

How to write complex sentences

A complex sentence consists of one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses joined together with the help of subordinating conjunction(s).

Two clauses connected by relative pronouns or relative adverbs are also examples of complex sentences.

Writing a complex sentence is easy if you have a basic understanding of conjunctions and relative pronouns.

Study the examples given below.

Maria is a brilliant girl. She is 12 years old. She lives with her grandmother.

As you can see we have got three simple sentences. We can combine them together and form a complex sentence.

Maria is a brilliant 12 year old girl who lives with her grandmother.

Although we had three simple sentences, the complex sentence has only two clauses – one main clause and one subordinate clause – because we reduced one of the clauses into an adjective.

Here are some points to keep in mind when we combine simple sentences into complex sentences:

Avoid the repetition of words.

You will probably have to change words.

Add linking words like conjunctions or relative pronouns.

Another example is given below.

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Her name is Susie.

She is a well-known singer.

She lives in Chicago.

We can combine these three sentences in two ways.

Susie, who lives in Chicago, is a well-known singer.

OR Susie, who is a well-known singer, lives in Chicago.

Exercise

Combine the following pairs of simple sentences into complex sentences.

1. John went to the movies. He had a lot of work to do.
2. Vishnu is a brilliant boy. He has won several honors.
3. Mark didn't get the job. He lacked the necessary qualifications.
4. Harry is a baseball player. He is known all over the world.

Suggested answers

1. John went to the movies although he had a lot of work to do.
2. Vishnu is a brilliant boy who has won several honors.
3. Mark didn't get the job because he lacked the necessary qualifications.

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4. Harry is a baseball player who is known all over the world.