



# IIT Madras

## BSc Degree

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# **CLAUSE ANALYSIS 3: ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE**

- We have seen that some subordinate clauses can work like nouns. They can be subject or objects to verbs. Sometimes they can also occur in apposition to other nouns.
- Some subordinate clauses can work like adjectives. Look at the following sentence, for example

*By eight he was at his desk in his 'room', which was only a corner in his father's dressing-room.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
By eight he was at his desk in his room	Which was only a corner in his father's dressing room- subordinate adjectival clause qualifying 'room'

- This subordinate adjectival clause can be replaced with one adjectival phrase such as ‘on the roof’, ‘behind the wall’, ‘beside the entrance’, ‘by the entrance’, etc.
- All these phrases work like an adjective qualifying the noun ‘room’. So, that is why grammarians call clauses of this kind ‘adjectival clause’.

Find adjectival clauses in the following paragraph

While the teacher was scrutinizing the sums,  
Swaminathan was gazing on his face, which seemed so  
tame at close quarters.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL/ADVERBIAL CLAUSE
Swaminathan was gazing on his face	i. While the teacher was scrutinizing the sums, ii. which seemed so tame at close quarters

*It was taken by D. Pillai, who had earned a name in the school for kindness and good humour.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
It was taken by D. Pillai	‘who had earned a name in the school for kindness and good humour’ is the subordinate adjectival clause qualifying the noun ‘D. Pillai’

*There were moments in it that brought stirring pictures before one.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
There were moments	'that brought stirring pictures before one' qualifying the noun 'moments'

*The only trouble was that the Scripture master, Mr Ebenezar, was a fanatic.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
The only trouble was	'that the Scripture master, Mr Ebenezar, was a fanatic'-Subordinate adjectival clause qualifying the noun 'trouble'

# ACTIVITY

Look at the following paragraph and identify sentences with subordinate adjectival clause. You can also say which nouns they qualify.

*When Swaminathan came out of the room, the whole school crowded round him and hung on his lips. But he treated inquisitive questions with haughty indifference. He honoured only four persons with his confidence. Those were the four that he liked and admired most in his class. The first was Somu, the Monitor, who carried himself with such an easy air. He set about his business, whatever it was, with absolute confidence and calmness. He was known to be chummy even with the teachers. No teacher ever put to him a question in the class. It could not be said that he shone brilliantly as a student. It was believed that only the Head Master could reprimand him. He was more or less the uncle of the class. Then there was Mani, the mighty Good-For-Nothing. He towered above all the other boys of the class. He seldom brought any books to the class, and never bothered about home-work. He came to the class, monopolised the last bench, and slept bravely. No teacher ever tried to prod him. It was said that a new teacher who once tried it very nearly lost his life. Mani bullied all strangers that came his way, be they big or small.*

# ANSWERS

*Those were the four that he liked and admired most in his class.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
Those were the four	‘that he liked and admired most in his class’ qualifying the noun ‘four’.

*The first was Somu, the Monitor, who carried himself with such an easy air.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
The first was Somu, the Monitor,	‘who carried himself with such an easy air’ qualifying the noun ‘Somu, the monitor’.

*He set about his business, whatever it was, with absolute confidence and calmness.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

He set about his business

SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE

‘whatever it was, with absolute confidence and calmness’ qualifying the noun ‘business’.

*It was said that a new teacher who once tried it very nearly lost his life.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE NOUN CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
It was said	that a new teacher.... very nearly lost his life	'who once tried it' qualifying the noun 'teacher'.

*Mani bullied all strangers that came his way, be they big or small.*

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	SUBORDINATE ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE
Mani bullied all strangers	'that came his way, be they big or small' qualifying the noun 'strangers'

# ACTIVITY 2

Look at the following paragraph and identify sentences with subordinate adjectival clause. You can also say which nouns they qualify.

*People usually slunk aside when he passed. Wearing his cap at an angle, with a Tamil novel under his arm, he had been coming to the school ever since the old school peon could remember. In most of the classes he stayed longer than his friends did. Swaminathan was proud of his friendship. While others crouched in awe, he -could address him as 'Mani' with gusto and pat him on the back familiarly. Swaminathan admiringly asked whence Mani derived his power. Mani replied that he had a pair of wooden clubs at home with which he would break the backs of those that dared to tamper with him. Then there was Sankar, the most brilliant boy of the class. He solved any problem that was given to him in five minutes, and always managed to border on 90 %. There was a belief among a section of the boys that if only he started cross-examining the teachers the teachers would be nowhere. Another section asserted that Sankar was a dud and that he learnt all the problems and their solution in advance by his sycophancy. He was said to receive his 90% as a result of washing clothes for his masters. He could speak to the teachers in English in the open class. He knew all the rivers, mountains, and countries in the world. He could repeat History in his sleep. Grammar was child's play to him.*

*His face was radiant with intelligence, though his nose was almost always damp, and though he came to the class with his hair braided and with flowers in it. Swaminathan looked on him as a marvel. He was very happy when he made Mani see eye to eye with him and admit Sankar to their company. Mani liked him in his own way and brought down his heavy fist on Sankar's back whenever he felt inclined to demonstrate his affection. He would scratch his head and ask where the blithering fool of a scraggy youngster got all that brain from and why he should not part with a little of it. The fourth friend was Samuel known as the 'Pea' on account of his size. There was nothing outstanding about him. He was just ordinary, no outstanding virtue of muscle or intellect. He was as bad in Arithmetic as Swaminathan was. He was as apprehensive, weak, and nervous, about things as Swaminathan was. The bond between them was laughter. They were able to see together the same absurdities and incongruities in things. The most trivial and unnoticeable thing to others would tickle them to death.*

**Thank you!**