

The Noun Clause

15f. A *noun clause* is a subordinate clause that is used as a noun.

- EXAMPLES** That life exists on other planets seems possible. [subject of the verb *seems*]
 A new computer is **what Matthew needs**. [predicate nominative identifying the subject *computer*]
 A good salesperson knows **what customers want**. [direct object of the verb *knows*]
 I will pay **whoever finds the gerbil** a reward. [indirect object of the verb *will pay*]
 Are you particular about **what you watch on television?** [object of the preposition *about*]

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, underline the noun clause.

Example 1. You may take whomever you wish to the dance.

- The film told us about what we should do in the case of an earthquake.
- That some tapeworms grow to lengths of more than one hundred feet seems incredible.
- No one could explain what had happened to all of the treasure.
- Leuwana sent whoever asked her for one a postcard from Puerto Rico.
- The ending of the book is not what I had expected.

EXERCISE B Underline the noun clause in each of the following sentences. Then, identify the use of the clause by writing above it one of these abbreviations: *S* for *subject*, *PN* for *predicate nominative*, *DO* for *direct object*, *IO* for *indirect object*, or *OP* for *object of a preposition*.

Example 1. No one knows who first set foot in America.
DO

- That the referee called a technical foul caused an uproar among the fans.
- The guest speaker told us what could be done about acid rain.
- The number of commercials during a television program is what annoys me most.
- The cafeteria worker gave whoever asked for more pasta another generous helping.
- Whatever happens at the Super Bowl will be seen by millions of people.
- Please do not tell me how the movie ends.
- That the storm caused some damage is an understatement.
- The ship's captain offered whoever spotted a whale three gold coins.
- Whatever happened to Amelia Earhart's airplane remains a mystery.
- Tsang Ying is reading a book about what happened to the bison of North America.