

# Telling Stories

Week 12

# Learning Objectives

- Features of fictional tales
- Anecdotes
- Rhetorical devices
- Discussing shapes of stories
- Comparing scientific writing and fictional tales
- Writing practice

# Either...or / neither... nor / both...and

1. These fish can swim in \_\_\_\_\_ shallow marshes \_\_\_\_\_ deep ponds.
2. She \_\_\_\_\_ feeds the chickens the leftover scraps, \_\_\_\_\_ she gives them fresh corn.
3. The horse was kept in a stable, so it had \_\_\_\_\_ plenty of space to run around \_\_\_\_\_ a cozy place to sleep at night.
4. The puppy will \_\_\_\_\_ nibble on the old shoe \_\_\_\_\_ find something else to chew on.
5. The diver could not tell if the water was too cold or too warm. The temperature was \_\_\_\_\_ consistent \_\_\_\_\_ predictable.
6. The little girl loved \_\_\_\_\_ playing outside in the mud \_\_\_\_\_ collecting insects from the garden.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ the wind \_\_\_\_\_ the rain would stop her from winning the championship.

# Either...or / neither... nor / both...and

1. These fish can swim in **both** shallow marshes **and** deep ponds.
2. You can **either** feed the chickens the leftover scraps, **or** you can give them fresh corn.
3. The horse was kept in a stable, so it had **both** plenty of space to run around **and** a cozy place to sleep at night.
4. The puppy will **either** nibble on the old shoe **or** find something else to chew on.
5. The diver could not tell if the water was too cold or too warm. The temperature was **neither** consistent **nor** predictable.
6. The little girl loved **both** playing outside in the mud **and** collecting insects from the garden.
7. **Neither** the wind **nor** the rain would stop her from winning the championship.

# Anecdotes

What is an anecdote?

# Anecdotes

- Anecdotes are short, self-contained stories that are often used to introduce a theme, a character or a moral.
- They can also be used for humour or to encourage an audience to reminisce about something.
- They are usually auto-biographical or an account of an event.
- They are often used in non-fiction writing to make a text or talk more interesting.

# Anecdotes

- Watch the following video.
- What do you think the purpose of this text is?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the effect of the anecdote?
- What theme / topic / argument does it introduce?
- Having listened to this anecdote, what do you think the rest of the talk will be about?



# Transcript

1. What tenses are used and where?
2. How does the anecdote start? Is it effective?
3. Is any terminology introduced?
4. What conjunctions are used?
5. What question will this talk answer?

As the truck screeched to a halt, one of its containers slid off, hit an approaching Prius and spilled its contents. Those contents happened to be thousands of kilograms of live hagfish, also known as slime eels. The result of this 2017 car accident was an absolute mess: the highway was littered with wriggling fish and coated in a thick slime that took the fire department 7 hours to clear.

Astonishingly good looks aside, the standout strength of all hagfishes is their slime. In fact, they're probably Earth's slimiest animals. But why be so slimy? Watch and learn.

# Transcript

*in media res*

past simple

date

introduce term

details

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repetition

universal present

Astonishingly good looks aside, the standout strength of all hagfishes is their slime. In fact, they're probably Earth's slimiest animals. But why be so slimy? Watch and learn.

sarcasm / humour

clear question to be answered by the talk

explain relevance of the story to the topic

# Your turn!



# Transcript

1. What tenses are used and where?
2. How does the anecdote start? Is it effective?
3. Is any terminology introduced?
4. What conjunctions / other cohesive devices are used?
5. What question will this talk answer?

## **What would happen if you didn't sleep?**

In 1965, 17-year-old high school student, Randy Gardner stayed awake for 264 hours. That's 11 days to see how he'd cope without sleep. On the second day, his eyes stopped focusing. Next, he lost the ability to identify objects by touch. By day three, Gardner was moody and uncoordinated. At the end of the experiment, he was struggling to concentrate, had trouble with short-term memory, became paranoid, and started hallucinating. Although Gardner recovered without long-term psychological or physical damage, for others, losing shuteye can result in hormonal imbalance, illness, and, in extreme cases, death.

# Writing anecdotes

# Spills

How to generate ideas (without AI)

# Writing anecdotes

Choose a topic to write an anecdote about.

The science of stage fright

The life cycle of a plastic bottle

Procrastination

Spelling in English

Apologizing

Once you've chosen your topic, re-write it as a question.

eg. rejection → how do I deal with rejection?

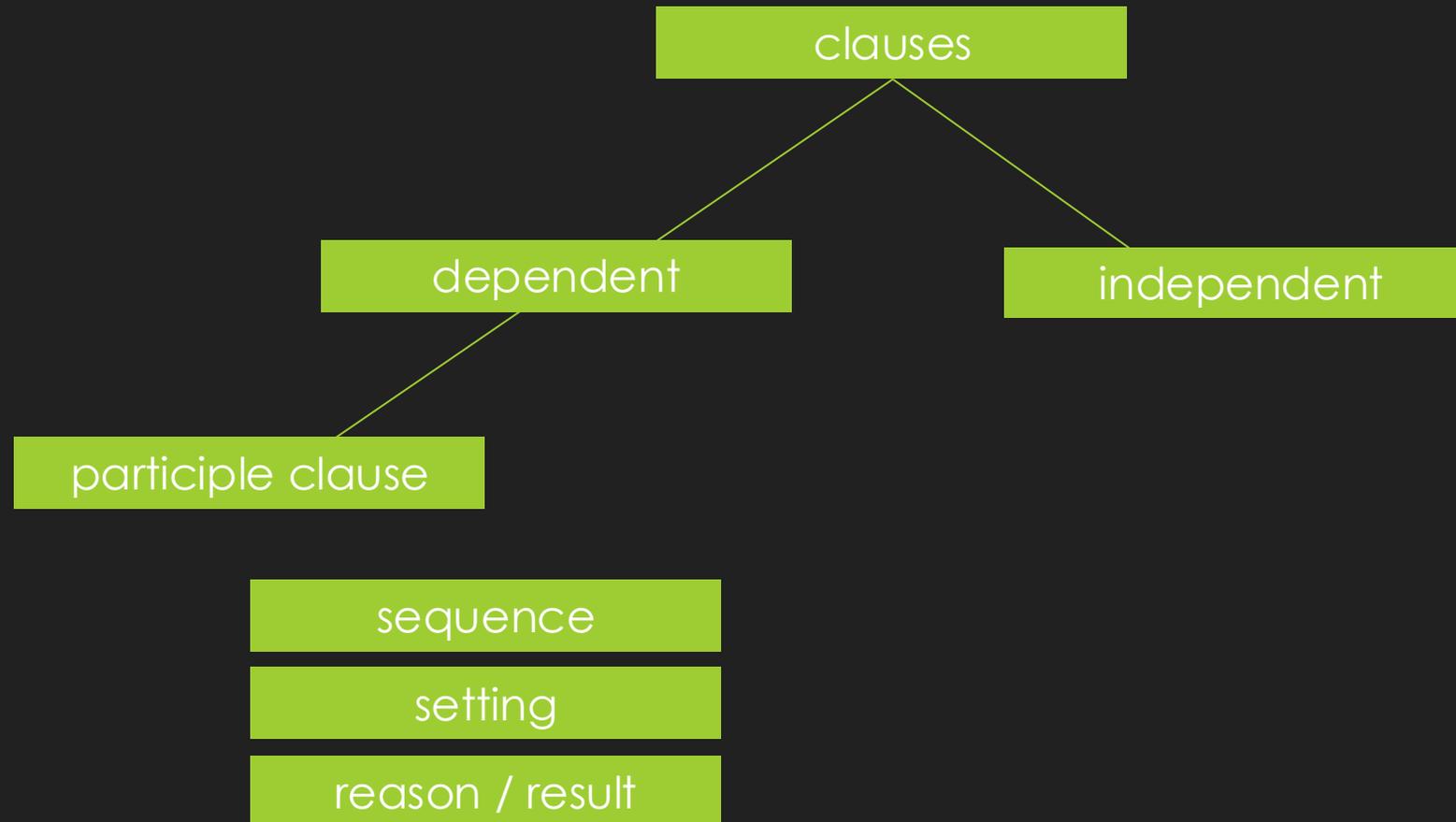
# Anecdotes

- Write an anecdote to introduce a talk about your chosen topic. Word limit = 120 words
- You can make it up, base it on an event from your own life or do some research about a real event.
- Look back at your spills to help you.
- Include the following:
  - narrative details
  - a clear question
  - introduce any terms you might need
  - include humour / a pun (if suitable)

# Participle clauses

What is a clause? What is a participle clause?

# Clauses



# Participle clauses

- A clause is a group of words that has both a subject and a predicate. Every complete sentence has at least one clause.
- A participle clause is a type of dependent (or subordinate) clause that starts with a participle.
- Participle clauses are made with –ed- or –ing participles.
- They offer an economical way to give information.
- They can help us present information *in media res* or as a sequence.

# Participle clauses

- Be careful not to use participle clauses with a confusing subject.
- A participle clause at the beginning of a sentence cannot refer to the object of the main clause:

*Moaning with pain, the victim was examined by the doctor.*

~~*Moaning with pain, the doctor examined the victim.*~~

*Horns locked, the two stags struggle for supremacy.*

*Having been to France, I can speak French.*

# Sequence and setting

- -ing participle clauses are often used to show when two things happen at the same time.

**Turning** the corner, we saw the hospital in front of us.

- We can use a perfect participle clause or a preposition to show sequence

**Having swallowed** two paracetamol, he went to bed.

**After swallowing** two paracetamol, he went to bed.

- -ing participle clauses are also often used to describe a setting or background.

**Standing** alone in the desert, the huge pyramid dominated the landscape

# Reason and result

- -ing participle clauses can also be used to show reason and result.
- A perfect participle clause is often used to show reason because the reason usually comes **before** the result.
- An -ing participle clause for results often express something unintended.

He will struggle to finish the hike because he is quite unfit.

Being quite unfit, he will struggle to finish the hike.

His knees had never fully recovered from the football injury, with the result that he was left hobbling.

His knees had never fully recovered from the football injury, leaving him hobbling.

# Conditions

- -ed participle clauses are used with conditions.

*If you treat it gently, the fabric should last a lifetime.*

***If treated** gently, the fabric should last a lifetime.*

***Treated** gently, the fabric should last a lifetime.*

*A bear won't attack unless it's provoked.*

***Unless provoked**, a bear won't attack.*

# Sequence, setting, reason, result

Re-write the following sentences using a participle phrase.

1. The Appalachian trail runs more than 2100 miles along America's eastern seaboard. It is the granddaddy of long hikes.
2. If you start at the northern end, at Mount Katahdin in Maine, the trail must be completed after the snows to clear in late May or June.
3. Dave Mengle gave me excellent advice because he had walked large parts of the trail himself and was an encyclopaedia of outdoor knowledge.
4. The US National Park Service distinguishes itself alarmingly by giving the length of the trail as 2,155 miles and 2,200 miles in the same leaflet.
5. In 1993, three people rolled a measuring wheel along its entire length and came up with a distance of 2,164.9 miles.
6. I settled on a backpack – a very expensive, top of the range backpack – and turned my attention to the sleeping bags.

# Participle clauses in storytelling

- Go back to your anecdote.
- Choose one sentence and re-write it using a participle clause.

## Examples:

On the second day, his eyes stopped focusing.

**Having stayed awake for two days**, Randy Gardner found his eyes stopped focussing.

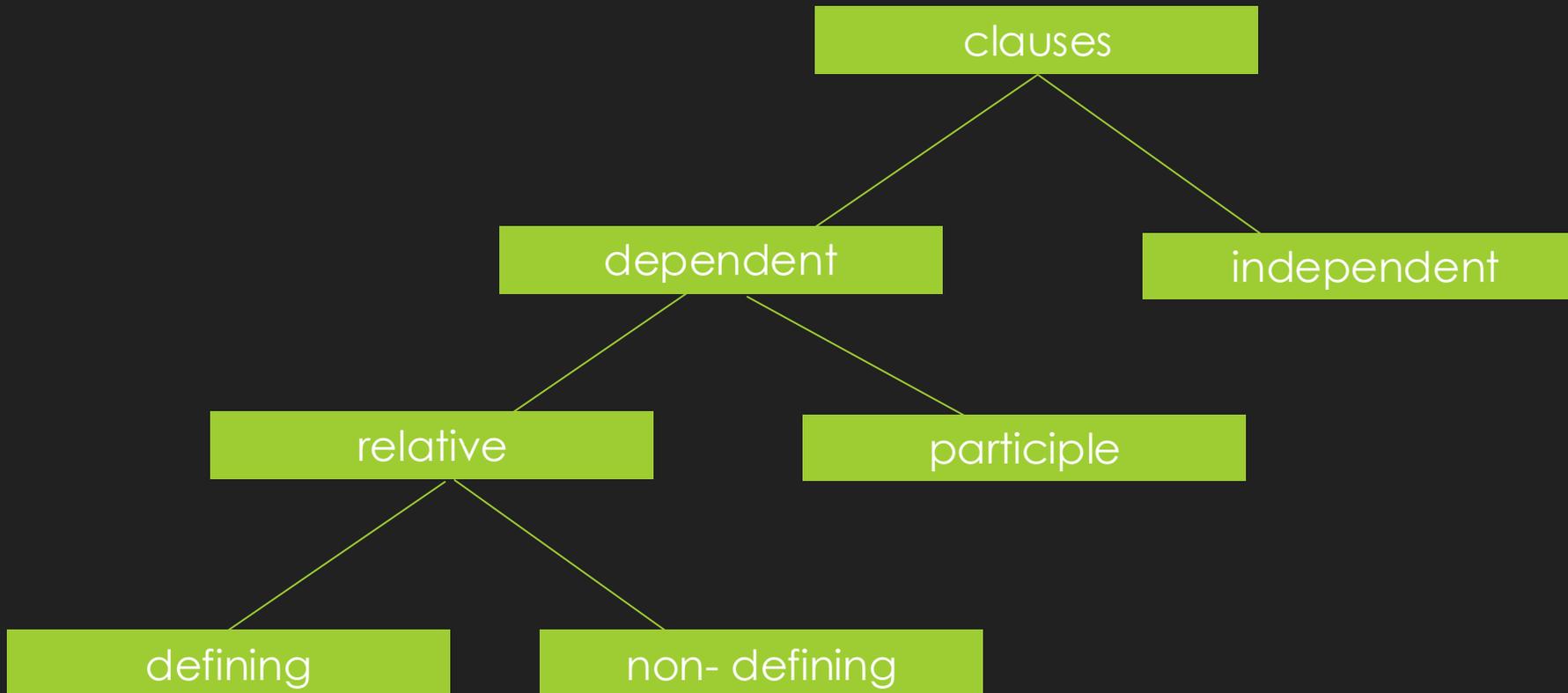
As the truck screeched to a halt, one of its containers slid off...

**Screeching to a halt**, the truck lost one of its containers.

**Lying on a hospital bed**, Randy Gardner questioned his life choices.

# Relative Clauses

# Clauses



Which cat ate the fish?



# Defining relative clauses

Which cat ate the fish?

The cat that was ginger ate the fish.

essential  
information



# Defining relative clause

In our previous example of a defining relative clause, we needed to identify the guilty cat.

The cat that was ginger ate the fish.

defining relative  
clause

Which cat ate it?  
The ginger cat.



A defining clause might also be said to **classify** our noun.

It tells us more about the noun in the main clause.

Would all guests who have booked for dinner go to the restaurant?

defining relative  
clause

Which guests?  
The group of guests  
which has booked.

# Defining relative clauses

Find the defining relative clauses.

1. I called my brother who lives in Australia.
2. Oh no! I broke the mug that she uses for work.
3. Here is a list of the flights which have been cancelled.
4. She's the woman who cuts my hair.
5. The laptop I bought last week has started making a funny noise.
6. Twickenham is the stadium where they hosted the Rugby World Cup.

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relative clauses use  
relative pronouns:  
who / whom / whose  
that  
which

# Non-defining relative clauses

The cat, which was ginger, ate the fish

additional  
information



The ginger cat ate the fish, which meant his owner had nothing for dinner.

consecutive action

The ginger cat ate the fish, which was quite greedy.

comment



# Sequence / comment

Use a non-defining relative clause to join these sentences or add a comment.

- 1) She called out to the man. The man ran off.
- 2) I picked up the model. It fell apart in my hands.
- 3) I bought a pair of shorts. They got ruined in the wash.
- 4) I baked some muffins. He said they were disgusting.
- 5) We visited Dickens' house. It was interesting.
- 6) I heard the news this morning. It was alarming.

# Relative adverbs: where, when, why

Relative clauses can also be introduced with the relative adverbs where, when and why.

The school where Shakespeare studied is now open to tourists.

The day when a truthful person walks under the whale rib will be the day it falls.

There are many reasons why tourists flock to Venice.

I once saw a play **where** all the characters died.

In informal English,  
where is often used to  
describe a situation  
= 'in which'

# Relative adverbs: where, when, why

Fill in the gaps with the correct relative adverb.

1. Do you know the reason \_\_\_\_\_ she is so upset?
2. The library is a place \_\_\_\_\_ you can borrow books.
3. The place \_\_\_\_\_ we went yesterday is just around the corner.
4. They never told us the reason \_\_\_\_\_ they moved away.
5. The school \_\_\_\_\_ I study English is not far from your house.
6. Was that the time \_\_\_\_\_ you guys went to France together?

# Prepositions

- We can use prepositions with relative pronouns. Their position depends on formality.

*My grandparents didn't own the house that they lived in.*

*Mr and Mrs Thompson did not own the house in which they lived.*

*~~Mr and Mrs Thompson did not own the house in that they lived.~~*

- We don't use a preposition **directly before** the relative pronoun that.

- Preposition + whom.

*The other tourists **who** we travelled **with** were a bit annoying.*

*The other tourists **with whom** we travelled were rather irksome.*

# Prepositions

Re-write these sentence in an **informal style** using that / which / who + preposition or when / where.

Modify vocabulary where you think it's appropriate.

- 1) *There are a number of delightful hotels in the area at which you may wish to sojourn.*
- 2) *The plaque marks the very spot upon which Lady Jane Grey was executed.*
- 3) *In England, 5<sup>th</sup> November is a day on which the gunpowder plot is remembered.*
- 4) *The discerning visitor may wish to spend an afternoon at the museum in which they may spot an early Da Vinci.*
- 5) *This is the house in which the Polish noblewoman Delfina Potocka lived.*
- 6) *Potocka was the woman for whom Chopin wrote his famous Minute Waltz.*

**Thank you**

[carolinebethany.dormor@units.it](mailto:carolinebethany.dormor@units.it)