

## TYPES OF SENTENCES ACCORDING TO THEIR FUNCTION

**J**ust as we classify sentences on the basis of the number of clauses they have in them, we can also classify sentences on the basis of their use. Thus, sentences can be assertive, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory depending on the function they perform.

### ASSERTIVE SENTENCES

Assertive (also known as 'declarative') sentences are used to make statements in order to give information, report events, express an opinion or make a promise. They have the word order subject – verb – object. Look at the examples below.

Manoj lives in Aligarh.

The giraffe has a long neck.

It rained all night.

I will meet you tomorrow.

Assertive sentences that make a positive statement (saying, for example, that something is true) are called **affirmative**. The examples above are all affirmative sentences.

Assertive sentences that make a negative statement (saying, for example, that something is *not* true) are called **negative** sentences.

Statements made by a speaker can be affirmative if they declare *what happened, what was said or done*, etc. They can, on the other hand, be negative if they state *what did not happen, what was not said or done*, etc. Look at the sentences given below. All the sentences make affirmative, or positive statements about a person, object or event.

The show *will start* in an hour.

Kunal *was smiling* at me.

MOTHER'S (MOTHER IS) NOT leaving tonight.

## INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES

Interrogative sentences, which end with a question mark, are used to ask questions, or make inquiries. They are of two types:

- Yes-No questions
- Wh- questions.

Yes-No questions can be answered with a *yes* or a *no*. These questions always begin with an auxiliary verb (*have/has, may or is/are/was/were, and do*—if the corresponding assertive sentence does not contain an auxiliary verb). If the main verb in the sentence is a form of the verbs *be* (i.e., *is, are, was or were*) or *have* (i.e., *have or has*, but only when the verb is used to mean *own or possess*), then it is moved to the beginning of the sentence. The subject of the sentence is always in second position in this kind of interrogative sentence. For examples, look at the pairs of assertive and interrogative sentences below.

Hasina *speaks* Marathi and English.

Does Hasina *speak* Marathi and English?

Rekha *has returned* from Varanasi.

Has Rekha *returned* from Varanasi?

You *are combing* your hair.

Are you *combing* your hair?

Kiran *plays* the sitar.

Does Kiran *play* the sitar?

Wh- questions call for a detailed and specific answer. They begin with the *wh*-words *who, whom, whose, when, where, why, which, what* and *how*. For examples, look at the sentences below and note the order in which the words appear.

Who is coming to see us today?

Whom are you waiting for?



Whose keys are these?  
 When did Uma send the e-mail?  
 Where are the children?  
 Why is the sky blue?  
 Which book do you want?  
 What is your telephone number?  
 How is your sister?

## IMPERATIVE SENTENCES

Imperative sentences are used to give orders or instructions, to make a request and to give advice. Although they begin with a verb, the subject you is always implied. Sentences that begin with let are also imperative sentences, in which the order or suggestion is indirectly expressed. For examples, look at the sentences below.

Open the door.  
 Give me a glass of water, please.  
 Boil water in an open pan.  
 Walk up the stairs and turn left.  
 Take care of your sprained ankle.  
 Let us get a set of new curtains for the house.

## EXCLAMATORY SENTENCES

Exclamatory sentences are used to express surprise, pain, joy, sorrow, admiration, pity and other feelings. They end with an exclamation mark. Look at the sentences below for examples.

Look who's here!	Ouch, that hurts!
How happy I'm to be here!	How sad it is to see you leave!

What a wonderful performance! Your story was so exciting!

Note that exclamatory sentences can either begin with 'how' or 'what' or have the structure of an assertive sentence.