Grammar & ESL: Independent and dependent clauses

An independent sentence has a subject and a verb.
- “I sit.” I is the subject, and sit is the verb.
- “She writes.” She is the subject, and writes is the verb.

If the subject or the verb is missing, the sentence is dependent.
A dependent clause depends on another part of the sentence in order for the sentence to be grammatically correct.
- “And writes.” This sentence is dependent. It is also a fragment (or an incomplete sentence).
  - A reader might ask, “Who or what is doing the writing?”
- “She sits and writes.” This sentence is independent (or complete).
  - A reader knows to whom the action of the verb applies.

Longer sentences have a subject, a verb, a direct object, and usually an indirect object.
- “She writes an email to her friend.”
  - The subject of the sentence is she.
  - The verb is writes.
  - The direct object is friend, because friend is the noun to which the action of the verb applies.
  - The indirect object is email, because the action of the verb indirectly applies to email.