



IIT Madras
ONLINE DEGREE

COMPLEX SENTENCE 3 : ADJECTIVAL CLAUSE

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- We saw in the earlier unit that some clauses work like nouns, and can be subject, or object of verbs in another clause.
- Some subordinate clauses, in a similar manner, can also function like adjectives. These are called adjectival clauses. For example.

He that is down needs fear no fall.

- There are two clauses in this sentence, as shown through brackets below.

[He [that is down] ^{adj Cl} needs fear no fall ^{main cl} .]

- In the sentence above, we have two clauses, as follows.

Main clause	Subordinate clause
He needs fear no fall	that is down

- This subordinate clause is an adjectival clause as it qualifies the subject of main clause “He”. What is the test? If you ask who needs fear no fall, the answer is “He that is down...”.

- Let us look at another sentence.

All that glitters is not gold.

Main Clause

All is not gold

**Sub adjectival
clause**

that glitters

it qualifies “All”, the subject of the main clause.

- So, any clause that qualifies a noun in another clause is an adjectival clause.
- You should do some exercise with the passage given below.

ACTIVITY

Look at the following passage and identify all the subordinate adjectival clauses that may be there.

1. He would shoot anyone that called him a liar.'
Granny expressed her approval of this attitude and then begged leave to start the story of Harischandra, who, just to be true to his word, lost his throne, wife, and child, and got them all back in the end. She was half-way through it when Swaminathan's rhythmic snoring punctuated her narration, and she lay down to sleep.

ANSWERS

Activity 1:

Main Clause

He would shoot anyone

**Sub adjectival
clause**

that called him a liar

Sub adj clause qualifying “anyone”
in the Main clause.

Main Clause

Granny expressed her approval of this attitude

and then begged leave to start the story of Harischandra

**Sub
adjectival
clause**

who, [just to be true to his word,] lost his throne, wife, and child,

Sub adj clause qualifying “Harischandra” in the Main clause.

**Sub
adjectival
clause**

and [who] got them all back in the end.

Sub adj clause qualifying “Harischandra” in the Main clause.

ACTIVITY

2. Rajam's father lived in Lawley Extension (named after the mighty engineer Sir Frederick Lawley, who was at one time the Superintending Engineer for Malgudi Circle), which consisted of about fifty neat bungalows, mostly occupied by government officials. The Trunk Road to Trichinopoly passed a few yards in front of these houses.

ANSWERS

Main Clause	Sub adjectival clause	
Rajam's father lived in Lawley Extension (named after the mighty engineer Sir Frederick Lawley	who was at one time the Superintending Engineer for Malgudi Circle	qualifying Sir Frederick Lawley in the Main Clause
	which consisted of about fifty neat bungalows	qualifying Malgudi Circle

ACTIVITY

3. This was a great disappointment to Swaminathan and Mani, who were waiting with watering mouths.

ANSWERS

Main Clause	Sub adjectival clause	
This was a great disappointment to Swaminathan and Mani	who were waiting with watering mouths	qualifying Swami and Mani in the main clause

ACTIVITY

4. Here Swaminathan's grandmother lived with all her belongings, which consisted of an elaborate bed made of five carpets.

ANSWERS

Main Clause	Sub adjectival clause	
Here Swaminathan's grandmother lived with all her belongings	which consisted of an elaborate bed made of five carpets	qualifying “belongings” in the main clause.

ACTIVITY

5. Look at the following table. Column A has the main clause from some sentences, and column B has the subordinate clause. But they have got mixed up.

Rearrange the table by writing the appropriate adjectival clause for each main clause given there.

	A. Main Clause	B. Subordinate Clause
i	Many tourists visit this railway station	whose wife belongs to this place.
ii.	This room is marked for the railway station staff	which is known for its antique architecture.
iii.	There is the Station Master first	which is not very large.
iv.	Then there is the Assistant Station Master	who are the only outsiders.
v.	There are only the two pointsmen	who has been here for a long time.

ANSWERS

	A. Main Clause	B. Subordinate Clause
i.	Many tourists visit this railway station	which is known for its antique architecture.
ii.	This room is marked for the railway station staff	which is not very large.
iii.	There is the Station Master first	who has been here for a long time.
iv.	Then there is the Assistant Station Master	whose wife belongs to this place.
v.	There are only the two pointsmen	who are the only outsiders here.

Thank You!