

## **NOUN CLAUSES: What marker word should I use?**

Noun clauses are used to express ideas about questions and statements. Because they are clauses, they use sentence word order, not question word order. Like other dependent clauses, noun clauses begin with marker words to show where the clause begins. Choosing the correct marker word depends on what you want to express: a question or a statement.

### **Two kinds of QUESTIONS to consider:**

#### **(1) YES/NO – expresses a doubt about something**

*if \* whether \* whether or not*

Are you happy? I want to know IF you are happy.

Do you eat meat? Can you tell me IF you eat meat?

Should I go to work? I want to know WHETHER OR NOT I should go to work.

#### **(2) INFORMATION – asks for information about something**

*who \* what \* when \* where \* why \* how*

What time is it? Can you tell me WHAT TIME it is?

Where did you go last night? I want to know WHERE you went last night.

### **STATEMENTS – expresses information, facts, or beliefs about a topic**

**Statement noun clauses are often used in topic sentences in essays.**

*that*

She is very tired. I know THAT she is very tired.

He wants to get a new job. I'm sure THAT he wants to get a new job.

The movie begins at 1:30. I believe THAT the movie begins at 1:30.

Fred is in charge of marketing. I think THAT Fred is in charge of marketing.

The first reason is THAT he is honest. (essay topic sentence)

**Noun clauses can also be used at the beginning of a sentence.** Sometimes, they are used to answer a question you don't know the answer to:

Why did John cheat on the test?

**Why he cheated** is a mystery to me. (Noun clause at the beginning)

OR

I don't know **why he cheated.** (Noun clause inside the sentence)

**What I want to know** is **who gave him the answers.** (at the beginning AND inside the sentence!)