

Adventures with Subordinate Clauses

Learning objective: To identify and use subordinate clauses to add extra detail to sentences.

Read the story below about Max the monkey. A subordinate clause adds extra information but cannot stand alone as a sentence. It usually starts with a subordinating conjunction like 'although', 'because', 'while', 'if', or 'since'. Complete the questions to show your understanding.

Max the monkey sat in the ancient mahogany tree. Although the sun was beginning to set, Max was still busy counting the golden coconuts he had gathered. He loved to solve maths puzzles while the gentle breeze rustled the leaves. Because he was so focused, he did not notice the curious squirrel watching him from a nearby branch. If Max finished his counting early, he planned to share his delicious fruit with his friends. Since the jungle was peaceful, he felt quite content.

Word bank: although · because · while · since · unless · whenever

1. Identify the subordinate clause in the sentence: 'Although the sun was beginning to set, Max was still busy counting the golden coconuts.' (2 marks)

2. Explain why the group of words 'because he was so focused' cannot be a sentence on its own. (3 marks)

3. Add a subordinate clause to the start of this sentence: 'Max climbed higher into the tree.' Remember to use a comma after your clause. (2 marks)

4. Compare the function of the word 'while' in the passage to how it might be used in a different context. Justify why it is a subordinating conjunction. (4 marks)

5. What might happen to the meaning of the final sentence if you replaced 'Since' with 'Unless'? Explain the change in tone. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Max the monkey in his mahogany tree with his pile of golden coconuts. Include a speech bubble showing Max using a sentence with a subordinate clause about his maths puzzle.



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph about a jungle mystery. You must include at least three subordinate clauses. Challenge yourself by placing one at the beginning of a sentence and one in the middle.