Is It an Independent Clause or a Dependent Clause?

An independent, or coordinate, clause is a clause that expresses a complete thought and can stand alone.

A dependent, or subordinate, clause is a clause that does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.

Curt called his father who was still at work.

In the example Curt called his father is an independent clause. It would be a complete sentence without anything else added to it. The clause who was still at work is a dependent clause. It does not express a complete thought and is not a complete sentence.

Below are sentences with a clause underlined. In the blank below the sentence, write whether the underlined clause is independent or dependent.

1. The teacher who lives next door to Rob is Mrs. Johnson. ____________________________

2. Our dog will run away if the gate is left open. ____________________________

3. Because the storm knocked out the power, school will be canceled on Thursday. ____________________________

4. This is the homework assignment that you missed last week. ____________________________

5. The movie was good although it was too long. ____________________________

6. Victoria heard what her sister said, but she ignored it. ____________________________

7. The moon shone on the ocean while the whales rose to the surface. ____________________________

8. At the end of his class, Jim walked to his locker where the coach was waiting. ____________________________
Is It an Independent Clause or a Dependent Clause?

An independent, or coordinate, clause is a clause that expresses a complete thought and can stand alone.

A dependent, or subordinate, clause is a clause that does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone.

Curt called his father who was still at work.

In the example Curt called his father is an independent clause. It would be a complete sentence without anything else added to it. The clause who was still at work is a dependent clause. It does not express a complete thought and is not a complete sentence.

Below are sentences with a clause underlined. In the blank below the sentence, write whether the underlined clause is independent or dependent.

1. The teacher who lives next door to Rob is Mrs. Johnson. _______________ dependent

2. Our dog will run away if the gate is left open. _______________ independent

3. Because the storm knocked out the power, school will be canceled on Thursday. ______ independent

4. This is the homework assignment that you missed last week. _______________ dependent

5. The movie was good although it was too long. _______________ independent

6. Victoria heard what her sister said, but she ignored it. _______________ dependent

7. The moon shone on the ocean while the whales rose to the surface. ______ dependent

8. At the end of his class, Jim walked to his locker where the coach was waiting. ____ independent