



LIFE·PAC®

Language Arts

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Alpha Omega Publications®

# **LANGUAGE ARTS 1102**

## **WRITING EFFECTIVE SENTENCES**

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# WRITING EFFECTIVE SENTENCES

The abilities both to speak and to write effectively are among the most important skills you can learn in school. Your ability to communicate with others contributes largely to your effectiveness in social, economic, and spiritual activities. Your ideas, however good, are of little importance unless you can express them clearly. Understanding the way language works and the ways it can be used is indispensable to developing language skills. Studying the organization and structure of the English language will help you both to speak and to write more effectively.

Proverbs 18:4 says, “The words of a man’s mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook.” Although this verse refers primarily to the spiritual attitude underlying a person’s speech, it may also apply to the “deep waters” of his knowledge of the nature and effective use of language.

In 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul gives Timothy advice which is also applicable to us. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” This LIFEPAK® will help you to learn to use words in such a manner that your speech and writing are commendable and easily understood. You should also be able both to understand and to communicate God’s Word better.

Everyone realizes that athletic skill can bring pleasure both to those who possess and use it and to those who watch it exercised. In a similar way, skill in the use of words can bring pleasure and satisfaction both to those who possess the skill and to those who observe it exercised. Learning how language is structured will help you to develop your own language skills and to appreciate the language skills of others.

In this LIFEPAK you will study main clauses and subordinate clauses. You will learn how clauses are used correctly in writing. You will also study such subordinating devices as relative pronouns and subordinating conjunctions in order to use them correctly and effectively. Another class of words you will study is verbals. You will learn how both to form and to use correctly participles, gerunds, and infinitives. You will also study the use of words and phrases as appositives.

God’s Word says in Proverbs 1:5, “A wise man will hear and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.” In Proverbs 4:13 we read, “Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life.” While these verses speak primarily of spiritual truths, they may be applied to all learning, for all truth is of God.

## OBJECTIVES

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAK.

When you have completed this LIFEPAK, you should be able to:

1. Identify main and subordinate clauses.
2. Determine whether a noun clause is used as the subject of a verb, a subject complement, the direct object of a verb, or the object of a preposition.
3. Identify adjective clauses and tell which noun they modify.
4. Recognize adverb clauses and tell how they are used.
5. Use elliptical clauses correctly.
6. Use subordinating words correctly to introduce subordinate clauses.
7. Choose the correct form of the relative pronoun according to its use in the clause.
8. Use subordinating conjunctions in introducing adverb clauses.
9. Form present and past participles, gerunds, and infinitives from verbs.
10. Distinguish between present participles and gerunds.
11. Use participial, gerund, and infinitive phrases.
12. List the distinctive uses of each of the three verbals.
13. Use appositives correctly.

**Survey the LIFE PAC.** Ask yourself some questions about this study. Write your questions here.

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## I. CLAUSES

As we grow older, our skill in the use of words becomes more mature. One characteristic of mature writing is the frequent and correct use of the subordinate clause. Studying the different kinds of clauses will help us to write sentences that are expressive and smooth, and will help to make our writing more varied and precise.

In this section you will be studying about two major groups of clauses: main clauses, which are independent, and subordinate clauses, which are dependent. Three types of subordinate clauses you will be working with include noun clauses, adjective clauses, and adverb clauses.

### SECTION OBJECTIVES

**Review these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Identify main and subordinate clauses.
2. Determine whether a noun clause is used as the subject of a verb, a subject complement, the direct object of a verb, or the object of a preposition.
3. Identify adjective clauses and tell which noun they modify.
4. Recognize adverb clauses and tell how they are used.
5. Use elliptical clauses correctly.

### VOCABULARY

**Study these words** to enhance your learning success in this section.

clause

subject complement

elliptical clause

subordinate clause

phrase

**Note:** All vocabulary words in this LIFE PAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

A **clause** is a group of grammatically related words, which has a subject and predicate and is used as part of a sentence. A clause is easily distinguished from a **phrase**, which has neither subject nor predicate.

## MAIN CLAUSES

A main clause is one whose meaning is complete. A main clause is sometimes called an *independent clause* because it can stand alone as a sentence. *He ran* is a main clause; so is *our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation*.

Main clauses are the basis of all types of sentences, whether *simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex*. A main clause used alone or with any number of phrases is a simple sentence. Two main clauses joined by a conjunction or punctuation form a compound sentence. The subject or the predicate of a main clause, or both, may be compound.

### → Underline the main clause or clauses in each sentence.

- 1.1 My brother attends Notre Dame University.
- 1.2 Have you seen my pet turtle, Mother?
- 1.3 Most of the juniors and all of the seniors will be going on the field trip to the capital.
- 1.4 Cats make good house pets, but I like dogs better.
- 1.5 Cathy went to the store because we were out of milk.

## SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

The word *subordinate* means of *lesser rank*. In the army a sergeant is subordinate to a lieutenant. In grammar a subordinate clause is one that is less than a sentence—one that does not make sense by itself. It is sometimes referred to as a *dependent clause*. The **subordinate clause** *depends* upon the main clause to complete its meaning.

In the following examples, the subordinate clauses are italicized.

*Since Christ came into my heart, my life has changed completely.*

The first clause is subordinate, since it depends upon the second clause for its complete meaning. The second clause, which can stand alone and which expresses a complete thought, is the main clause.

*Born Again is a book which I can recommend.*

The first clause is the main clause; it expresses a complete thought. The second clause is not set off by commas, but it is nevertheless a subordinate clause. It has a subject and a verb, but it cannot stand alone. A subordinate clause can function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

### → Underline the subordinate clause in each sentence.

- 1.6 Although the assignment was given early, Joe's term paper was late.
- 1.7 The hazards of oil drilling were demonstrated when an oil rig in the North Sea exploded.



- 1.8 A survey revealed that more than 80 percent of industrial polluters are currently meeting federal regulations.
- 1.9 Congress finally passed a bill that establishes federal control over strip-mined land.
- 1.10 In a study of work environments, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration found that one out of every four workers is exposed to hazardous materials or conditions.
- 1.11 The president offered a plan to revise the nation's welfare system, although the proposal met with some opposition.
- 1.12 Early in the year a national problem took center stage as the president formulated his position on labor unions and strikes.
- 1.13 He recommended fines for employers who hired illegal aliens.
- 1.14 A huge quantity of toxic materials which had been dumped into the city water system contaminated a major waste treatment plant.
- 1.15 Amateur sports must become better organized if the United States wishes to perform more successfully in international competition.

**Noun clauses.** A subordinate clause functioning as a noun can be used in a variety of ways. Like a common or proper noun, a noun clause can serve as the subject of a sentence.

**Example:** *What I have always wanted to do* is to learn to play the piano.

Noun clauses can also function as objects of either verbs or prepositions.

**Example:** I knew *that the lightning had struck a tree*.

In the preceding example, the noun clause is the object of the verb *knew*. What the speaker *knew* was *that the lightning had struck a tree*.

Indirect quotations also use noun clauses as direct objects.

**Example:** He said *that John had gone home*.

In the sentence, *Give the prize to whoever submits the best original short story*, the noun clause is the object of the preposition *to*. Note that the whole clause, not the pronoun alone, is the object of the preposition. *Whoever* is the subject of the clause and is therefore in the nominative rather than the objective case. This sentence can be reworded to read: *Give whoever submits the best original short story the prize*. The noun clause in this version serves as an indirect object. The length of this noun clause makes its use as an indirect object a bit cumbersome. Such awkwardness is a common problem, best avoided by using a prepositional phrase beginning with *to* rather than having the clause serve as an indirect object.

Besides serving as a subject or an object of a verb or preposition, a noun clause can be used as a **subject complement** or a predicate nominative. A subject complement renames the subject and completes the meaning of the verb.

**Example:** Your loving care is *what I need most*.

Most positions which can be filled by nouns can be filled by noun clauses.