.*

**B. Grammar Drill:**

*Drill the state of being verbs and helping verbs.*

**C. Lesson Exercise:**

*On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions using complete sentences.*

1. Based on the information in this lesson, which location in the sentence gives an idea the strongest emphasis?
2. What is the second strongest point of emphasis in a sentence?
3. Why would a knowledgeable writer shift an idea to the end of a sentence?

**D. Writing Exercise:**

1. Write a sentence which has the word "accident" in the greatest point of emphasis.

2. Rewrite the above sentence with the word “accident” moved to the second most emphatic location. Underline the most emphasized word or phrase in this new sentence.
3. Write four sentences that demonstrate each of the basic sentence structures, using the same general topic in each sentence. Mark all subjects and verbs so that you can clearly see the clauses.