

The phrase and the clause

When we make a sentence, we name a person or thing and say something about that person or thing. Every sentence has two parts -

The part which names the person or thing we are speaking about is called the subject of the sentence. The part which says something about the subject is called the predicate.

The subject of a sentence usually comes first, but occasionally it is put after the predicate.

Sweet are the uses of adversity. (Subject - the uses of adversity, predicate - are sweet)

In imperative sentences, the subject is usually left out.

Sit down. (Here the subject you is not mentioned but it is understood.)

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Consider the group of words 'on the roof'. It makes sense, but not complete sense. Such a group of words which makes sense, but not complete sense is called a phrase.

In the following sentences, the groups of words in italics are phrases.

The sun rises *in the east*.

The old man sat *in a corner*.

Humpty Dumpty sat *on a wall*.

Show me *how to do it*.

Now consider the groups of words in italics in the following sentences.

She has *a necklace of gold*.

She has a necklace *which is made of gold*.

We know that the group of words 'a necklace of gold' is a phrase. But the group of words 'which is made of gold' is not a phrase. It has a subject (which) and a predicate (is made of gold).

Such a group of words which forms part of a larger sentence, and contains a subject and a

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predicate is called a clause. In the following sentences, the groups of words in italics are clauses.

We cannot start *while it is raining*.

I think *that you are wrong*.

John, *who is a writer*, is known all over the world.