

Commas with Complex Sentences: *The Case of the Missing Commas*



A complex sentence has an independent clause and a dependent clause. They are put together in a sentence using a word called a subordinating conjunction. Examples of coordinating conjunctions are: **because, how, which, while, after, though, unless, even though** and **until**.



Example:

Jeff mowed the lawn because he wanted his allowance.

Jeff mowed the lawn is the independent clause. The dependent clause is *he wanted his allowance*. The subordinating conjunction is *because*. There is no comma between the two clauses because the subordinating conjunction separates them.

If the dependent clause is at the beginning of the sentence, a comma separates the dependent clause from the independent clause.

Although she orders pizza, Jeanette's favorite food is chicken.

Below are some complex sentences. Some of the dependent clauses are at the beginning; others are at the end. You are the comma detective! Rewrite the sentences and add the commas where they are needed.

1. They played checkers until it was time to go home.

2. Even though Lee prefers blue Charlotte picked yellow.

3. Since there was no school that day the children played in the snow.

4. We thought she was nice because she smiled a lot.

5. Mike ate his vegetables before he ate his dessert.

6. While the class took a test the teacher graded papers.



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1. They played checkers until it was time to go home.

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Even though Lee prefers blue, Charlotte picked yellow.

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Since there was no school that day, the children played in the snow.

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