

## The Independent Clause

**15b.** An *independent (or main) clause* expresses a complete thought and can stand by itself as a complete sentence.

**EXAMPLES** <sup>S</sup> People from many parts of Europe <sup>V</sup> have immigrated to the United States.  
[one independent clause]

In the mid-1800s, a <sup>S</sup> famine hit Ireland, and many Irish citizens <sup>S</sup> moved to the United States. [two independent clauses]

Although the immigrants left many of their belongings behind, <sup>S</sup> they <sup>V</sup> brought with them their traditions. [one subordinate clause and one independent clause]

**EXERCISE A** In each of the following sentences, draw one line under the subject and two lines under the verb in the independent clause.

**Example 1.** The United States is known as a country of immigrants.

- In the nineteenth century, Scotch-Irish immigrants came to the United States.
- They brought with them their music and their way of speaking.
- Many settled in the south-central part of the United States.
- In some places you can still hear some of the Scotch-Irish songs.
- One singer of those old ballads is Jean Ritchie.
- Audiences love Ritchie's version of "Barbara Allen."
- Ritchie can play the dulcimer as well as the guitar.
- The dulcimer, which is an oval-shaped stringed instrument, is especially popular among the people of the southern Appalachians.
- Before her solo career, Ritchie sang with her family.
- Every group of immigrants brings its own special treasures to our shores.

**EXERCISE B** For each of the following sentences, decide whether the underlined clause is or is not an independent clause. On the line provided, write *Yes* if it is or *No* if it is not.

**Example** No 1. The campers fished until they were exhausted.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Alex sang, and Lani played the harpsichord.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Have you met our new next-door neighbors?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. We cannot leave because the work has not been completed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. If I were president, I would send an environmental bill to Congress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Some cobras squirt poison when they are attacked.