

# Clauses

**Goal:** This Directed Learning Activity is intended to introduce you to clauses, and will help you become familiar with terms, definitions and applications of the concepts surrounding the topic.

**Activities:** The first thing to know about clauses is that they are very important to understand. Being able to see clauses in your own writing will make it much easier for you to find all sorts of sentence-level errors that could be hiding in your papers. If any teacher has ever told you that you have comma splices, run-ons, or fragments in the papers you hand in, then learning about clauses will help your writing.

**Clauses are simply groups of words that have at least one subject and at least one verb.** There are two kinds of clauses: independent clauses and dependent clauses. Someone decided that they didn't like the names *dependent* and *independent* and wanted to give them other names, so **independent clauses** are also called **main clauses**, and **dependent clauses** are also called **subordinate clauses**, because they are subordinate to (dependent on) the main clauses.

**An independent clause is a group of words that has at least one subject and at least one verb and contains a complete idea. An independent clause can be a sentence.**

Example: Boopsie knew she had been caught.

Everyone wanted to see Charlie Chaplin.

**A dependent clause is a group of words that has at least one subject and at least one verb but does NOT contain a complete idea. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence by itself; it needs an independent clause in order to be a complete sentence.**

Example: Because the police showed her a tape of her robbing the store.

When he got on the plane to leave America.

The only way that a dependent clause can work in a sentence is to join it to an independent clause.

Example: Boopsie knew she had been caught because the police showed her a tape of her robbing the store.

Everyone wanted to see Charlie Chaplin when he got on the plane to leave America.

Cut and paste the following URL and read through the lesson about clauses:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/598/01/>

## Crafton Hills Writing Center: Directed Learning Activity

After you have done this, write five independent clauses below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Now write five dependent clauses below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Review:** With a tutor at the Writing Center, discuss specific terms, their definitions, and all of the examples you have written. Make sure to be clear about your understanding of the definitions, and the examples you have given. Clarity will be gauged by your use of specific terms you learned during the Activities portion of this Directed Learning Activity. **In order to pass this Directed Learning Activity, everything in the Activities section must be correct.**