

Writing Skills

Level 3 English

Key Terminology

Sentence Types:

Simple

Compound

Complex

Minor

Independent Clause

Dependent Clause

Conjunction

Marker Word

Simple Sentence

An independent clause in which a single, complete thought is presented.

It must have:

- A verb
- A subject
- A single idea

Very good for:

Expressing an idea in a straightforward, clear manner.

When to use them:

Following a longer more complex explanation to summarize the key idea of that explanation.

Task

Using the statement below, write an introduction to an essay in which you would discuss *Gladiator* in your response.

The rule: You may only write in simple sentences.

To communicate ideas throughout, a text must have a striking opening

The Compound Sentence

Two independent clauses joined with a conjunction; both of these clauses express a complete thought and could be split into two separate sentences.

The dog wanted to go for a walk but it was cold outside.

Must have:

Two independent clauses

When to use them:

When you wish to indicate a relationship between two separate ideas or thoughts.

Task

Look at the introduction you have written in simple sentences.

Go through and highlight, in different colours, the sentences you would like to 'join'. You must be able to justify why you are joining the sentences- what connection are you wanting to establish between the two ideas and why?

After you have identified **what** you want to join, look at each pair and think about **how** you want to join them. Select a conjunction that is appropriate to your purpose.

Complex Sentences

One independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. The dependent clauses rely on the presence of the independent clause to make sense.

When it stops raining, we will play baseball.

The complex sentence relies on marker words to indicate the connection between the dependent and independent clauses. When the dependent clause comes before the independent clause, a comma must be placed.

Must have:

One independent and at least one dependent clause.

When to use them:

In academic writing, complex sentences allow us to develop our ideas in more detail. They help us to demonstrate the connections between ideas and make comments on these connections.

Practice!

Identify the independent and dependent clauses in the following complex sentences:

1. You should brush your teeth before you go to bed.
2. Because she is nice, Mrs. Thomas let us read books that we brought from home.
3. Will you bring chips for the party that we are having for Jan?
4. After we arrived at school, I went to gym
5. English is the most enjoyable hour of the day because it is interesting.

Once you have identified the dependent clauses, find the marker words.

Task

Look over your introduction which is now written in simple and compound sentences.

Highlight **three** independent clauses which could do with some expansion.

Like before, you must have a reason behind the expansion. Would your reader benefit from additional information? Is there a relationship that you need to develop or justify?

Think carefully about your **marker words** and **comma placement**.

Minor Sentence

A fragment or clause that does not meet the grammatical requirements of a full sentence but still conveys meaning.

Minor sentences don't really have a place in academic writing but it is good to have knowledge of their existence.

Want to know more?

[Visit this blog entry!](#)

Check Your Sentences!

<https://parts-of-speech.info/>

The Basic Rules of Punctuation

- Every sentence begins with a capital letter and ends in a full stop.
- The names of people, places and texts always have a capital letter.
- A comma is used to create a pause, separate items on a list, to separate adjectives that are side by side, to separate sentence clauses and to show a shift in ideas.
 - *I slowly, quietly and carefully took my first step on the bridge.*
 - *Even though it was raining, I wanted to walk.*
 - *The sun was shining, however, I wanted to drive my new scooter to work.*

Correct me!

i am conflicted about zoos I worry they're an extension of our other colonial activities marking our territory at the apex of the natural world and a form of species-level dominance that shares a root with the domination of men over women and of majority over minority

or perhaps I'm overthinking things. maybe they're just a playground to take the children to rather than go stir crazy at home whatever they used to be zoos are now playing a different role in conservation and reminding people of the challenges humans have created for the diversity of global fauna

I am conflicted about zoos. I worry they're an extension of our other colonial activities, marking our territory at the apex of the natural world, and a form of species-level dominance that shares a root with the domination of men over women and of majority over minority.

Or, perhaps I'm overthinking things. Maybe they're just a playground to take the children to, rather than go stir crazy at home. Whatever they used to be, zoos are now playing a different role in conservation and reminding people of the challenges humans have created for the diversity of global fauna.

Editing for Accuracy

Read your piece back to yourself in your head and look for the following things:

- Full stops
- Capital letters for proper nouns, the word 'I' and the beginning of a sentence.
- Commas in the correct location
- Complete sentences- does your sentence have a subject, verb, article.

The Trick

Now try reading your work out loud to yourself.

Do you notice any other punctuation errors?

Do you stumble over any of the phrases you have written? If so, this often means there is an error of some kind located in the place you stumbled.