

# Independent and Dependent Clauses

A related group of words with a subject and a predicate is called a **clause**. A clause that makes sense by itself is an **independent clause**. A clause that does not make sense by itself is a **dependent clause**. A **complex sentence** contains an independent and a dependent clause.

**Independent Clause** They came to the island in canoes.

**Dependent Clause** even though it was a long trip

If the dependent clause comes first, set it off with a comma:

*Until they were attacked, Native Americans lived on the island.*

If the independent clause is first, no comma is needed:

*Native Americans lived on the island until they were attacked.*