

Identifying Clauses

17a. A **clause** is a word group that contains a verb and its subject and that is used as a sentence or as part of a sentence.

Although every clause has a subject and a verb, not every clause expresses a complete thought. A clause that expresses a complete thought is called an **independent clause**. A clause that does not express a complete thought is called a **subordinate clause**.

SENTENCE We had been watching the waves as they crashed against the cliffs.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE ^S We had been watching the waves ^V

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE as ^S they crashed ^V against the cliffs

EXERCISE A In the independent and subordinate clauses in the following sentences, underline the subjects once and the verbs twice.

Example 1. Was this memorial the first that any state had created to honor an American Indian?

- In 1909, funding was approved for this statue, which is located between Plymouth, Indiana, and the Yellow River.
- It is a monument to Chief Menominee, who tried to save his people's land.
- When he designed the statue, the sculptor depicted the chief in full Potawatomi dress.
- Everyone will remember this peaceful chief as long as the monument stands.
- The reservation where the Potawatomi lived had been set aside in an 1832 treaty.
- Chief Menominee did not negotiate to sell the land, but three other chiefs did.
- Because the treaty had given the land to all four chiefs, Menominee said the sale was illegal.
- Chief Menominee and his supporters, who had committed no crimes, were simply ignored.
- White settlers rushed onto the land, and the state militia moved the American Indians off.
- The relocation trip to Kansas, which is now called "The Trail of Death," was a disaster.

EXERCISE B In each of the following sentences, underline the subordinate clause.

Example 1. Please give this message to whoever answers the telephone.

- Then, I saw a side of her character that I had not seen before.
- We finally found the key in the locker where I had left my luggage.
- Luisa believed that she would not be recognized with a new hairstyle.
- After 6:00 P.M., every door was locked so that it was impossible to leave or enter the building.
- Chemistry is the subject with which he has the most difficulty.