***Complex Sentences Review***

**Definition:** A **COMPLEX SENTENCE** is made up of an independent clause (the main clause) and one or more dependent clauses.

The INDEPENDENT CLAUSE has a subject and verb and can stand alone as a complete sentence. It is also called a simple sentence.

John fixed the car.

The DEPENDENT CLAUSE also has a subject and a verb, but it cannot stand alone. There are **two types of dependent clauses**, those that begin with ***subordinating conjunctions*** and those that begin with ***relative pronouns***.

*When* John fixed the car (subordinating conjunction)

*Who* fixed the car (relative pronoun)

**I. Dependent Clauses with *Subordinating Conjunctions:***

One type of dependent clause is introduced by a word (or words) called a ***subordinating conjunction***. The clause does have a subject and a verb, but it begins with a ***subordinating conjunction***. When a clause starts with a subordinating conjunction, the clause becomes **dependent**—it cannot stand alone.

The most common ***subordinating conjunctions*** are listed below:

\* These words are also prepositions.

after\*

although

as\*

as if

as long as

as though

because

before\*

even though

if

once

provided

since\*

so that

though

till\*

unless

until\*

when

whenever

where

wherever

while

when

When one of these subordinating conjunctions is placed before an independent clause, the clause can no longer stand by itself. It becomes **dependent**.

Robert rode the bus to town. (independent clause)

***When*** Robert rode the bus to town. (dependent clause)

**Two Positions of Dependent Clauses with Subordinating Conjunctions:**

The dependent clause can come in two places in relation to the independent clause.

|  |
| --- |
| **Pattern 1:** The dependent clause can come **first,** and **a comma is required**. The dependent clause is in *italics* below. |

Example: *Until I have my first cup of coffee,* I cannot think about anything.

|  |
| --- |
| **Pattern 2:** The dependent clause can come **after** the independent clause, and **no commas are necessary**. The dependent clause is in *italics* below. |

Example: I cannot think about anything u*ntil I have my first cup of coffee.*

**II. Dependent Clauses with *Relative* *Pronouns:***

The second type of dependent clause begins with a ***relative pronoun.*** Relative pronouns are listed below:

|  |
| --- |
| **Relative Pronouns** |
| who whose which  whom that  *Sometimes*: where, when, why |

**Two Positions of Dependent Clauses with Relative Pronouns:**

The dependent clause can come in two places in relation to the independent clause, but it usually comes right after the noun that it is describing.

|  |
| --- |
| **Position 1:** |

The dependent clause may come in the middle of an independent clause, especially if it relates to the subject of the independent clause. The dependent clause is in *italics.*

Example:

All cars *that have bad brakes* should be kept off the streets.

|  |
| --- |
| **Position 2:** |

The dependent clause beginning with a relative pronoun may come at the end of the independent clause and may modify a noun that is a direct object, a subject complement, or the object of a preposition The dependent clause is in *italics.*

Example:

Jeff makes promises *that he will not keep.*

**Punctuation Rules:**

**Rule 1:** When a dependent clause beginning with a relative pronoun points to a **general** noun, do **NOT** use commas. The clause is needed in the sentence to make a general noun more specific.

Example:

All cars *that have bad brakes* should be kept off the streets.

**Rule 2:** When a dependent clause beginning with a relative pronoun points to a **specific** noun, **DO** use commas. The clause is not needed in the sentence because it only gives extra information about a noun that is already limited and specific.

Examples:

Ed, who is in the third grade, is the biggest boy on the block.