

Subordinating Conjunctions

The Clause Joiner

Reading and Discussion

Subordinating conjunctions are used to join a dependent clause to an independent clause. They join unequal parts. Here are some common subordinating conjunctions:

After	For	Than	While
Although	If	That	When
As	Once	Though	Whenever
As if	Since	Till	Where
Because	So	Unless	Whereas
Before	So that	Until	Wherever

Subordinating conjunctions are used to connect the main part of a sentence, the **independent clause**, with a **dependent clause** that usually acts like a modifier.

You need to know about these two kinds of clauses in order to understand how subordinating conjunctions work:

An independent clause is a complete thought; it can stand alone as a sentence.

A dependent clause does not make complete sense. It cannot stand alone as a sentence.

An independent clause is usually referred to as the **principal clause**. It is the main part of the sentence. The dependent clause is sometimes referred to as the **subordinate clause**. It depends on the principal clause to have meaning. Let's look at some examples:

- While Susan plays with her dolls, I will clean the kitchen.

I will clean the kitchen is the independent or principal clause. It makes a complete thought and it could stand alone.

While Susan plays with her dolls is the dependent or subordinate clause. It does not make a complete thought, and it could not stand alone.

By using the subordinating conjunction **while**, we join the two clauses together to make a complete thought and a complete sentence.

- You must practice daily **if** you want to join the team.

The word **if** is the subordinating conjunction. It joins the independent clause and the dependent clause together:

You must practice daily **if** you want to join the team.

Name _____

Date _____

Activities

Activity A: Time to Review.

Test your knowledge of subordinating conjunctions and independent clauses. Underline the subordinating conjunction in each sentence. Find the principal or independent clause and write it on the blank line below the sentences.

1. Since the class is so large, the children must share the textbooks.

2. Jacob plays computer games while he is supposed to be studying.

3. Cindy and Casey left before the concert ended.

4. The storm passed quickly once the rain began.

5. The bike trail was closed because of the landslide.

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Key

1. Since the class is so large, the children must share the textbooks.
The children must share the textbooks.
2. Jacob plays computer games while he is supposed to be studying.
Jacob plays computer games.
3. Cindy and Casey left before the concert ended.
Cindy and Casey left.
4. The storm passed quickly once the rain began.
The storm passed quickly.
5. The bike trail was closed because of the landslide.
The bike trail was closed.