

ArivArk General English Video Series

Simple, Compound, Complex Sentences + Synthesis: Practice Questions

Group 2/2A Prelims: General English, Unit I Grammar

Real questions: TNPSC previous year questions (2025), official answer key. Practice questions: ArivArk Academy.

Simple, compound and complex sentences

Type	Clauses	Joined by	Example
Simple	one clause (one subject + one finite verb)	no joining word	Ravi plays cricket.
Compound	two or more independent clauses (each can stand alone)	and, but, or, so, yet	Ravi plays cricket, and his sister plays chess.
Complex	one main clause + one or more dependent clauses	because, when, if, though, as, who, which, that, how	Ravi plays cricket when it is sunny.

Clause and phrase

Clause: a group of words with its own subject and verb. "Ravi plays cricket." (Ravi = subject, plays = verb)

Phrase: a group of words without a subject-verb pair. "in the morning", "a crown made of gold".

Adjective phrase: describes a noun. "made of gold" tells us which crown.

Dependent clause: has a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone. "how beautiful the girl was" in "He commented how beautiful the girl was."

Transformation: one meaning, three forms

Simple	Compound	Complex
Being tired, he went to bed.	He was tired, so he went to bed.	As he was tired, he went to bed.
In spite of his poverty, he is honest.	He is poor, but he is honest.	Though he is poor, he is honest.

Simple	Compound	Complex
On seeing the police, the thief ran away.	The thief saw the police and ran away.	When the thief saw the police, he ran away.
Besides being a singer, she is a dancer.	She is not only a singer but also a dancer.	She is a dancer who is also a singer.

Synthesis: joining sentences

Synthesis = combining two or more simple sentences into one sentence.

so / and so (cause and effect): The company decreased its product prices, so sales increased gradually.

who / which / that (relative clause): I met a boy. He was very clever. = I met a boy who was very clever.

-ing participle: He heard the noise. He woke up. = Hearing the noise, he woke up.

too ... to / so ... that: He is very weak. He cannot walk. = He is too weak to walk.

Quick tips

"and" does not always make a compound sentence: "Ravi and Kumar play cricket" has only one verb (play), so it is simple.

Count the verbs, then the clauses: one finite verb = simple; two clauses that can stand alone = compound; a clause that leans on another = complex.

Though / Although / Because / When / If at the start usually means a complex sentence.

TNPSC PYQs (official key)

1. The phrase A crown made of gold is

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| (A) an adjective phrase | (B) an adjective clause |
| (C) an adverbial phrase | (D) an adverbial clause |

Answer: (A) an adjective phrase. No subject-verb pair, so it is a phrase; "made of gold" describes the noun "crown", so it is an adjective phrase.

2. Identify the sentence. "He commented how beautiful the girl was".

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| (A) Simple sentence | (B) Compound sentence |
| (C) Complex sentence | (D) Interrogative sentence |

Answer: (C) Complex sentence. "He commented" is the main clause; "how beautiful the girl was" is a dependent (noun) clause: complex.

3. Which of the following is the best synthesis of the two sentences using a cause-effect relationship?

Sentence 1: The company decreased its product prices. **Sentence 2:** Sales increased gradually.

(a) The company decreased its product prices, which caused sales to increase gradually. (b) The company decreased its product prices, so sales increased gradually. (c) The company decreased its product prices and sales increased gradually. (d) Sales increased gradually as a result of the company decreasing its product prices.

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| (A) (a) | (B) (b) |
| (C) (c) | (D) (d) |

Answer: (B) (b). "so" shows the effect clearly; "and" only adds the two facts.

Practice MCQs

1. "The sun rises in the east." is a _____ sentence.

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| (A) compound-complex | (B) simple |
| (C) compound | (D) complex |

2. "She is poor, but she is honest." is a _____ sentence.

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| (A) compound | (B) complex |
| (C) simple | (D) exclamatory |

3. "I know that he is honest." is a _____ sentence.

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|----------------|-------------|
| (A) imperative | (B) simple |
| (C) compound | (D) complex |

4. "Ravi and Kumar went to school." is a _____ sentence.

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| (A) simple | (B) complex |
| (C) interrogative | (D) compound |

5. "Though it was raining, we went out." is a _____ sentence.

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| (A) simple | (B) imperative |
| (C) complex | (D) compound |

6. Change into complex: "In spite of his illness, he attended the class."

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| (A) Though he was ill, he attended the class. | (B) He was ill, but he attended the class. |
| (C) Being ill, he attended the class. | (D) He was ill and attended the class. |

7. Change into compound: "Being tired, she slept early."

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| (A) As she was tired, she slept early. | (B) Because tired, she slept early. |
| (C) She was tired, so she slept early. | (D) She slept early being tired. |

8. Change into simple: "As he was ill, he could not come."

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| (A) He was ill, so he could not come. | (B) He was ill and he could not come. |
| (C) Though he was ill, he could not come. | (D) Owing to his illness, he could not come. |

9. Combine: "I have a pen. It writes well."

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| (A) I have a pen, it writes well. | (B) I have a pen who writes well. |
| (C) I have a pen which writes well. | (D) I have a pen and writes well. |

10. Combine: "He saw a snake. He ran away."

- (A) Seeing a snake, he ran away. (B) He saw a snake ran away.
(C) Saw a snake, he ran away. (D) Seen a snake, he ran away.

11. Combine: "He is very weak. He cannot walk."

- (A) He is too weak to walk. (B) He is weak enough to walk.
(C) He is very weak to walk. (D) He is so weak to walk.

12. Which joining word makes a compound sentence?

- (A) but (B) although
(C) because (D) when

13. Which joining word makes a complex sentence?

- (A) but (B) or
(C) and (D) because

14. "The boy who came here is my brother." The part "who came here" is

- (A) an adverb clause (B) a noun clause
(C) a phrase (D) an adjective clause

15. "I will go when he comes." The part "when he comes" is

- (A) a noun clause (B) an adjective clause
(C) an adverb clause of time (D) a phrase

16. "A man of courage" is

- (A) an adverb phrase (B) a noun clause
(C) an adjective phrase (D) an adjective clause

17. "He came in a hurry." "in a hurry" is

- (A) a noun phrase (B) an adjective phrase
(C) an adverb phrase (D) a clause

18. Change into compound: "If you work hard, you will pass."

- (A) Work hard, and you will pass. (B) Working hard, you will pass.
(C) You will pass if hard. (D) Though you work hard, you will pass.

19. Change into complex: "She is not only beautiful but also intelligent."

- (A) She is beautiful and she is also intelligent. (B) She is a beautiful girl who is also intelligent.
(C) Being beautiful, she is intelligent. (D) Besides being beautiful, she is intelligent.

20. Combine using "so": "It was very late. We took a taxi."

- (A) It was very late so that we took a taxi. (B) It was very late, so we took a taxi.
(C) So it was late, we took a taxi. (D) It was so late we took taxi.

Answer key: 1 B, 2 A, 3 D, 4 A, 5 C, 6 A, 7 C, 8 D, 9 C, 10 A, 11 A, 12 A, 13 D, 14 D, 15 C, 16 C, 17 C, 18 A, 19 B, 20 B

Why? Short explanations

- 1 (B)** One subject (the sun), one verb (rises).
2 (A) Two independent clauses joined by "but".
3 (D) "that he is honest" is a dependent clause.
4 (A) Only one verb (went); "and" joins two subjects, not two clauses.
5 (C) "Though it was raining" cannot stand alone: complex.
6 (A) Though + clause = complex.
7 (C) "so" joins two independent clauses.
8 (D) A phrase (owing to his illness) replaces the clause.
9 (C) "which" for things.
10 (A) -ing participle joins the two actions.
11 (A) very ... cannot = too ... to.
12 (A) and, but, or, so join independent clauses.
13 (D) because starts a dependent clause.
14 (D) It describes the noun "boy".
15 (C) It tells when: adverb clause of time.
16 (C) "of courage" describes the noun "man".

17 (C) It tells how he came.

18 (A) imperative + and is the compound form of "if".

19 (B) Complex needs a dependent clause: "who is also intelligent".

20 (B) so shows the result.

