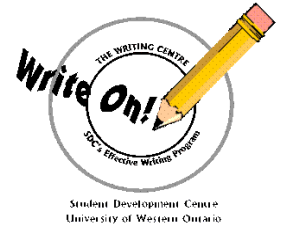


Name _____ Date _____ Period _____



Sentence Patterns: Simple, Compound, Complex (3)

When you use a variety of different sentence patterns, your writing flows more smoothly for the reader. There are four sentence patterns that you can use:

- Simple sentences contain one independent clause. An independent clause can stand alone as a complete sentence because it contains both a subject (noun) and a predicate (verb).

The rat ate the cheese.

- Compound sentences contain two or more independent clauses. These clauses are joined either by a semi-colon, or a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction (**For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So--FANBOYS**).

The rat ate the cheese, but he did not drink the wine.
The rat ate the cheese; he did not drink the wine.

Independent clause: the rat ate the cheese
Independent clause: he did not drink the wine

- Complex sentences contain one independent clause, and at least one subordinate clause. Remember, both independent and subordinate clauses contain subject & verb.

The rat ate the cheese because he was hungry.

Independent clause: the rat ate the cheese
Subordinate clause: because he was hungry

- Compound-complex sentences contain two or more independent clauses, and one or more subordinate clauses.

Instead of going hungry, the rat ate the cheese; however, he did not drink the wine.

Subordinate clause: instead of going hungry
Independent clause: the rat ate the cheese
Independent clause: he did not drink the wine

Note: It is key that you look for subordinating conjunctions first (after, when, since, before, because, if, while, besides, as, even though, whenever, although) as they make subordinate/dependent clauses; then look for the coordinating conjunctions FANBOYS with a comma and complete sentence after it. If you have both together, you have a compound/complex sentence. If neither applies, it is a simple sentence!

Practice Exercise¹

Identify the following sentences as simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

1. You should leave now, or you will have to wait until tomorrow for the next train.

2. Martha presented a new and controversial marketing campaign, but when her co-workers objected, she was forced to modify it. _____
3. No one will be allowed in that class unless he or she has registered in advance for it. _____
4. Don't forget to put out fresh food and water for the dog. _____
5. On Tuesday, the Smiths painted the porch, watered their lawn, and bought new summer furniture. _____
6. Greg is articulate, but he is very immature. _____
7. I don't care what you say; this sentence is boring. _____
8. If you cannot send the program to the mainframe, all your hard work will be wasted. _____
9. Evangeline was hard at work in her garden while her husband was taking a nap on the couch. _____
10. While we are waiting, let's play cards until Joe returns; it will help pass the time.

¹ Adapted from Put it in Writing, Prentice-Hall p. 143.