



The Four Sentence Types

The four sentence types are *simple*, *compound*, *complex*, and *compound-complex*. Each type is built from one or more *clauses*. In this lesson, we will first examine clauses, and then we will turn our attention to sentence types.

Every complete sentence has at least one main clause (sometimes called an independent clause).



A main clause contains a subject and its verb and expresses a complete idea. It can stand alone as a sentence.

In the following examples, the subject is underlined once, and the verb is underlined twice.

MAIN CLAUSES: American folklore includes stories, songs, dances, and more.

Many characters in folklore stories are fictional.

Others are based on real-life people, such as Daniel Boone.

Besides a main clause, some sentences contain one or more subordinate clauses (sometimes called dependent clauses).



A subordinate clause contains a subject and its verb but does not express a complete idea. It cannot stand alone as a sentence.

The word *subordinate* means "occupying a lower position." We use *subordinate* to label clauses that are in a lower position than, or *dependent* upon, a main clause. Specifically, the subordinate clause depends on the main clause to complete the expression of thought.

In the examples below, notice that each subordinate clause expresses an incomplete thought. Because the thought is incomplete, these clauses cannot stand alone as a sentence. We call them sentence *fragments*. In particular, the word that begins each clause raises an idea that is left incomplete. Below, these words are *when*, *because*, and *which*.

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES: when Daniel Boone blazed the Wilderness Trail

(The clause has a subject, *Daniel Boone*, and a verb, *blazed*. But the idea of "when" is incomplete. What happened or was true *when* Boone blazed the trail?)

because pioneers needed a path through Cumberland Gap

(The clause has a subject, *pioneers*, and a verb, *needed*. But what happened or was true *because* pioneers needed the path? The thought is incomplete.)

which was a settlement in Kentucky territory

(The clause has a subject, *which*, and a verb, *was*. But what noun or pronoun is this clause saying was a settlement? The thought is incomplete.)

To form a complete sentence, a subordinate clause must be joined to a main clause. In the following examples, each main clause is underlined once, and each subordinate clause is underlined twice.

SENTENCES: When Daniel Boone blazed the Wilderness Trail, the Kentucky wilderness opened up.

(Now the thought is complete. We know what happened when Boone blazed the trail.)

Boone created the trail because pioneers needed a path through Cumberland Gap.

(Now the thought is complete. We know what happened because pioneers needed a path.)

Boone founded Boonesborough, which was a settlement in Kentucky territory.

(Now the thought is complete. We know that Boonesborough was a settlement.)

ACTIVITY 1

On the line provided, label each item *main* for *main clause* or *sub.* for *subordinate clause*. If the item is a main clause, insert a capital letter and a period to show that it can stand alone as a complete sentence.

Samples:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>main</u> | a. ^A another folkloric legend was Calamity Jane. |
| <u>sub</u> | b. whose real name was Martha Jane Canary |

- _____ 1. she dressed like a man in pants and hat
- _____ 2. who was one of the Pony Express riders
- _____ 3. which were written about the exploits of Calamity Jane
- _____ 4. when Sam Bass stole cattle and robbed trains
- _____ 5. which was the stuff of legends
- _____ 6. according to legend, he buried gold in secret caves
- _____ 7. although no one has ever found the gold
- _____ 8. ballads tell of Sam Bass's outlaw adventures
- _____ 9. most Americans have heard of Johnny Appleseed
- _____ 10. since he planted apple orchards for four decades

A main clause that stands alone as a sentence is called a *simple sentence*. Look at your work in Activity 1. Each item you marked correctly as *main* is a simple sentence.

By joining main and subordinate clauses in various ways, we construct the other three sentence types. Study the following definitions and examples of all four types. In the examples, each subject is underlined once, and each verb is underlined twice.

SENTENCE TYPE AND DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
<p>A simple sentence contains one main clause and no subordinate clauses.</p> <p><i>Note: The subject, the verb, or both can be compound.</i></p>	<p>Billy the Kid <u>gained</u> fame as a gunfighter.</p> <p>At age 21, he <u>died</u> from a gunshot by Sheriff Pat Garrett.</p> <p>Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett <u>defended</u> the Alamo.</p> <p>Black Caesar <u>escaped</u> slavery and <u>became</u> a pirate.</p> <p>Black Caesar and Blackbeard <u>met</u> and then <u>worked</u> together.</p>
<p>A compound sentence contains two or more main clauses and no subordinate clauses.</p> <p><i>Note: Main clauses can be joined by a comma and a connecting word or by a semicolon.</i></p>	<p>Our folklore <u>features</u> Anglo characters, but it also <u>includes</u> American Indian characters.</p> <p>Bowie and Crockett <u>were</u> Anglos, but Pocahontas and Sitting Bull <u>were</u> Indians.</p> <p>Pocahontas <u>helped</u> the Jamestown settlers; Sitting Bull <u>defeated</u> General Custer at Little Bighorn.</p>
<p>A complex sentence has one main clause and at least one subordinate clause.</p> <p><i>Note: At right, subordinate clauses are italicized. Words such as although, that, and who introduce subordinate clauses.</i></p>	<p><i>Although some of their exploits <u>are</u> true, others <u>have been enhanced</u>.</i></p> <p>Ballads and stories <u>exaggerate</u> things <i>that <u>happened</u>.</i></p> <p>People <i>who <u>have become</u> "larger than life"</i> <u>are</u> legendary.</p>
<p>A compound-complex sentence has at least two main clauses and at least one subordinate clause.</p> <p><i>Note: In the examples, the words that, what, and whether introduce subordinate clauses.</i></p>	<p>Paul Revere <u>warned</u> colonists <i>that the British <u>were coming</u>, and he <u>became</u> the hero in a poem by Longfellow.</i></p> <p>Numerous folktales <u>tell</u> <i>what Davy Crockett <u>did</u> or <u>said</u>, and he often <u>seems</u> superhuman.</i> Billy the Kid supposedly <u>killed</u> twenty-one men by age twenty-one, but <i>who really <u>knows</u> whether <u>this is</u> factual?</i></p>

QUESTION: How can a knowledge of sentence types help me become a better writer?

ANSWER: You can become a better writer by starting with the simple sentence, the building block of all sentences. Even though it has only one subject and one verb, the simple sentence does not have to be simplistic. In fact, it can be just as powerful as the other, more complicated, types.

QUESTION: Okay. How can I write "powerful" simple sentences?

ANSWER: Your choices as a writer can transform a blah, basic simple sentence into a simple sentence that packs a punch. For example, you can combine related sentences into one improved simple sentence. The revision may have a compound subject, a compound verb, or both. By combining elements, you create a simple sentence that is effective, informative, sophisticated, and pleasing to read—powerful!

Read these two simple sentences:

John Frémont explored America's far West.

Jim Bridger, too, explored new territory in the West.

QUESTION: These sentences are grammatically correct. Why revise them?

ANSWER: Powerful sentences are not merely grammatically correct. They also engage readers by presenting ideas effectively. The two sentences above are technically correct, but they are repetitive in structure, which can turn off readers. One revised simple sentence presents the same information more effectively, as follows:

John Frémont and Jim Bridger explored new territory in America's far West.

The revised sentence has a compound subject, and it expresses all key ideas from the original sentences.

Study these additional examples.

ORIGINALS: Frémont surveyed the upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

He also mapped these waterways.

REVISION: Frémont surveyed and mapped the upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

(The sentences have been combined by using a compound verb.)

ORIGINALS: Jim Bridger and Kit Carson scouted for paths through the wilderness.

They guided expeditions along these paths.

REVISION: Jim Bridger and Kit Carson scouted for paths and guided expeditions through the wilderness.

(This revision has a compound subject and a compound verb.)

ACTIVITY 2

Each of the following items consists of two sentences. Combine each pair into one simple sentence with a compound subject, a compound verb, or both. (Make necessary changes to capitalization, punctuation, and subject-verb agreement.)

Samples:

- a. Wyatt Earp was a gunfighter in the Old West.

Doc Holliday was another Old West gunfighter.

Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday were gunfighters in the Old West.

- b. Earp became friends with Holliday and in 1880 went to Arizona.

Holliday went with his friend.

Earp and Holliday became friends and in 1880 went to Arizona.

- c. Annie Oakley could shoot a dime in midair.

She could hit targets from horseback.

Annie Oakley could shoot a dime in midair and hit targets from horseback.

1. Buffalo Bill is an American folk hero.

Annie Oakley, too, is an American folk hero.

2. Buffalo Bill founded Cody, Wyoming.

He also created the Wild West Show.

3. As a teenager, Annie Oakley competed against Frank Butler, a sharpshooter.

She won the competition.

4. Frank lost the contest.

He won Annie's heart.

5. Annie and Frank got married.

They later joined the Wild West Show.

Eventually, using only simple sentences gets monotonous. The compound sentence adds variety to your writing, and it also serves another need: It allows you to join main clauses that express related ideas. Usually, we join the clauses with a comma and a conjunction such as *and*, *but*, or *nor*, or with a semicolon.

MAIN CLAUSE: Jim Bridger described the Western territory to easterners.

MAIN CLAUSE: Many of his tales were overly imaginative.

COMPOUND SENTENCE: Jim Bridger described the Western territory to easterners, **but** many of his tales were overly imaginative.

(The revised version has two main clauses, each with its own subject and verb. The sentence is compound.)

ACTIVITY 3

Combine each pair of simple sentences to form one compound sentence. To do so, make changes directly to the printed sentences by crossing out periods and letters or words and writing corrections above them. Use a comma and *and*, *but*, or *or* to join the simple sentences, or use a semicolon.

Samples:

- a. In Oklahoma, Myra Belle Shirley led horse thieves and cattle rustlers;
she
~~Myra Belle Shirley~~ became the legendary Belle Starr.
- b. Betsy Ross inspired folk stories too, ~~this woman~~ *but she* was not a criminal.

1. Betsy Ross was a seamstress. She sewed the first "Stars and Stripes" American flag, according to legend.
2. In fact, Betsy Ross did make flags for the government. Historians can't verify the "Stars and Stripes" tale as absolute fact.
3. This first flag was made in 1776. The story about Ross's involvement did not emerge until 1870.
4. William Canby, Ross's grandson, told the story. Other Ross descendants backed him up.
5. Ross's house at 239 Arch Street in Philadelphia still stands. It is honored as the birthplace of the U.S. flag.



Writing Application

Using Simple and Compound Sentences

What person from recent history do you think could become part of America's (or another nation's) folklore in the future? Think of someone whom the public sees as larger than life, someone whose actions, words, or accomplishments have been, or might one day be, exaggerated. A few possibilities are Elvis, Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods, Bill Gates, and Madonna.

On separate paper, write a paragraph of at least **five** sentences explaining who you think could be a folkloric character and why (in other words, how might he or she be seen as larger than life?). For each sentence, locate each clause and underline its subject once and its verb twice. Then label the sentence *simple* or *compound*. (Use at least two compound sentences.)

ACTIVITY 4

Write a subordinate clause to complete each sentence below. Use the word in parentheses to introduce the subordinate clause. Be sure to add a period at the end of the sentence, if needed.

Samples:

- a. (*until*) Enrique knew nothing about Wild Bill Hickock until he read this folktale.
- b. (*While*) While her students completed a worksheet, the teacher graded quizzes.

1. (*who*) I invited Jonathon, _____
2. (*because*) You should read this story _____
3. (*If*) _____, you are breaking the law.
4. (*how*) The student did not know _____
5. (*Whoever*) _____ will pass the test.

Look at the sentences you wrote in Activity 4. Each of them is a complex sentence because it has one main clause and one subordinate clause.

Now take a quick look at the commas in the sentences you wrote in Activity 4. Normally, when a subordinate clause begins a sentence, a comma separates it from the main clause (see item 3). An exception is a sentence in which the subordinate clause serves as the subject of the sentence (see item 5). When a subordinate clause follows the main clause and is essential, a comma is not used (see items 2 and 4). A nonessential subordinate clause following a main clause is set off by a comma (see item 1).

Of course, a complex sentence can have more than one subordinate clause. Recall this complex sentence from Sample a:

Enrique knew nothing about Wild Bill Hickock until he read this folktale.

To add even more specificity, we can add another subordinate clause to the sentence.

Enrique knew nothing about Wild Bill Hickock until he read this folktale that tells about his exploits.

Composition Hint

Beware of adding too many subordinate clauses to a sentence. In some cases, it is better to break a sentence into two than have a long series of *that* or *which* clauses.

AWKWARD: Enrique knew nothing about Wild Bill Hickock until he read this folktale that tells about his exploits that occur in the rough, wild region that is known as the Wild West.

(Even though all the subordinate clauses help develop the main idea, the series of *that* clauses becomes awkward as it strings on and on.)

BETTER: Enrique knew nothing about Wild Bill Hickock until he read this folktale that tells about his exploits. The adventures occur in the rough, wild region that is known as the Wild West.

(The ideas are expressed in two well-formed, manageable complex sentences. Breaking the original sentence into two gives readers a chance to catch their breath.)

ACTIVITY 5 _____

Add information to each complex sentence you wrote in Activity 4. To do so, add one more subordinate clause. Choose a word from the table on page 8 to introduce each new clause, and write each complex sentence on the lines below.

Samples:

(The sample sentences below are revisions of the sample sentences in Activity 4.)

- a. Enrique knew nothing about Wild Bill Hickock, who was a frontier marshal,
until he read this folktale.
- b. While her students completed a worksheet, the teacher graded quizzes that
they had just taken.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

ACTIVITY 6 _____

For each item, use the given clause to write a complex sentence. If you are given a subordinate clause, add a main clause to it. If you are given a main clause, add a subordinate clause to it. Make slight changes in wording, if desired, and write the complex sentence on the lines provided.

Hint: Review the information about using commas with subordinate clauses, which follows Activity 4 on page 9.

Samples:

- a. when I read about Old West horse thieves
When I read about Old West horse thieves, I think of modern-day car thieves.
- b. they are criminals
They are both criminals, although horse thieves seem more sensational.

1. some people are famous for actions

2. who has become a legend

3. I wasn't interested in history

4. when you do a search on the Internet

5. people have not changed much

Composition Hint

Don't make your reader guess at the relationship between ideas in your sentences. Instead, use *subordinating conjunctions* to show the relationship. Notice the different meanings that can come from one pair of simple sentences, depending on how they are combined.

ORIGINAL: James Brady wore lots of diamond jewelry.

He was called Diamond Jim.

REVISED: **Because** James Brady wore lots of diamond jewelry, he was called Diamond Jim.
(shows cause and effect)

REVISED: **Whenever** James Brady wore lots of diamond jewelry, he was called Diamond Jim.
(shows time)

REVISED: James Brady wore lots of diamond jewelry **before** he was called Diamond Jim. (shows sequence)

The following table lists common subordinating conjunctions and tells what kind of relationships they show in sentences.

Subordinating Conjunctions and the Relationships They Show

after	shows that one action follows another action <i>Please go to the bank after you eat lunch.</i>
although	makes a contrast <i>Although the line at the bank was long, it moved quickly.</i>
as	shows that one action occurs while or when another action does <i>As I stepped up to the bank teller, the clock struck five o'clock.</i>
because	shows the cause, or reason, something happened or is true <i>I can get cash out of this machine because I have an ATM card.</i>
before	shows that an action occurs in advance of another action <i>Before I went to the bank, I stopped at the post office.</i>
if	expresses a condition <i>I would be grateful if you could lend me twenty dollars.</i>
since	shows the cause, or reason, something happens or is true; shows a sequence of time <i>Since I just got my paycheck, I can loan you the money. (shows cause)</i> <i>Since I started this job, I have had plenty of cash. (shows time)</i>
so	shows why something occurs or should occur; shows a consequence or reason <i>Sign the back of the check so the teller can cash it for you. (shows why)</i> <i>The bank was closed, so I withdrew cash from an ATM. (shows consequence)</i>
than	makes a comparison <i>Bianca saved more money in a month than I saved in a year.</i>
unless	expresses a condition <i>Spend less than you earn unless you want to go broke.</i>
when	shows that an action occurred at or during the time that something else happened or was true <i>When I was at the bank, I saw Paulo.</i>
where	expresses location <i>Show me where to sit, please.</i>
whether	expresses one or more options <i>I don't care whether you pay with cash or a credit card.</i>
while	shows that an action occurs during the time that something else happens or is true <i>While Gopal did homework, I balanced my checkbook.</i>

ACTIVITY 7

Write two different revisions for each of the following pairs of simple sentences. In each revision, use a different subordinating conjunction to form a complex sentence, and circle the conjunction.

Sample:

Jesse James became an outlaw.

He used a false name, Thomas Howard.

a. When Jesse James became an outlaw, he used a false name, Thomas Howard.

b. Jesse James used a false name, Thomas Howard, after he became an outlaw.

1. He performed daring robberies.

Songs and ballads described his bravery.

a. _____

b. _____

2. James robbed banks.

He gave money to the poor.

a. _____

b. _____

3. James shared money with the needy.

He was a folk hero.

a. _____

b. _____

Clear, Forceful Sentences

Sentences vary widely in style and subject matter, yet all good sentences are clear and forceful. Compare the following two sentences:

WEAK: The city of Hollywood, which is in the highly populated state of California, is seen as the very focal point of the film industry in the country.

FORCEFUL: Hollywood, California, is the heart of America's film industry.

QUESTION: Why is the first sentence considered weak? After all, it uses a sophisticated sentence structure (it is a complex sentence).

ANSWER: The first sentence is weak due to wordiness and lack of unity, among other faults. It is true that a complex sentence structure is sophisticated, but only if every word contributes to the meaning of the sentence. In this example, though, many words are merely padding. When they are cut out, the revised sentence expresses the same idea succinctly.

QUESTION: Does this mean that I should try *not* to use complex and compound-complex sentences?

ANSWER: Absolutely not! Use a variety of sentence structures to express ideas that link tightly together, to make your sentences varied and vivid, and to add sophistication to your writing style. What's important is that every word count, whether the sentence is simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

QUESTION: What qualities make the second sentence clear and forceful?

ANSWER: It has several strong characteristics: *conciseness*, *clarity* and *specificity*, *unity*, and *active voice*. In this lesson, we examine each of these qualities in detail, and you will practice incorporating each quality into your own sentences.

Conciseness

Conciseness in writing means expressing yourself as simply and directly as possible. Never make a thought more complicated than it really is. To make your writing concise, avoid these five common errors.

1. Useless Words

Eliminate all useless words.

WORDY: Most movie previews make use of a film ratings system.

CONCISE: Most movie previews use a film ratings system.

(Eliminate *make* and *of*.)

WORDY: These ratings are for the purpose of specifying a film's suitability for young viewers.

CONCISE: These ratings specify a film's suitability for young viewers.

(Eliminate *are for the purpose of* and change *specifying* to *specify*.)

Here are a few other expressions that contain useless words, along with concise revisions:

<u>WORDY</u>	<u>CONCISE</u>
at a later date	later
for the purpose of	for
on a daily basis	daily

2. Duplication

Avoid saying the same thing twice, even in different words.

WORDY: Parents can refer back to a film's rating when deciding the question as to whether a movie is suitable for their kids.

CONCISE: Parents can refer to a film's rating when deciding whether a movie is suitable for their kids.

(Eliminate *back* and *the question as to*.)

Here are additional expressions that contain duplication, along with concise revisions:

<u>WORDY</u>	<u>CONCISE</u>
basic essentials	basics <i>or</i> essentials
cancel out	cancel
continue on	continue
a distance of five feet	five feet
each and every	each <i>or</i> every
end results	results
few in number	few
first began	began
future plans	plans
large/small in size	large/small
mail out	mail
past experience	experience
personal opinion	opinion
pleased and delighted	pleased <i>or</i> delighted
rarely ever	rarely
red in color	red
reduce down	reduce
repeat again	repeat
subject matter	subject
summarize briefly	summarize
in the month of June	June
until such time as	until

3. Wordy Construction

Do not use too many words to express an idea. The result is writing that sounds padded, pretentious, rambling, or "flabby." To eliminate wordiness, whenever possible condense a phrase to a word, and a clause to a phrase or even a word. Be a *which* hunter and eliminate every unnecessary *which* or *that*. Make every word in your sentence count.

WORDY: In the households of many, teens under the age of seventeen may not watch R-rated movies due to the fact that they contain violent images and profane language.

CONCISE: In many households, teens under seventeen may not watch R-rated movies because they contain violence and profanity.

(Change *the households of many* to *many households*. Change *the age of seventeen* to *seventeen*. Change *due to the fact that* to *because*. Change *violent images* to *violence*. Change *profane language* to *profanity*.)

WORDY: The rating of G, which means General, designates a movie as being suitable for general audiences that include children.

CONCISE: The G, or General, rating designates a movie as suitable for general audiences.

(Change the prepositional phrase *of G* to the adjective *G*. Change the clause *which means General* to the phrase *or General*. Eliminate the clause *that include children* since *general audiences* implies all ages.)

Here are commonly used wordy expressions, along with concise revisions:

<u>WORDY</u>	<u>CONCISE</u>
a number of	some
at the present time	now
at this point in time	now
despite the fact that	although
due to the fact that	because <i>or</i> since
during the time that	while
for the reason that	since <i>or</i> because
give consideration to	consider
hold a meeting	meet
in a timely manner	promptly <i>or</i> on time
in the event that	if
in the near future	soon
it is my understanding	I understand
limited number of	few
make preparations for	prepare for
on the grounds that	because

ACTIVITY 1

Revise the following sentences to make them more concise. Eliminate useless words, duplication, and wordy constructions. Write your new sentences on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. We held a meeting for the purpose of choosing films for the film festival.

We met to choose films for the film festival.

- b. Each person who is on the committee submitted a list of five films for consideration.

Each committee member submitted a list of five films for consideration.

1. We have held this film festival on a yearly basis since 2001.

2. From past experience, I knew that Laetitia would suggest movies that are romantic.

3. All films must meet requirements which are just a few in number.

4. For example, due to the fact that teenagers will attend the festival, all of the films that we show must have a PG-13 rating or lower.

5. Fairly often, we frequently meet on weekends to watch movies that have been proposed.

6. At a later time, we vote on which films to show.

7. After that has happened, our committee chair makes the decision, which is final, at a later date.

8. Usually we try to show films that represent a mix and variety of subject matter.

9. During the month of July, we show a different film each evening.

10. The cost of admission is one dollar, and we collect in about fifty dollars on a daily basis.

4. Elaborate Language

Learning and using challenging vocabulary is a valid goal, whether you do so for school, for work, or for personal enrichment. When you use these complex or elaborate words, be sure their use fits the needs of your audience. For example, in business settings, *compensation* and *methodology* name business actions or practices precisely. However, to tell your grandmother you got a raise in *compensation* at your job sounds out of place. Similarly, *equitable* and *witnessed* are valid word choices for legal settings, but to say your curfew is not *equitable* sounds unnatural, even silly.

In most cases, the elaborate or complex word choice is formal, even official sounding. Use complex words to make your writing as clear, specific, and appropriate as possible to your audience. The simpler word choice is informal or casual. Often—but not always—you'll use simple, direct words in your personal life and more complex words for school or business. In any case, choose the word that best fits your audience and the purpose of your writing.

ELABORATE: Please render your remuneration at the door.

SIMPLE: Please pay at the door.

ELABORATE: Is everyone cognizant that refreshments will be served pursuant to the movie?

SIMPLE: Does everyone know that snacks will be served after the movie?

Study this list of elaborate words and their simpler alternatives:

<u>ELABORATE</u>	<u>SIMPLE</u>
appreciable	many, much
assistance	help
cognizant	aware
commence	begin
compensation	pay
correspondence	letter(s)

ELABORATE	SIMPLE
disseminate	issue, send
endeavor	try
equitable	fair
expedite	rush, hurry
facilitate	help, ease
heretofore	until now
implement	do, carry out, follow
locality	place
methodology	method, way
modification	change
optimum	best, greatest, most
parameters	limits
preclude	prevent
procure	get, buy
purchase	buy
recapitulate	summarize
subsequent	later, next
terminate	end, stop
transmit	send
transpire	happen
utilize	use
witnessed	saw

5. Piled-up Modifiers

Avoid piling adjective upon adjective or adverb upon adverb. Where possible, use specific nouns and verbs to reduce the number of modifiers.

WORDY: Everyone loves a funny, delightful movie in the comedy category, such as one of Jim Carrey's many numerous films.

CONCISE: Everyone loves a comedy, such as one of Jim Carrey's many films.

(The noun *comedy* is more concise than the adjective-packed phrase *funny, delightful movie in the comedy category*. Also, *many numerous* is redundant; one of these adjectives is sufficient.)

WORDY: In *Liar Liar*, Carrey's character tries really really hard to deal with his sudden and unexpected inability to tell a lie.

CONCISE: In *Liar Liar*, Carrey's character struggles with his sudden inability to tell a lie.

(The verb *struggles* is more concise than the adverb-packed phrase *tries really really hard to deal*. Also, *sudden and unexpected* is redundant; *sudden* is sufficient.)

ACTIVITY 2

Revise the following sentences to make them concise, direct, and simple to understand. To do so, eliminate elaborate language and piled-up modifiers. (Use a dictionary if you need to.) Write your new sentences on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. The optimum environmental conditions in which to view a Jim Carrey film is with a little, young kid who is still youthful.

The best way to watch a Jim Carrey film is with a kid.

- b. A young person's uninhibited, spontaneous nature allows him to chortle freely at every single one of the humorous, comical jokes.

A kid's open nature allows him to laugh at every joke.

1. Walk in a hurry over here to the place where I live so we can sit down together and watch *Bruce Almighty*.

2. I have been eagerly looking forward to procuring my very own personal copy of this movie.

3. In *The Majestic*, after a vehicular accident, Carrey's character walks uncertainly and tentatively into a small locality.

4. Due to amnesia, he is not cognizant or even very certain of who he is.

5. Of all Carrey's cinematic film works, perhaps the most popular and well liked is *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*.

Clarity and Specificity

Writing concisely is important, but a concise sentence that uses inexact or vague words is still weak. To make your writing as clear as possible, avoid these three common errors.

1. Inaccurate Connectives

Use the connective that expresses your thought accurately. Connectives include coordinating conjunctions, printed in *italics* below:

1. Use *and* to join sentences that express equal thoughts.
2. Use *but* or *yet* to join sentences that contrast with each other.
3. Use *or* or *nor* to join sentences that express two or more possibilities.
4. Use *for* to join sentences that express a cause and effect.

Connectives also include subordinating conjunctions such as *after*, *while*, *because*, and *if*. Take a moment to review "Subordinating Conjunctions and the Relationships They Show" on page 12.

CONFUSING: In 2004, Keisha Castle-Hughes was nominated for an Oscar, and the award went to Charlize Theron.

CLEAR: In 2004, Keisha Castle-Hughes was nominated for an Oscar, but the award went to Charlize Theron.

CONFUSING: Although Keisha was just thirteen years old, her nomination for a best actress award was especially impressive.

CLEAR: Because Keisha was just thirteen years old, her nomination for a best actress award was especially impressive.

QUESTION: Does it matter which conjunction I use to join simple sentences?

ANSWER: Yes, it matters. Different conjunctions have different purposes, as explained below.

1. Use *and* to join sentences that express equal thoughts.
Mandy worked the crossword puzzle, *and* Julian read the comics.
2. Use *but* or *yet* to join sentences that contrast with each other.
Mandy enjoys brain teasers, *but* Julian does not.
The puzzle was difficult, *yet* Mandy could easily finish it.
3. Use *or* or *nor* to join sentences that express two or more possibilities.
Did Julian build this model ship, *or* did Jim build it?
Jim is not interested in ships, *nor* did he build this model.
4. Use *for* to join sentences that express a cause and effect.
Julian worked carefully, *for* he wanted the model to be perfect.

2. The Inexact Word

Choose the word that expresses your thought accurately.

CONFUSING: Please find out if Keisha Castle-Hughes doesn't have an official Web site.

CLEAR: Please find out if Keisha Castle-Hughes has an official Web site.

CONFUSING: Don't fail to miss Keisha's portrayal of Pai in *Whale Rider*.

CLEAR: Don't miss Keisha's portrayal of Pai in *Whale Rider*.

CLEAR: Don't fail to see Keisha's portrayal of Pai in *Whale Rider*.

3. Vague, General Words

To add clarity and forcefulness to your writing, use words that express the specific meaning you have in mind.

VAGUE: People spoke well of the movie.

SPECIFIC: Critics praised *Whale Rider*.

VAGUE: People will enjoy learning about the native people of another country.

SPECIFIC: American viewers will enjoy learning about the Maori of New Zealand.

ACTIVITY 3

Revise each sentence to make its meaning clear and specific. Keep in mind the three preceding suggestions. Write your new sentences on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. You could apply for the job as ticket taker, but you could apply to work at the concessions counter.

You could apply for the job as ticket taker, or you could apply to work at the concessions counter.

- b. Grounds for dismissal from the job include honesty and tardiness.

Grounds for dismissal from the job include dishonesty and tardiness.

1. Amber wanted to watch a Lindsay Lohan movie, and Viggo preferred one starring Johnny Depp.

2. Sonia could care less about horror movies.

3. I got hungry during the movie, when I went to buy popcorn.

4. The movie ended, and everyone stood and clapped.

5. Although Javier has a DVD player, we rented a DVD, not a videotape.

ACTIVITY 4

Replace each italicized word or phrase in the sentences with a more specific word or phrase from the list below. Write your choice on the line below the word or phrase it should replace. Use each choice only once.

Thanksgiving	grilled	basketball player
inform	hustled	splashed
prohibits	history class	scribbled
furious	Buena Vista Mall	Cedar Lake
hamburgers	basketball	tank tops and shorts
Brandon Jamison	King Senior High	American Eagle Outfitters

Sample:

- a. Tanya ~~quickly wrote~~ a note to ~~tell~~ me she was ~~very upset~~ with me.
scribbled inform furious

1. At *the lake*, we *cooked* some *food* and *went* in the water.

2. *The school* now has a rule against wearing *revealing clothing*.

3. *One of the stores in the mall* is hiring.

4. A student in my class hosted a *holiday* party.

5. The *athlete* caught the *ball* and *went quickly* down the court.

Unity

Follow these guidelines to create unity in a sentence.

1. Be sure that every part of a sentence is related to one main idea

Correct a lack of unity by breaking a sentence into shorter sentences or by subordinating one part of a sentence to a main part. (To review subordinate clauses and the words that introduce them, turn to page 8 in Lesson 1.)

LACKS UNITY: Live animals in movies are not harmed during filming, and many live horses were filmed in *Seabiscuit*.

(Even though both clauses mention animals, the clauses have very different main ideas. One focuses on live animals in general, and the other focuses on horses.)

HAS UNITY: Live animals in movies are not harmed during filming. Many live horses were filmed in *Seabiscuit*.

(Each clause now forms a separate simple sentence. In the first, the main idea is the safety of animals during filming. In the second, the main idea is the filming of horses in *Seabiscuit*. The ideas are relevant to each other, but each requires a separate sentence.)

LACKS UNITY: Horse racing is one theme in the movie, but the most important message is that underdogs can win.

(The first clause is about horse racing. The next clause breaks the unity of the sentence by switching the focus to underdogs.)

HAS UNITY: The most important message in the movie, which is about horse racing, is that underdogs can win.

(The main idea of the entire sentence is the message about underdogs. The idea about horse racing is set in a subordinate clause beginning with *which*, making it clear that it is a secondary, not main, idea.)

LACKS UNITY: Seabiscuit was a racehorse in the late 1930s, and Red Pollard, a former boxer, was the horse's jockey (rider).

(The first clause tells about Seabiscuit, a racehorse. A clause joined to this one should express an idea closely linked to this main idea. However, the second clause tells who Red Pollard was. As a result, the emphasis moves from Seabiscuit to Red, breaking the unity of the sentence.)

HAS UNITY: Seabiscuit was a racehorse in the late 1930s. Red Pollard, a former boxer, was the horse's jockey (rider).

(The first sentence is unified around the subject of Seabiscuit, and the second sentence is unified around Red Pollard.)

HAS UNITY: Seabiscuit was a racehorse in the late 1930s, ridden by jockey Red Pollard.

(The entire sentence focuses on one main idea: Seabiscuit. The detail about Red is part of a phrase modifying *Seabiscuit*, so the focus stays on Seabiscuit rather than shifting to a new main idea.)

LACKS UNITY: Seabiscuit gained fame in 1938, and he became Horse of the Year.

(The two main ideas have no clear connection. The first clause tells when Seabiscuit gained fame, but what is the connection to the second clause, which tells about an award?)

HAS UNITY: Seabiscuit gained fame in 1938 when he became Horse of the Year.

(By subordinating the clause about the award to the first clause with *when*, the relationship between ideas becomes clear and unified. Now we know how the ideas are closely connected: The award led to Seabiscuit's fame.)

2. Avoid a series of *that*, *which*, or *who* clauses

Too many clauses make a sentence long and stringy, or cumbersome. To correct an unwieldy sentence, break it into shorter sentences or eliminate words to make the sentence more concise.

- UNWIELDY: The 2003 movie about Seabiscuit starred Tobey Maguire, who played the jockey, who was hired by Charles Howard, who was the horse's owner, who also hired the trainer, Tom Smith.
- MANAGEABLE: The 2003 movie about Seabiscuit starred Tobey Maguire, who played the jockey. The horse's owner, Charles Howard, hired him and the trainer, Tom Smith.
- UNWIELDY: The movie grew out of the book *Seabiscuit*, which was written by Laura Hillenbrand, who published this nonfiction novel in 2001.
- MANAGEABLE: The movie grew out of the book *Seabiscuit*. Laura Hillenbrand wrote this nonfiction novel, which was published in 2001.
- MANAGEABLE: The movie grew out of the nonfiction novel *Seabiscuit*, written by Laura Hillenbrand and published in 2001.

3. Use parallel structure

Make sure items in the sentence are parallel. Ordinarily, *and* and *but* connect like grammatical elements—for example, two or more nouns, verbs, adjectives, phrases, or clauses. Equal (like) grammatical elements are considered *parallel*.

- NOT PARALLEL: The movie is suspenseful, entertaining, and it inspires.
(*Suspenseful* and *entertaining* are adjectives, but *it inspires* is a clause.)
- PARALLEL: The movie is suspenseful, entertaining, and inspiring.
(The series includes three adjectives and is therefore parallel in structure.)
- NOT PARALLEL: Seabiscuit was small, had knobby knees, and his front legs were crooked.
(*Was small* and *had knobby knees* each follow the structure of verb plus complement or object. However, *his front legs were crooked* follows a different structure: subject plus verb plus complement.)
- PARALLEL: Seabiscuit was small, had knobby knees, and had crooked front legs.
(Now, all elements in the list follow that verb-first pattern, achieving parallel structure.)
- NOT PARALLEL: The jockey is short and thin yet has strength and is capable.
(*Short* and *thin* is a pair of adjectives. The conjunction *yet* connects this pair to *has strength* and *is capable*, which begin with verbs. The two sets are not parallel.)
- PARALLEL: The jockey is short and thin yet strong and capable.
(All four items are adjectives.)
- NOT PARALLEL: They practiced on the track, racing along a dirt road, and in a field.
(The first and third items are prepositional phrases, but the middle item is a participial phrase.)
- PARALLEL: They practiced on the track, on a dirt road, and in a field.
(All three items are prepositional phrases.)

ACTIVITY 5

Revise each of the following sentences. Write the revised sentence on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. Back in 1981, John Wilson began watching movies, evaluating them, and the ones that were the worst.

Back in 1981, John Wilson began watching movies, evaluating them, and identifying the worst ones.

- b. He established the Razzie Awards, and they recognize the year's worst film, actors, and actresses.

He established the Razzie Awards, which recognize the year's worst film, actors, and actresses.

1. Each year, awards are showered upon films, actors, actresses, and those who direct.

2. The Academy Awards show is televised nationally, and Billy Crystal makes an excellent host.

3. Billy Crystal has acted, done voice-overs, and he has performed comedy routines.

4. The Sundance Film Festival, which is a highly respected festival that honors independent films, which are not made by the big studios, occurs each year in Park City, which is in Utah.

5. Sundance award winners include *My Flesh and Blood*, *Genghis Blues*, and *American Dream*, but not all Sundance winners are available on DVD.

6. Another major award festival is the Independent Spirit Awards, which honor independent films, which include foreign films, which usually are not in English.

7. In 2000, Reese Witherspoon and Matthew Broderick starred in *Election*, but this film won an Independent Spirit Award.

8. When you like to choose films from themed lists, you will appreciate the American Film Institute's lists.

9. They group the top 100 films in various categories, and the Top 100 Thrills and the Top 100 Passions are two categories.

10. The 1942 film *Casablanca*, which stars Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, who play star-crossed lovers, is a favorite of many who prefer older movies, which are known as classics today.

Active and Passive Voice

Often, you can make a sentence more forceful by writing the verb in *active voice* instead of *passive voice*.

PASSIVE VOICE: The movie was given five stars by Roger Ebert. (less forceful)

ACTIVE VOICE: Roger Ebert gave the movie five stars. (more forceful)

The *voice* of a sentence identifies the relationship between the subject and the verb.



In an *active voice* sentence, the subject performs the action of the verb.

ACTIVE VOICE: Roger Ebert reviewed *Shakespeare in Love*.

Gwyneth Paltrow plays the role of Viola De Lesseps.

The film delighted audiences.

In the examples above, each subject is **active** in relation to its verb. Roger Ebert *reviewed*. Gwyneth Paltrow *plays*. The film *delighted*. The ideas in each sentence move forward from subject to verb to object. Each word is a power word because it is vital to the meaning of the sentence.



In a *passive voice* sentence, the subject is acted upon; it receives the action of the verb.

PASSIVE VOICE: *Shakespeare in Love* was reviewed by Roger Ebert.

The role of Viola De Lesseps is played by Gwyneth Paltrow.

Audiences were delighted by the film.

In the previous examples, each subject is **passive** in relation to its verb. In other words, some other agent performs action *upon* the subject, and the subject just rests there and takes it in. *Shakespeare in Love* was reviewed. The role *is played*. Audiences *were delighted*.

QUESTION: How can I tell if a verb is in the passive voice?

ANSWER: The passive voice is formed by combining a form of the "to be" verb with the past participle of the main verb. (The "to be" verbs are *am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been*.) Here are examples of passive voice sentences:

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>"TO BE" VERB</u>	<u>MAIN VERB</u>	
Joseph Fiennes	is	featured.	(What featured?)
The movie	was	enjoyed.	(Who enjoyed?)
Paltrow	had been	interviewed.	(Who interviewed?)
Tickets	will be	purchased.	(Who will purchase?)

The passive voice sentences above do not identify who performs the action of the verb. When passive voice sentences contain this information, it usually takes the form of a prepositional phrase following the verb.

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>"TO BE" VERB</u>	<u>MAIN VERB</u>	<u>PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE</u>
Joseph Fiennes	is	featured	by the movie.
The movie	was	enjoyed	by viewers.
Paltrow	had been	interviewed	by David Letterman.
Tickets	will be	purchased	by many.

Even though the above sentences tell who performed the action, the sentences are still passive. Why? The verb is still in the passive voice. Now look at these sentences revised to be in active voice:

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>VERB</u>	<u>DIRECT OBJECT</u>
The movie	features	Joseph Fiennes.
Viewers	enjoyed	the movie.
David Letterman	had interviewed	Paltrow.
Many	will purchase	tickets.

In the active voice, we do not need a prepositional phrase to identify the doer of the action. The active voice sentences are more direct, more concise, more forceful.

ACTIVITY 6

In each sentence, identify the voice of the verb as *active* or *passive*, and write the appropriate label on the line provided. To help you get started, the verbs in the first five sentences are underlined.

Samples:

passive a. My admiration has been earned by actress Julia Stiles.

active b. She has starred in many enjoyable movies.

- _____ 1. In *The Prince & Me*, a motorcycle is ridden by Paige Morgan.
- _____ 2. Premed college classes are taken by her.
- _____ 3. One day, she meets Eddie.
- _____ 4. This role is played skillfully by Luke Mably.
- _____ 5. The Paige character, by the way, was brought to life by Julia Stiles.
- _____ 6. Paige enjoys activities with Eddie.
- _____ 7. After a while, a secret about Eddie is learned.
- _____ 8. Eddie is actually a Danish prince.
- _____ 9. At first, Paige is angered.
- _____ 10. But, of course, she later accepts Eddie's role in life.

QUESTION: How can I revise a sentence in the passive voice to be in the active voice?

ANSWER: First, find the verb. Then ask yourself who or what is performing the action of the verb. Usually, this "who" or "what" is a noun or pronoun following the passive voice verb. Finally, rewrite the sentence using this noun or pronoun as the subject.

EXAMPLE 1

Shakespeare is inspired by Viola.

- STEP 1: What is the verb? It is *is inspired*.
- STEP 2: Who is performing the action of inspiring someone? *Viola* is.
- STEP 3: In active voice, the sentence is *Viola inspires Shakespeare*.

EXAMPLE 2

Shakespeare is portrayed by Joseph Fiennes.

- STEP 1: What is the verb? It is *is portrayed*.
- STEP 2: Who is performing the action of portraying? *Joseph Fiennes* is.
- STEP 3: In active voice, the sentence is *Joseph Fiennes portrays Shakespeare*.

EXAMPLE 3

The film was reviewed by him.

- STEP 1: What is the verb? It is *was reviewed*.
- STEP 2: Who is performing the action of reviewing? *Him* is. Notice that the pronoun *him* is in the objective case (meaning it fills the role of *object* in a sentence). To revise the sentence with the pronoun as *subject*, we need a pronoun in the nominative case. Therefore, we will use *he*, not *him*, in the active voice sentence.
- STEP 3: In active voice, the sentence is *He reviewed the film*. (NOT *Him reviewed the film*)

EXAMPLE 4

Shakespeare is misled about Thomas Kent's identity.

- STEP 1: What is the verb? It is *is misled*.
- STEP 2: Who is performing the action of misleading Shakespeare? The sentence does not specify. To supply a subject for the active voice version, draw upon your knowledge of the subject. In the *Shakespeare* movie, Viola pretends to be a male actor, Thomas Kent.
- STEP 3: In active voice, the sentence is *Viola misleads Shakespeare about Thomas Kent's identity*.

ACTIVITY 7 _____

Look back at the sentences you labeled *passive* in Activity 6. On the lines below, rewrite each of these sentences in the active voice. If the passive sentence does not specify who performs the action, choose your own subject for the revision.

Sample:

Note: The sample below is a revision of sample a in Activity 6.

Actress Julia Stiles has earned my admiration.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



Writing Application

Active and Passive Voice

Think about a movie or television show you saw recently, or book you recently read. Specifically, think about events that happened in the plot. On a separate sheet of paper, write five sentences in the **passive voice** about the movie or book plot. You can refer to the examples regarding *Shakespeare in Love* for ideas.

With your teacher's approval, exchange papers with a classmate. Revise each of your classmate's passive voice sentences to be in the active voice. Share the results.

QUESTION: Is it ever okay to use passive voice?

ANSWER: Yes. Passive voice has certain useful purposes. When you want to emphasize the person or thing acted upon, use the passive voice.

EXAMPLE: *Shakespeare in Love* has been released on DVD.

(Readers don't care who released the movie. Rather, they want to know something about the movie itself. Therefore, the writer of this sentence places emphasis on *Shakespeare in Love* by putting this noun in the subject position.)

Passive voice sentences are also appropriate when the performer of the action is unknown, or the writer does not want to reveal who performed the action.

EXAMPLES: Thirteen DVDs were stolen.

(The writer does not know who stole the DVDs.)

The day manager has been accused of the theft.

(The writer does not want to reveal who accused the manager.)

ACTIVITY 8

Decide whether each sentence should be rewritten in the active voice. Write necessary revisions on the lines provided. If the sentence should remain unchanged, write *no change* on the line.

Samples:

- a. Sometimes, a kid's dreams are not understood by parents.

Sometimes, parents do not understand a kid's dreams.

- b. Dreams should be nurtured despite opposition.

no change

1. In *Billy Elliot*, boxing lessons are abandoned by Billy.

2. Ballet lessons are taken by him instead.

3. His dad, a manly miner, is shocked by the choice.

4. The story is set in northern England.

5. The wisdom of Billy's choice is revealed by this unforgettable movie.

LESSON

3

Sentence Variety

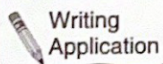
To keep a reader's interest, sentences must not always follow a set pattern. Good sentences are varied in length and structure.

MONOTONOUS:	Carl Lewis is a sports legend. He won nine Olympic gold medals. He is my hero.
VARIED:	Carl Lewis, my hero, is a sports legend who won nine Olympic gold medals.
VARIED:	The sports legend Carl Lewis, who won nine Olympic gold medals, is my hero.
MONOTONOUS:	Lewis went to the Olympics in 1984. The Games were in Los Angeles. He won four gold medals.
VARIED:	In 1984, Lewis won not one but four Olympic gold medals at the Games in Los Angeles.
VARIED:	At the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, Lewis won not one but four Olympic gold medals.

Sentence Length and Purpose

As you learned in Lesson 2, conciseness is always a desirable goal. By avoiding padding and unnecessary words, you can create a concise sentence. However, concise sentences are not necessarily short ones. The following sentences use words economically, but they vary in length.

SHORT:	Carl Lewis was born into an athletic family.
LONGER:	At Tuskegee Institute, his parents had excelled at track and other sports.
STILL LONGER:	Lewis first qualified as an Olympic athlete in 1980; however, that year the United States boycotted the Games, held in Moscow.



Varying Sentence Length

On a separate sheet of paper, write **six to eight** sentences about a sport or other activity (such as band, debate, woodworking, etc.) that interests you, whether it is a competitive activity like football or a pastime like walking in the park. Vary your sentences' lengths to include short sentences, longer sentences, and still longer ones. Make sure that each sentence, no matter its length, is concise.

You can also vary the purpose of sentences. Most sentences are declarative; their purpose is to inform. For variety, use an occasional question, exclamation, or command, but don't overdo.

- QUESTION: When did Lewis retire from competition?
- EXCLAMATION: What an amazing athlete he is!
- COMMAND: Look at this Web site on Carl Lewis.
- POLITE REQUEST: Please write down the URL for me.

ACTIVITY 1

Revise each of the following sentences according to the directions given in parentheses. Write the revision on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. I am curious about what Carl Lewis is doing nowadays. (*Make a question.*)

What is Carl Lewis doing nowadays?

- b. You chose an interesting research topic. (*Make an exclamation.*)

What an interesting research topic you chose!

1. People may wonder how Carl Lewis got started in sports. (*Ask a question.*)

2. During the research process, students should document each source they consult. (*Make a command.*)

3. Each student should give his or her essay an interesting title. (*Make a polite request.*)

4. Lewis has been an inspiration to other athletes. (*Make an exclamation.*)

5. There is a question about what aspect of his training was hardest for Lewis. (*Ask a question.*)

Sentence Structure

You can avoid monotony by varying sentence beginnings, by using appositives, and by using verbals (participles, infinitives, and gerunds).

Every sentence does not have to begin with the subject. When a shift in placement is both natural and effective, begin a sentence with a word other than the subject. Formations that can work well at the start of a sentence are listed below.

ADVERB:	<i>Undoubtedly</i> , Babe Didrikson Zaharias was one of the greatest female athletes of the twentieth century.
ADVERB PHRASE:	<i>From 1930 to 1932</i> , she played basketball for the women's All-America team.
ADVERB CLAUSE:	<i>When she wasn't playing ball</i> , she competed in track-and-field events.
THERE:	<i>There</i> was no end to Babe's interest in sports. (Note: Do not overdo. Beginning with <i>There</i> is often not the strongest option.)
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE:	<i>At the 1932 Olympic Games</i> , she won gold in the 80-meter hurdles and in the javelin throw.
PARTICIPIAL PHRASE:	<i>Competing as a team by herself</i> , she won the team title in the 1932 Women's Amateur Athletic Association.
INFINITIVE PHRASE:	<i>To expand her athletic skills</i> , Babe played baseball, softball, and football; swam; and figure-skated.
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE WITH GERUND:	<i>After marrying George Zaharias</i> , Babe took up golf in 1938.
APPPOSITIVE:	<i>An amateur golfer</i> , Babe won eighteen golf championships.
VERB:	<i>Cheering her on were</i> countless fans.

KEY TERMS

adverb: A word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

appositive: A word or word group that identifies or renames a noun or pronoun.

gerund: A verb form used as a noun. A gerund ends in *ing*.

infinitive: A verb form that can be used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. Most infinitives begin with *to*, as in *to eat*.

participle: A verb form that may be used as part of a verb phrase or as an adjective.

phrase: A related sequence of words that does not have both a subject and its verb.

ACTIVITY 2

Revise each sentence by moving a word or word group before the subject.

Samples:

- a. Some children learn a sport before they can read.

Before they can read, some children learn a sport.

- b. Tiger's parents taught him golf at age two to give their son a head start.

To give their son a head start, Tiger's parents taught him golf at age two.

1. Eldrick Woods, nicknamed Tiger, is one of the most impressive U.S. golfers.

2. Tiger won the 1991 U.S. Junior Amateur championship at age fifteen.

3. He won the next two championships too, returning in 1992 and 1993.

4. Tiger consistently hits golf balls more than three hundred yards.

5. Tiger won the 1996 collegiate title after he enrolled in Stanford University.

6. He turned pro after leaving college in August 1996.

7. A great deal of prize money is there in the major golf tournaments.

8. Tiger won over six million dollars in one season.

9. His parents are proudly watching Tiger's career.

10. Tiger won the Masters, the U.S. Open, the British Open, and the PGA Championships to complete the "Grand Slam" in 2001.

Composition Hint

You can use sentence structure to place emphasis on one part of the sentence over another. Compare these examples from Activity 2:

Some children learn a sport before they can read.

(This sentence emphasizes learning a sport.)

Before they can read, some children learn a sport.

(This sentence emphasizes the time factor of when children learn a sport by placing the *Before* clause first.)



Writing Application

Using Sentence Structure to Vary Emphasis

Look back at the sentences in Activity 2. In each pair of sentences, both the original and your rewritten version express the same basic thought. However, each has a different emphasis based on the sentence's structure.

On a separate sheet of paper, explain whether you prefer the original or the rewritten version of the ten sentences in Activity 2, and why. Here is an example based on sample sentence b:

b. *The original version states that the parents taught Tiger golf at age two, but the real question I had was why they did this. Therefore, I like the rewritten version, which emphasizes why they did this by placing the infinitive phrase first.*

Another way to vary sentence structure is to use an appositive within the sentence.

WITHOUT APPOSITIVE: Gertrude Ederle set her sights on the English Channel in 1925.

WITH APPOSITIVE: Gertrude Ederle, *an avid swimmer*, set her sights on the English Channel in 1925.

WITHOUT APPOSITIVE: The English Channel is about thirty-five miles across.

WITH APPOSITIVE: The English Channel, *a strait between England and France*, is about thirty-five miles across.

Look again at the two sentences with appositives above. Notice that each appositive is set off by a comma before it and a comma after it. If an appositive falls at the end of a sentence, use a period instead of the second comma.

EXAMPLE: One of my heroes is Gertrude Ederle, *an amazing swimmer*.

ACTIVITY 3

Rewrite each sentence, adding an appositive. Choose from the appositives listed below, and use each one only once. Remember that an appositive is set off by commas, as shown in the sample sentence.

a born champion fourteen hours and thirty-one minutes

~~an American~~ the year of her first attempt

Gertrude's hometown a cape in France

Sample:

Gertrude Ederle was the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

Gertrude Ederle, an American, was the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

1. In 1925 Gertrude was unsuccessful.

2. But this young swimmer did not give up.

3. In 1926 she set out from Gris-Nez and swam successfully across the channel.

4. Her swim time beat the men's world record by nearly two hours.

5. New York City gave her a ticker-tape parade.

Another way to vary sentence structure is to use verbals and verbal phrases.

WITHOUT PARTICIPLE: Sammy Sosa was born in the Dominican Republic. Sammy became a baseball star in the United States.

WITH PARTICIPIAL PHRASE: Born in the Dominican Republic, Sammy Sosa became a baseball star in the United States.

WITHOUT GERUND: Sammy was signed by the Texas Rangers after he had turned sixteen.

WITH GERUND PHRASE: Sammy was signed by the Texas Rangers after turning sixteen.

WITHOUT INFINITIVE: He played for minor-league teams. He acquired the skills necessary for major-league ball.

WITH INFINITIVE PHRASE: He played for minor-league teams to acquire the skills necessary for major-league ball.

ACTIVITY 4

Combine each set of monotonous sentences to create one sentence with engaging structure. A hint in parentheses tells you what is needed. Write on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. Sammy landed 30 homers and 30 stolen bases in one season.

He earned a place in the "30-30 club." (*participial phrase*)

Sammy landed 30 homers and 30 stolen bases in one season, earning a place
in the "30-30 club."

- b. He earned this level of success. (*gerund phrase*)

It was incredibly difficult.

Earning this level of success was incredibly difficult.

1. Sammy earned the Rangers' esteem. (*participial phrase*)

He played his first major-league game in June 1989.

2. He attacked the ball forcefully. (*gerund phrase*)

This was his batting style.

3. The Rangers sent Sammy back to the minor leagues in order that he improve his batting. (*Make the words after leagues an infinitive phrase.*)

4. Then the Rangers made a decision.

They traded Sammy to the Chicago White Sox. (*infinitive phrase*)

5. He won Chicago's starting right field position. (*participial phrase*)

He played strong all year.

6. He performed poorly the next season.

He let his old batting habits return. (*participial phrase*)

7. Chicago sent Sammy back to the minor leagues. (*gerund phrase*)

This was Chicago's solution.

8. Later in the season Sammy received an offer.

The offer was for a return to the White Sox. (*infinitive phrase*)

9. Finally, Sammy was learning.

He must watch the ball better. (*infinitive phrase*)

He must bat with skill, not with aggression. (*infinitive phrase*)

10. Slowly he earned respect and fame.

He became a true baseball star. (*participial phrase—either sentence*)

LESSON

4

Review of Sentence Composition

Recall the four types of sentences:

- A *simple sentence* contains one main clause and no subordinate clauses.
- A *compound sentence* contains two or more main clauses and no subordinate clauses.
- A *complex sentence* has one main clause and at least one subordinate clause.
- A *compound-complex sentence* has at least two main clauses and at least one subordinate clause.

ACTIVITY 1

Combine each set of sentences to form one strong simple or compound sentence.
Write on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. Buddy Holly recorded innovative rock and roll.

He rose to fame in the late 1950s.

Buddy Holly recorded innovative rock and roll and rose to fame in the

late 1950s.

- b. Buddy Holly's career was soaring.

His life was cut short by a plane crash.

Buddy Holly's career was soaring, but his life was cut short by a plane crash.

1. Buddy Holly was one of America's early rock stars.

Elvis Presley was also one of this country's early rock stars.

2. As a youngster, Buddy developed a passion for music.

Rock and roll and rhythm and blues inspired his musical creativity.

3. Buddy listened to records by Elvis, Bo Diddley, and others.

He began developing his own personal style.

4. In 1957, Buddy joined with three other musicians.

The foursome formed The Crickets.

5. The group recorded several hits.

The biggest was probably "Peggy Sue."



Simple and Compound Sentences

On a separate sheet of paper, write **five or six** sentences about a musical artist whom you admire. Tell who the artist is, what kind of music he or she plays, and why you admire this person. Make your sentences powerful by varying their structure in the following ways: In two of the simple sentences, use compound elements (compound subject and/or compound verb); in addition, use at least two compound sentences. Above each sentence, label it *simple* or *compound*.

ACTIVITY 2

Combine each set of sentences to form one strong complex or compound-complex sentence. Write on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. America is home to a world of music styles.

These music styles include rock, African, Latin, and others.

America is home to a world of music styles, which include rock, African, Latin, and others.

- b. Many Latin singers first sang in Spanish.

They have reached the top of the charts.

Later they crossed over to English.

Many Latin singers who have reached the top of the charts first sang in Spanish, and later they crossed over to English.

1. Latin pop music exploded onto the music scene in 1999.
Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, and others released big hits.

2. Ricky Martin sang "Livin' la Vida Loca."
Jennifer Lopez sang "If You Had My Love."
Lopez was also an actress.

3. Both of these songs reached number one on the charts.
These songs appeared repeatedly on MTV.

4. Other Latino artists were Gloria Estefan, Julio Iglesias, and Shakira.
These artists gained national recognition.

5. America's love of Latin music did not end.
The first wave of Latin hits dropped off the charts.
Instead, it increased thanks to Marc Anthony and many others.



Writing Application

Simple and Compound Sentences

What is your favorite kind of music, and why? On a separate sheet of paper, write **five** sentences explaining your answers to these questions. Use at least two complex sentences and at least one compound-complex sentence, and label each one.

Recall the characteristics of strong, forceful sentences:

- _____ conciseness
- _____ clarity and specificity
- _____ unity
- _____ active voice unless there is a specific reason for passive voice
- _____ sentence variety in length and structure

ACTIVITY 3

Revise each sentence to correct errors in conciseness, clarity and specificity, or unity. Write on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. Music fans always welcome songs that are fresh, memorable, and ones that are not like others because they are one of a kind.

Music fans always welcome songs that are fresh, memorable, and unique.

- b. Based on the fact that I am cognizant that CDs can be expensive, I buy them used.

Because CDs can be expensive, I buy them used.

1. Each and every time I turn on the radio to listen to it, I hear the new Ashlee Simpson song.

2. Despite the fact that she is popular, I wonder if her celebrity status will last.

3. I endeavor to be equitable in my evaluation of music; I procure only the best CDs.

4. Sometimes a hit song is sung by an artist who is new and who we think is the next big thing but whom we forget within a year, which is too bad.

5. Ashlee's fame is helped by her sister, who is Jessica Simpson, who is also a singer, who starred in her own TV show, which was called *Newlyweds*.

6. Her music is good too.

7. I wonder if Jessica won't be remembered five years from now.

8. This Simpson sister is already known for her beauty, her singing, and she is humorous.

9. Because Ashlee did publicity for her album, she dyed her blonde hair dark brown.

10. Ashlee is a brunette, or Jessica is a blonde.

ACTIVITY 4

Decide whether each sentence would be stronger in the active voice. If yes, rewrite the sentence in active voice. If no, write *no change*. Write on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. Many types of piano music were composed by Frédéric Chopin.

Frédéric Chopin composed many types of piano music.

- b. His compositions are celebrated for their beauty, sensitivity, and originality.

no change

1. Chopin is known for his nocturnes, etudes, and mazurkas.

2. Six-year-old Frédéric was given piano lessons by Adalbert Zywny.

3. Master composers were studied by them, including Bach and Mozart.

4. New methods of playing music on the piano were invented by Chopin.

5. Two centuries later, Chopin's music is still respected, studied, and enjoyed.

ACTIVITY 5

Revise each sentence or set of sentences to create variety in structure. To do so, vary the sentence beginning or use an appositive, participle, gerund, or infinitive. Write on the lines provided.

Samples:

- a. Vanessa Williams won a beauty pageant in 1983. This was just the beginning. She was talented.

Winning a beauty pageant in 1983 was just the beginning for the talented
Vanessa Williams.

- b. At the time she was young. She was inexperienced. She soon learned. She took charge of her destiny.

Young and inexperienced, she soon learned to take charge of her destiny.

1. The first black Miss America was more than just a beauty queen. The first black Miss America was Vanessa Williams.

2. Her first music album was released in 1988. *The Right Stuff* went gold.

3. She continued to record and perform. She also married and started a family.

4. She began other artistic endeavors. She acted. She danced.

5. She acted. She danced. She sang. These things brought her respect and stardom.
