

Grammar Practice: Sentence Structure

Independent Clause (IC): Has a subject, verb, and complete meaning. An independent clause can stand alone as its own sentence. Also called a **Main Clause**.

Dependent Clause (DC): Has a subject and verb, but no complete meaning. A dependent clause depends on an independent clause for its meaning. Begins with a subordinating conjunction. Also called a **Subordinate Clause**.

Simple Sentence: A simple sentence contains one independent clause.

IC.

Compound Sentence: A compound sentence contains two independent clauses.

IC, cc IC.

IC; IC.

IC; ca, IC.

Complex Sentence: A complex sentence contains one independent clause and one dependent clause.

DC, IC.

IC DC.

Compound-Complex Sentence: A compound-complex sentence contains two independent clauses and one dependent clause.

Common error: Comma Splice (cs)

A comma splice is when two independent clauses are joined with only a comma.

IC, IC.

Use the sentence structures above to fix a comma splice.

Coordinating Conjunctions (cc):

For	And
Nor	But
Or	Yet
So	

Subordinating Conjunctions (sc): after, although, as, as if, because, before, even though, if, since, so, though, unless, until, when, whenever, whereas, wherever, while.

Conjunctive Adverbs (ca): accordingly, additionally, also, anyway, besides, certainly, consequently, finally, furthermore, hence, however, in addition, incidentally, indeed, likewise, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, next, nonetheless, now, on the other hand, otherwise, similarly, still, then, thereafter, therefore, thus, undoubtedly.

Also called **adverbial conjunctions** or **transition words**.

Relative Pronouns: who (subject), whom (object), which, that, whoever, whichever.

Relative pronouns are used to introduce a qualifying or explanatory clause—often they begin a modifier.

Common error:

Run-On (ro) or fused sentence (fs).

A fused sentence occurs when two independent clauses are put together with nothing to join them (notice that this can happen even to a short sentence).

ICIC.

Use the sentence structures on this page to fix a run-on.

Practice

Read the choices below. Choose the appropriate answers for the underlined portion. If the sentence contains no error, choose "No change is necessary."

1. Florida is known for the quality of its oranges but California ships more lemons.
 - A. oranges; but
 - B. oranges, but
 - C. oranges but,
 - D. No change is necessary.
2. When fall finally arrived Cheri was surprised at the ninety-degree temperatures.
 - A. arrived. Cheri
 - B. arrived; Cheri
 - C. arrived, Cheri
 - D. No change is necessary.
3. The Olympic diver stood motionless on; the edge of the board it was a dramatic moment.
 - A. on the edge of the board; It
 - B. on the edge of the board, it
 - C. on the edge of the board; it
 - D. No change is necessary.
4. Evan promised to babysit Trina's children if she would feed them before he got there.
 - A. children. If
 - B. children, if
 - C. children; if
 - D. No change is necessary.
5. The tellers at the bank are exceptionally trained and very courteous to the customers.
 - A. trained; and
 - B. trained, and
 - C. trained and,
 - D. No change is necessary.
6. Armand often read to his grandmother, her eyes were weak but her mind was sharp.
 - A. grandmother; her eyes were weak, but
 - B. grandmother her eyes were weak, but
 - C. grandmother; her eyes were weak but
 - D. No change is necessary.
7. Because hurricanes have been very destructive; home insurance rates are going up.
 - A. destructive home
 - B. destructive. Home
 - C. destructive, home
 - D. No change is necessary.

8. The word “Arctic” refers to the North Pole and “Antarctic” refers to the South Pole.
 A. Pole; and “Antarctic”
 B. Pole; “Antarctic”
 C. Pole and, “Antarctic”
 D. No change is necessary.
9. The diamond on Cathy’s engagement ring wasn’t large, but the stone was flawless.
 A. large but,
 B. large; but
 C. large but
 D. No change is necessary.
10. Marco hopes to find a job next summer, or to stay with his cousin on her farm.
 A. summer or
 B. summer; or
 C. summer or;
 D. No change is necessary.
11. Trinh has wisely begun to save for retirement, even though she’s only thirty.
 A. retirement; even though she’s
 B. retirement even though she’s
 C. retirement even though, she’s
 D. No change is necessary.
12. Marv’s plane landed in Tucson at 11:00, he didn’t get home until after midnight.
 A. 11:00, so he
 B. 11:00; so
 he C. 11:00 he
 D. No change is necessary.
13. Before Europeans ever landed on the beaches of Florida; many Native American tribes already had been inhabiting the state’s semi-tropical wilderness for some time.
 A. Florida. Many
 B. Florida, many
 C. Florida many
 D. No change is necessary.
14. Harmful insects destroy billions of dollars’ worth of crops each year; and beneficial insects save us billions by pollinating many of the same crops.
 A. year; And beneficial
 B. year; beneficial
 C. year and beneficial
 D. No change is necessary.
15. Always carefully read the labels on cereal boxes, for many low-fat cereals are actually high in sugar.
 A. boxes for,
 B. boxes for
 C. boxes; for
 D. No change is necessary.

Answer Key:
 1. B 2. C 3. C 4. D 5. D 6. A 7. C 8. B 9. D 10. A 11. B 12. A 13. B 14. B 15. D