

Lesson 3
Noun Clauses

Reteaching

A **noun clause** is a subordinate clause that is used in a sentence as a noun. Noun clauses may be used anywhere in a sentence that nouns can be used and serve the same function as a noun.

- Subject** Whether the defendant is guilty is the question.
- Direct Object** The plaintiff claims that her landlord cheated her.
- Indirect Object** She gives whoever listens a long, sad story.
- Predicate Nominative** The truth may be what she says.
- Object of a Preposition** Don't be swayed by how tearful she becomes.

Usually, a noun clause is introduced by one of these words: a **subordinating conjunction**, such as *that, how, when, where, whether, and why*; or a **relative pronoun**, such as *what, whatever, who, whom, whoever, whomever, which, and whichever*. If no introductory word is used, you can still recognize a noun clause if the clause can be replaced in the sentence by *someone* or *something*.

Identifying Noun Clauses and Their Uses

Underline the noun clause in each sentence. Then, on the line, indicate how the noun clause is used: write **S** for subject, **DO** for direct object, **IO** for indirect object, **PN** for predicate nominative, or **OP** for object of a preposition.

1. The bailiff announced that the judge was entering the room. _____
2. Whoever committed the crime should be punished. _____
3. His alibi is that he was bowling that night. _____
4. The angry man gave whoever was in his way a push. _____
5. Most of the jurors were alarmed by how readily the witness changed her story. _____
6. Tuesday was when the crime spree began. _____
7. None of the witnesses noticed whether she arrived with her husband. _____
8. The clerk made a list of what was missing. _____
9. Why anyone turns to a life of crime is a puzzle to me. _____
10. To avoid capture, the thief hid under whatever was at hand. _____
11. Juries must give whichever person is charged the benefit of the doubt. _____
12. Which house they broke into depended on the vandals' mood at that moment. _____
13. What the prosecution claimed, the defense rejected. _____
14. The bank robbers gave whoever was in the lobby a minute to lie down. _____
15. A dependable getaway car was what they lacked. _____
16. The villainous witness supported whichever side paid him well. _____
17. That the defendant has a criminal past was kept from the jury. _____

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More Practice

A. Identifying Noun Clauses and Their Uses

Underline the noun clause in each sentence. Then, on the line, indicate how the noun clause is used: write **S** for subject, **DO** for direct object, **IO** for indirect object, **PN** for predicate nominative, or **OP** for object of a preposition.

1. How global warming affects our planet is a matter of great concern. _____
2. We can offer whoever answers our ad a choice of interview dates. _____
3. Jeannie didn't know how she could break the bad news to the yearbook staff. _____
4. The employer gave a generous bonus to whoever had been with the company for over one year. _____
5. What pleased Alex most was that he would be at a beach for his vacation. _____
6. Jeff's opinion was that we should apologize. _____
7. No one could understand why Penny became so angry. _____
8. The author gave a description of what life was like in the Middle Ages. _____
9. Looking at the night sky, Isabel wondered when the next full moon would be. _____
10. Please tell whoever answers the news. _____

B. Using Noun Clauses

Revise each of the numbered sentences by replacing the underlined word with one of the lettered noun clauses. Write the revised sentences on the lines provided.

- a. who gets called to serve on a jury
- b. how much time she will serve
- c. where the crime occurred
- d. why the wrongdoer committed the crime
- e. who caused the hung jury

1. The jurors were taken to the place.

2. The twelfth juror was the person.

3. The police have a better chance of finding the criminal if they know that.

4. That is a result of chance.

5. The judge decides that.

Noun Clauses

Application

A. Using Noun Clauses

Rewrite each numbered sentence by including a noun clause as directed in the parentheses. Underline the noun clause in each new sentence.

(1) Marc met quite a few people on his vacation and told each one about his job (IO). (2) He remembers clearly his first days on the job as a court reporter (DO). (3) His interest in his job has not been dulled by the fact that he has been in it for a long time (OP). (4) His main interest is the person on trial; he doesn't care who it is (PN). (5) Besides, anything that comes to trial involves some mystery (S).

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

B. Writing with Noun Clauses

You are a trial lawyer in a civil case involving the events described below. You may represent either the plaintiff or the defendant. Write your opening speech to the jury in which you outline what you intend to prove in this trial. In your speech, include at least five sentences using noun clauses. Show at least three of the possible uses of noun clauses (subject, direct object, indirect object, predicate nominative, or object of a preposition).

Defendant borrowed plaintiff's motorbike, promising to return it by 6 P.M. Because of tornado warnings, defendant did not return bike on time. Plaintiff phoned defendant at 7 P.M. and insisted on getting bike back immediately. Returning the bike in bad weather, defendant skidded and crashed. Although defendant was unhurt, the bike was a total loss. Plaintiff is suing for cost of new motorbike.
