

UNDERSTANDING SENTENCE PATTERNS

Chapter 2 Section 1
Clauses





What is the definition
of a sentence?

TRADITIONAL DEFINITION

A group of words that contains a
subject and a **verb**.

RIGHT?

Yes ... and no.

Let's test it out.



Is this a sentence?

Because he was sleeping

It contains a **subject (he)**

And a **verb phrase (was sleeping)**

but that word “**because**”
confuses things...

Because he was
sleeping... **what?**

Did he miss his show?
Was he late for work?
I don't understand.
Tell me more!



All sentences must contain
a **subject** and a **verb**.

However, **not all groups of words** that contain a subject and a verb qualify as a sentence.

Which is why we need a new definition of a sentence.

NEW DEFINITION

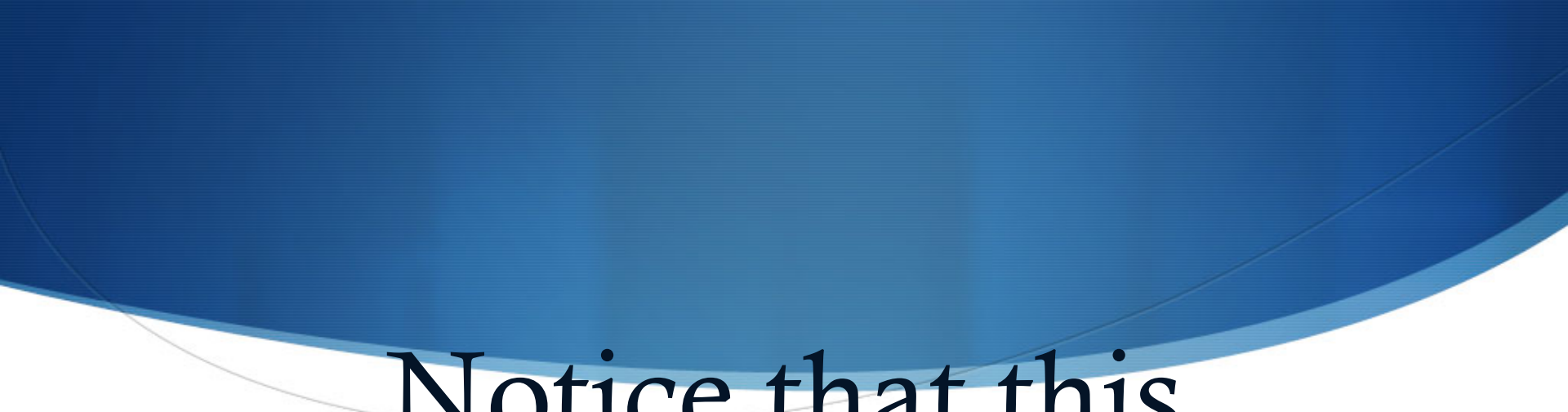
“**SENTENCE**”

A group of words that
contains at least one
main clause.

So what's a **clause**?



A clause is a group of words
that contains at least **one**
subject and at least **one verb**.

A blue curved shape, resembling a stylized wave or a segment of a circle, is positioned at the top of the slide, partially obscuring the text.

Notice that this
definition doesn't say
anything about
expressing
a complete thought.

THAT'S BECAUSE THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF CLAUSES

MAIN CLAUSE

Sometimes called
**independent
clause**

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE

Sometimes called
**dependent
clause**

MAIN CLAUSE

Matt is an excellent golfer.

This group of words has a **subject (Matt)**

It has a **verb (is)**

It expresses a **complete thought.**

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE

Although he seldom plays.

This group of words has a **subject (he)**

It has a **verb (plays)**

But it **does not** express a complete thought.

Combine these clauses

Matt is an excellent golfer

Although he seldom plays

And you not only have a **complete thought**, you also have created...



A SENTENCE

(according to our new definition)



CONTAINS ONE
MAIN CLAUSE
AND ONE
SUBORDINATE CLAUSE....

Matt is an excellent
golfer **although he
seldom plays.**

Or....

**Although he seldom
plays,** Matt is an
excellent golfer.

QUESTION

What makes a clause
“subordinate”?



ANSWER

**SUBORDINATING
CONJUNCTIONS!**



SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

Adding a **subordinating conjunction** changes the meaning of a clause.

Look what happens when you add a subordinating conjunction to a main clause: **I eat**

When I eat
After I eat
Before I eat
Because I eat
Even though I eat
Whenever I eat
While I eat...

See what happens?

Suddenly the clause “I eat” is
**dependent (subordinate) on another
clause in order for it to make sense.**



When I eat, I am happy.

After I eat, I feel sleepy.

Before I eat, I am a grump.


Because I eat, I get strong.

Even though I eat, I still want more.

Whenever I eat, I get a stomach ache.

While I eat, I do my homework

Learning to recognize
subordinators
in a sentence
will help you identify
subordinate clauses.

A blue curved shape, resembling a stylized wave or a partial circle, is positioned at the top of the slide. It has a gradient from a darker blue on the left to a lighter blue on the right.

Which in turn will help you
become a more
sophisticated writer as you
apply these skills to your
own writing.



Shall we
practice?

