SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

CEFR Level B2 — Upper-Intermediate

English Language Worksheets | 4 Worksheets + Answer Key

Worksheet 1: Finite, Non-Finite & Verbless Clauses

Not every subordinate clause has a tensed verb.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PART A — **Look and learn**

Type	Description	Example
finite	has a tensed verb and a subject	Because she was tired, she left.
non-finite: -ing	participle; subject often shared	Being tired, she left.
non-finite: -ed	past participle; usually passive	Published in 1890, the book shocked readers.
non-finite: to-infinitive	purpose or complement	To succeed, you must practise.
verbless	no verb at all; subject shared	Though exhausted, she continued.

*Danger! In non-finite and verbless clauses the implied subject must be the subject of the main clause, or the participle **dangles**.*

PART B — **Identify the clause type**

Write FINITE, -ING, -ED, TO-INF or VERBLESS.

1. Written in haste, the letter contained errors. → _____
2. Although uncertain, he agreed to the terms. → _____
3. She stayed home because she felt unwell. → _____
4. To understand the result, read the appendix. → _____
5. Knowing the risk, they proceeded anyway. → _____
6. When the alarm sounded, everyone froze. → _____

PART C — **Reduce the clause**

Reduce each finite subordinate clause to a non-finite or verbless one.

1. Because he had lost his keys, he waited outside.
   → _____
2. Although she was nervous, she gave the speech.
   → _____

3 The report, which was written by a junior analyst, was ignored.
→ _____

4 If it is treated early, the condition is harmless.
→ _____

Score: _____ / 14

Worksheet 2: Noun Clauses — Subjunctive, Extraposition & Ellipsis

The advanced behaviour of that-clauses and wh-clauses.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PART A — The mandative subjunctive

Trigger	Structure	Example
verbs: insist, demand, suggest, recommend, require	that + subject + BASE FORM	They demanded that he resign.
adjectives: essential, vital, crucial, imperative	It is essential that + base form	It is vital that she be informed.
negative	that + not + base form	I insist that he not be told.

Put the verb in brackets into the correct subjunctive form.

1. The board recommended that the CEO _____ immediately. *(resign)*
2. It is imperative that every applicant _____ a reference. *(provide)*
3. She insisted that her name _____ from the list. *(remove — passive)*
4. The judge ordered that the witness _____ the courtroom. *(not / leave)*

PART B — Extraposition with dummy 'it'

A heavy noun clause in subject position is usually moved to the end. Rewrite each sentence using ‘It…’

1. That the figures were falsified is now beyond doubt.
   → _____
2. Whether the treaty survives remains uncertain.
   → _____
3. That she resigned so abruptly surprised her colleagues.
   → _____
4. How the thieves entered the vault is still a mystery.
   → _____

Score: _____ / 12

Worksheet 3: Choosing the Right Subordination

The same content, three structures, three effects.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PART A — **Transform between clause types**

Rewrite each sentence using the clause type in brackets.

1. His resignation shocked us. *(noun clause as subject)*
   → _____
2. The minister apologised. This surprised nobody. *(sentence-relative)*
   → _____
3. He was inexperienced, but they hired him. *(adverbial concession)*
   → _____
4. I don't know the reason for her silence. *(noun clause with 'why')*
   → _____
5. The witness gave evidence. She was later threatened. *(relative clause)*
   → _____

PART B — **Fix the dangling clause**

Each non-finite clause has the wrong implied subject. Explain the fault, then rewrite.

1. "Having read the proposal, several objections occurred to me."
   Fault: _____
   Rewrite: _____
2. "While crossing the bridge, the wind blew off his hat."
   Fault: _____
   Rewrite: _____
3. "Born in Lisbon, her novels are set in Portugal."
   Fault: _____
   Rewrite: _____

Score: _____ / 11

Worksheet 4: Reading & Writing

Subordination as a tool of argument.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PART A — **Analytical reading**

> *That the inquiry took four years is less remarkable than what it concluded. Convened after a scandal which had already forced two resignations, the panel was asked to determine whether the failures were systemic or individual. It found, unsurprisingly, that they were both. What the report does not explain — and here its authors, though thorough, fall silent — is why nobody acted on warnings that had been circulating for a decade. It is essential that the recommendations now be implemented. Whether they will be is another matter.*

1. Identify TWO noun clauses, ONE relative clause, ONE non-finite clause and ONE verbless clause. Label each.

_____

_____

_____

2. ‘It is essential that the recommendations now be implemented.’ Name the structure and explain the verb form.

_____

_____

3. The passage opens with a fronted that-clause rather than ‘It is less remarkable that…’ What is the effect?

_____

_____

4. ‘Whether they will be is another matter.’ Identify the ellipsis and the clause function.

_____

_____

PART B — **Write an analysis**

Write an analytical paragraph (120–150 words) on an institutional failure (real or invented). Include: TWO noun clauses (one as subject), ONE subjunctive that-clause, ONE non-finite clause, ONE relative clause and ONE adverbial clause. Underline and label each.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Word count: _____ Structures labelled: _____ / 6

Score: _____ / 17

ANSWER KEY & TEACHER NOTES

For teacher use only — B2 Level Worksheets

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Worksheet 1 – Finite, Non-Finite & Verbless

#	Question / Item	Answer / Guidance
B	Types 1–6	**1 -ED, 2 VERBLESS, 3 FINITE, 4 TO-INF, 5 -ING, 6 FINITE**
C1	reduce	**Having lost his keys, he waited outside.**
C2	reduce	**Although nervous, she gave the speech. (verbless)**
C3	reduce	**The report, written by a junior analyst, was ignored.**
C4	reduce	**If treated early, the condition is harmless.**

Worksheet 2 – Subjunctive & Extraposition

#	Question / Item	Answer / Guidance
A	Subjunctive 1–4	**1 resign, 2 provide, 3 be removed, 4 not leave**
B1	extraposition	**It is now beyond doubt that the figures were falsified.**
B2	extraposition	**It remains uncertain whether the treaty survives.**
B3	extraposition	**It surprised her colleagues that she resigned so abruptly.**
B4	extraposition	**It is still a mystery how the thieves entered the vault.**

Worksheet 3 – Choosing the Subordination

#	Question / Item	Answer / Guidance
A1	noun as subject	**That he resigned shocked us. / What shocked us was his resignation.**
A2	sentence-relative	**The minister apologised, which surprised nobody.**
A3	concession	**Although he was inexperienced, they hired him.**
A4	noun clause	**I don't know why she was silent.**
A5	relative	**The witness who gave evidence was later threatened.**
B1	dangling	**‘Having read’ implies the objections read the proposal. Rewrite: ‘Having read the proposal, I thought of several objections.’**
B2	dangling	**‘While crossing’ implies the wind crossed the bridge. Rewrite: ‘While he was crossing the bridge, the wind blew off his hat.’**
B3	dangling	**‘Born in Lisbon’ implies the novels were born. Rewrite: ‘Born in Lisbon, she sets her novels in Portugal.’**

Worksheet 4 – Reading & Writing

#	Question / Item	Answer / Guidance
A1	Five structures	**Noun: ‘That the inquiry took four years’ (subject), ‘what it concluded’, ‘whether the failures were systemic or individual’, ‘What the report does not explain’, ‘why nobody acted’. Relative: ‘which had already forced two resignations’ / ‘that had been circulating for a decade’. Non-finite: ‘Convened after a scandal’ (-ed). Verbless: ‘though thorough’.**
A2	‘that … be implemented’	**Mandative subjunctive after the adjective ‘essential’: the base form ‘be’ is used regardless of subject and tense (passive: ‘be implemented’).**
A3	fronted that-clause	**It violates end-weight deliberately, giving the four-year delay the prominence of a topic before dismissing it — the comparison (‘less remarkable than…’) lands with the conclusion in end-focus.**
A4	‘Whether they will be’	**The verb phrase after ‘be’ is ellipted (‘implemented’ is recoverable). The whole ‘whether’ clause functions as the SUBJECT of ‘is another matter’.**
B	Analysis (120–150 words)	**Up to 10 marks: 6 for the six required structures used and labelled correctly, 2 for register, 2 for coherence and accuracy.**