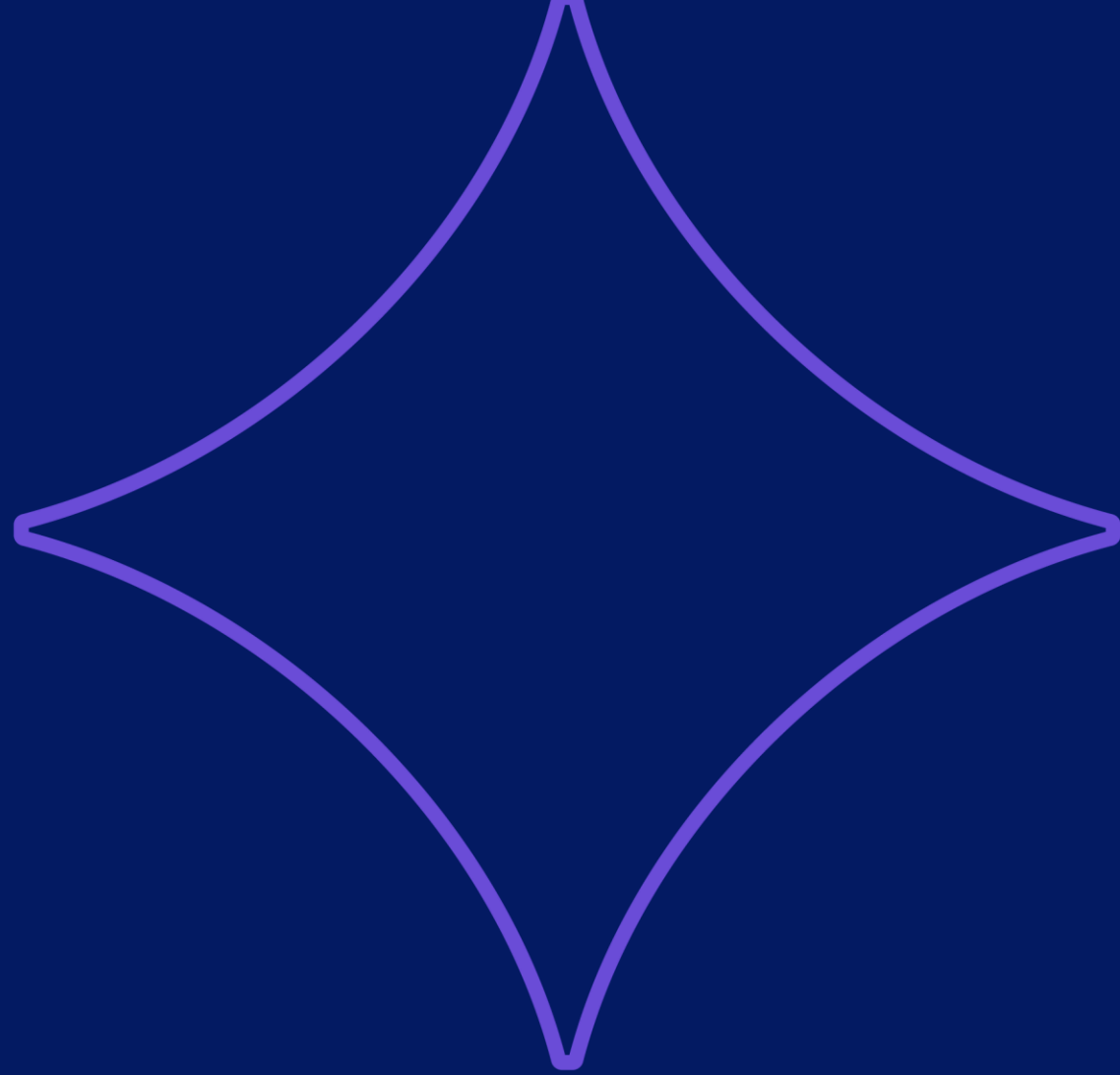


Writing Skills: Sentence Types for Clarity and Precision



Overview

- Parts of a sentence
- Types of sentences
 - Simple Sentences
 - Patterns of simple sentences
 - Independent clause
 - Compound Sentences
 - Coordinating conjunctions
 - FANBOYS
 - Complex Sentences
 - Dependent clause
 - Subordinating conjunction
- Incorporating different sentence types in your writing



Choices to Be Made

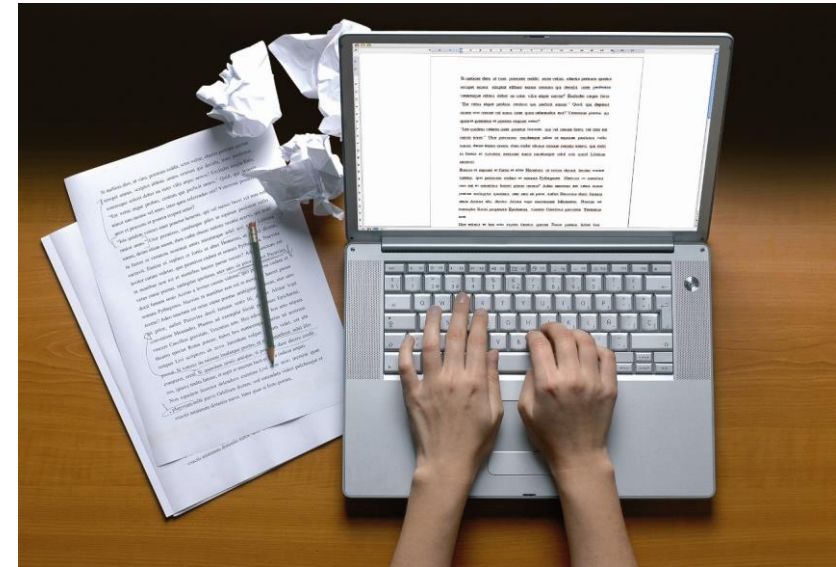
- The types of sentences that we choose to include in our writing are just as important as the words.
 - Writers should strive to vary their sentence structure to create rhythmic prose and keep their reader interested. Sentences that require a variation often repeat subjects, lengths, or types. (Walden University, 2020a)
 - This is a choice that we must make as writers to display a level of care and consideration to our reader.
 - This is something that will be important when an instructor grades your writing!
 - Remember that once your writing is submitted to an instructor, you will not be able to add, explain, or provide definitions. Your writing will have to stand on its own.



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Keeping the Reader Interested

- Writer's have the difficult responsibility of providing their reader with a reason to continue reading.
 - When a reader struggles to make sense of/follow ideas, they will feel less inclined to give their full attention to what has been written.
 - Writers should always be looking to avoid instances where a reader feels lost or confused!
- OK – GREAT – SO WHAT CAN I DO?!?
- We want to make sentences, paragraphs, and research papers as interesting as we can no matter what the topic or subject matter might be.
 - One way to achieve this is through the use of a variety of sentence types.



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Every Sentence Needs...

- At the very least, a sentence must have a subject + verb
 - A subject is usually a noun (person, place, thing, idea) or a pronoun (a word that substitutes for and refers to a noun). The subject of a sentence is the noun or pronoun that name who or what the sentence is about (Trent University, 2020).
 - A verb is the action or state associated with the subject of the sentence.
 - We want to ensure that the verb is written using the proper verb tense to express the correct time we want the reader to understand (PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE).



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Simple Sentences

- Writing a simple sentence is the most straightforward way of expressing our ideas.
 - Subject - Verb = Simple sentence
 - Simple sentences are effective for making short, direct statements that provide the reader with concise information.
 - Eg. She drew a picture.
 - Marco read his textbook.
 - Patterns of simple sentences:
 - Subject - Verb
 - Subject - Verb + Verb
 - Subject + Subject - Verb
 - Subject + Subject - Verb + Verb
 - Each of these patterns is still considered a simple sentence because the subject(s) and verb(s) make up one coherent 'idea'.

Simple Sentence Patterns

- Patterns of simple sentences:
 - **Subject** - **Verb**
 - The boy reads.
 - **Subject** - **Verb + Verb**
 - The boy reads and studies.
 - **Subject + Subject** - **Verb**
 - The boy and his sister read.
 - **Subject + Subject** - **Verb + Verb**
 - The boy and his sister read and study.
- **Keep in mind** that we can have multiple subjects and multiple verbs in a simple sentence because they 'belong' to each one another. All of the subjects are doing, feeling, or thinking the same way.
 - Eg. **The teacher and her students** **watched** **a TED Talk** and **discussed the most important ideas.**

Simple Sentence Practice

- Try to add some more information to these sentences:
 - She drew a picture.
 - Marco read his textbook.
 - Samantha and her Mother bake cookies.
 - The family watches TV.
- What are some of the ways that we have added more information to these sentences?
 - When we add additional 'pieces' to the sentences we write, we give our ideas more clarity and help the reader to understand what we are trying to explain.
 - Remember – This is a choice we make as writers!



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Simple Sentence = Independent Clause

- A simple sentence can also be considered an **independent clause**.
 - This means that a reader can make sense of all of the necessary parts we have included to make a complete thought.
 - Eg. The boy and his sister in the library. X No verb.
 -
- A clause is a group of words containing both a subject and a verb. Clauses can be independent or dependent. (University of Guelph, 2020a)
 - Eg. The boy and his sister played on the computers in the library.
 - This is a simple sentence AND an independent clause.

Building Longer Sentences with Clauses

- We do not want the reader to have to guess, assume, or fill-in-the-blanks when they review our writing.
 - One way that a writer can enhance a reader's ability to follow their ideas is by connecting simple sentences together to make chains of information.
 - When we connect two independent clauses together, we create a **compound sentence**.
- Eg. She drew a picture. Marco read his textbook.
- How could we join these two sentences together to make a compound sentence?



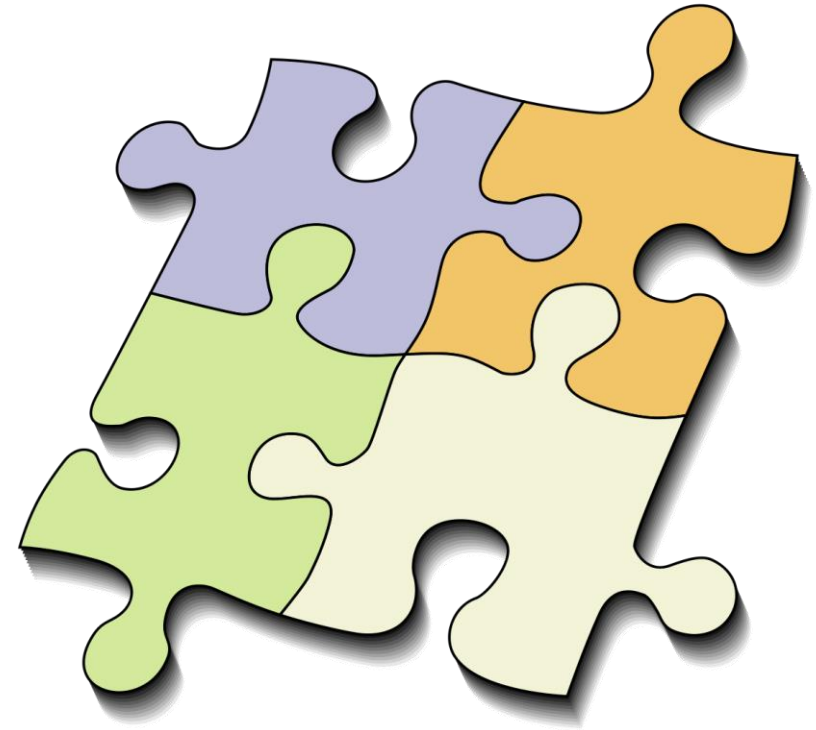
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Coordinating Conjunctions

- The coordinating conjunctions can be remembered as FANBOYS
 - **For** – not commonly used in modern English; meaning is like ‘because’.
 - **And** – adds information.
 - **Nor** – removes alternatives. It tells what something is not, rather than what it is.
 - **But** – contradicts, offers a contrast, or introduces something unexpected.
 - **Or** – offers a choice.
 - **Yet** – expresses a stronger contrast than **but**.
 - **So** – means the same as *as a result*. It introduces the effect of a cause-effect relationship.
- John Jay College (2007).

Coordinating Conjunctions

- We can use coordinating conjunctions between two independent clauses to make a compound sentence.
 - Ind. Clause, Coordinating Conjunction Ind. Clause
- Use of coordinating conjunctions forces the reader to interpret your ideas in a very specific way!
- A writer will always have to put a coordinating conjunction between two independent clauses with a comma to make a compound sentence.



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Coordinating Conjunctions

- Compound sentences are a good way to add variety to writing and show the reader that you have put thought into how you would like them to interpret your ideas. Let's look at the following example paragraph:

Food insecurity is becoming more of a problem in Canada. Populations in all provinces and territories are experiencing challenges associated with missing meals or relying on low-nutrition foods. The problem is most evident in remote locations like the far North and small towns far from major cities. The public and private sectors often join forces to help alleviate some of the stresses. There is more help required. In the past few decades, many different charitable organizations have been formed to provide access to services. Food banks are one important support available to those in need.

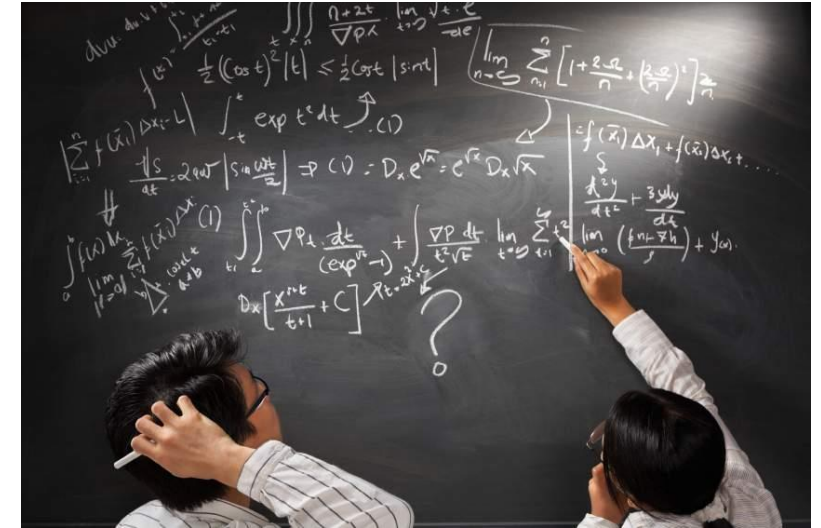
Coordinating Conjunctions

Food insecurity is becoming more of a problem in Canada. Populations in all provinces and territories are experiencing challenges associated with missing meals or relying on low-nutrition foods, **but** the problem is most evident in remote locations like the far North and small towns far from major cities. The public and private sectors often join forces to help alleviate some of the stresses, **yet** there is more help required. In the past few decades, many different charitable organizations have been formed to provide access to services, **and** food banks are one of the major supports available to those in need.

Which of the two paragraphs did you prefer reading? Why?

Complex Sentences

- What is a complex sentence? Does the name provide us with any clues...?
- You can use complex sentences to present the reader with more clear depictions of the relationships that exist in your ideas.
- These are like compound sentences, but the words we will use, their placement in the sentence, and the effect on the writing will be quite different.
- A complex sentence has an **independent clause** and a **dependent clause**.
- We are already familiar with independent clauses, so what is a dependent clause?



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Dependent Clauses

- A **dependent clause** is the part of a complex sentence that clarifies the relationship with the independent clause.
- The clauses in a complex sentence are combined using words that help the dependent clause relate to the independent clause.
 - It is important to understand that a dependent clause **cannot** act as a complete sentence in most academic writing!
 - Eg. **Even though it was late in the evening.**
 - We need more information to understand what is 'happening' in the sentence.
 - This would be considered a **sentence fragment**.
 - Eg. **Even though it was late in the evening, Samira felt like eating cereal.**
 - We want to think of these words as being part of the dependent clause. They are one 'unit'.

Subordinating Words

- A **dependent clause** will begin with certain words or phrases called subordinating words.
- Trent University (2020) provides a list of some examples:
after, although, as, as if, as long as, because, before, even if, even though, ever since, if, in order that, provided that, since, so that, than, that, though, unless, until, what, whatever, whenever, when, where, whereas, wherever, whether.



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Subordinating Words

- Becoming more familiar with these words can be easier if we organize them into categories of use:
 - **Cause:** as, because, since
 - **Comparison:** as, than
 - **Condition:** if, provided (that), unless
 - **Concession:** although, (even) though, whereas, while
 - **Manner:** as, as if, as though, how.
 - **Place:** where, wherever
 - **Purpose:** in order that, so that
 - **Time:** after, as, before, once, since, still, till, until, when, while
 - Public Works and Government Services Canada (2020).
- Words in the same category may be similar in meaning, but they can provide the reader with different interpretations of your writing.

Subordinating Words

- Unlike a **compound sentence**, we can change the order of the clauses in a **complex sentence** and still keep the same meaning.
 - Even though it was late in the evening, Samira felt like eating cereal.
 - Samira felt like eating cereal even though it was late in the evening.
- Notice that the first sentence uses a comma after the dependent clause but the second sentence does not.
- Dependent Clause, Independent Clause **COMMA**
- Independent Clause Dependent Clause **NO COMMA**

Why use complex sentences?

- According to Powers (2015), complex sentences allow a writer to:
 - Show clear relationships between clauses.
- Present complicated thoughts to the reader that will help them to understand certain kinds of ideas.
- Force our reader(s) to focus on one part of a sentence (on idea) rather than another part of a sentence.
 - This is where the name **subordinate** comes from!
- Join small, choppy sentences together into longer, more interesting sentences.



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See for Yourself

According to recent studies, the adult workforce in Canada is shrinking at a rapid pace. Many older employees are getting close to retirement. There are not enough qualified replacements to take over their positions. It is a big concern in fields such as healthcare and agriculture. There is such a strong reliance on experienced and adequately trained staff. Some job openings are left unfilled or made redundant. The number of potential replacements is so low. Organizations in Canada have been put in a position where they must bring in people from other countries to fill these roles. They can continue to operate their businesses at full capacity. This certainly provides some relief to the situation. It remains clear that this will not provide a permanent solution to the problem.

See for Yourself

Some possibilities...

According to recent studies, the adult workforce in Canada is shrinking at a rapid pace. Many older employees are getting close to retirement, but there are not enough qualified replacements to take over their positions. It is a big concern in fields such as healthcare and agriculture because there is such a strong reliance on experienced and adequately trained staff. Since the number of potential replacements is so low, some job openings are left unfilled or made redundant. Organizations in Canada have been put in a position where they must bring in people from other countries to fill these roles so that they can continue to operate their businesses at full capacity. This certainly offers some relief to the situation, yet it remains clear that this will not provide a permanent solution to the problem.

Contact Us!

A Writing Specialist is available to provide you with help in two different ways.

- **Email:** Send your assignments for comments and review to:
academicsuccess@bowvalleycollege.ca
- **Writing Support Appointment:** Book a 30 minute meeting at:
<https://v2.waitwhile.com/welcome/ascwriting>

We look forward to hearing from you soon.



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