

# SPaG Knowledge Organiser: Writing Complex (Multi-Clause) Sentences

## Key Vocabulary

**main clause:** A simple sentence that includes a subject and a verb.

**relative clause:** A dependent clause that adds more information about the noun or clause directly before it.

**dependent clause:** A dependent clause can be added to a main clause to make a complex sentence.

**subordinate clause:** Another word for a dependent clause. Subordinate clauses often start with subordinating conjunctions.

**subject:** The person, animal or object that is doing or being the verb.

**verb:** A doing or being word, such as: kicking; walk; touched.

**simple sentence:** A sentence that contains a subject and a verb with no conjunctions.

**complex sentence:** A multi-clause sentence that includes a main clause and a dependent clause.

## Starting Out!

A **main clause** is a simple sentence that includes a **subject** and a **verb**.

The giraffe stretched its neck.

The giant carried the cow.

Craig sat down.



## Use It!

Now, choose a **subordinating conjunction**.

The giraffe stretched its neck **because...**

The giant carried the cow **although...**

Craig sat down **before...**

TOP TIP: **I SAW A WABUB** can help you to remember common subordinating conjunctions.

## Extend It!

Next, turn your simple sentences into **complex sentences** by completing your **subordinate clause**.

The giraffe stretched its neck **because the leaves were so high up.**

The giant carried the cow **although it wriggled and squirmed.**

Craig sat down **before eating the delicious bowl of custard.**

## Become an Expert!

To become an expert at writing complex sentences, try using the subordinate clause at the beginning of the sentence:

**Although it was a cold day**, Anita refused to wear her coat.

Instead of using a **subordinating conjunction**, try adding a **relative clause** instead:

The firefighter ran towards the house, **which was engulfed in thick, black smoke.**

Slowly, the black cat, **who was well known in this neighbourhood**, crept up the path.

**Congratulations – you have reached expert status!**

TOP TIP: Always use a comma after your subordinate clause if it is at the beginning of the sentence.

## Try to remember...

The best pieces of writing use a mix of complex sentences, compound sentences and simple sentences.