

## The Subordinate Clause

**15c.** A **subordinate** (or **dependent**) **clause** does not express a complete thought and cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence.

**EXAMPLE** <sup>S</sup> <sup>V</sup> **If wishes were horses**

The meaning of a subordinate clause is complete only when the clause is attached to an independent clause.

**EXAMPLE** **If wishes were horses**, then beggars would ride.

Sometimes the word that begins the subordinate clause is the subject of the clause.

**EXAMPLE** This is a line <sup>S</sup> <sup>V</sup> **that comes from a Mother Goose rhyme.**

**EXERCISE A** Underline the subordinate clause in each of the following sentences. Then, write S above the subject and V above the verb of each subordinate clause.

**Example 1.** Before the stories by Raffi and Disney appeared, many children were learning Mother Goose rhymes.

- England is the country where Mother Goose rhymes originated.
- The people who composed the rhymes lived hundreds of years ago.
- These rhymes became popular because they were fun and easy to learn.
- If a rhyme was especially funny or interesting, children would sing it.
- One rhyme that children enjoyed was "Baa, Baa Black Sheep."
- Some people think that this rhyme is actually a protest against taxes.
- In the rhyme, the three bags of wool that the sheep produces are given away.
- Since the sheep has only three bags of wool, it is left with nothing.
- So, "Baa, Baa Black Sheep" may be a rhyme that protests high taxes.
- Mother Goose rhymes, which are always fun to read, may or may not have political meanings.

**EXERCISE B** On the line provided, expand each of the following sentences by adding a subordinate clause that begins with the word given in parentheses.

**Example 1.** (*that*) This is the trophy that our soccer team won.

- (*if*) On Friday we will go on a picnic \_\_\_\_\_.
- (*who*) Do you know \_\_\_\_\_?
- (*that*) Is the story \_\_\_\_\_ true?
- (*Whenever*) \_\_\_\_\_, our dogs bark.
- (*because*) The band canceled its performance \_\_\_\_\_.