GRAMMAR PRACTICE 2

There are too few windows in this house and I would not want to live in a gloomy home. Furthermore, when they are small, the number of windows would have to be even greater, and these tiny ones hardly let in any light.

T  F      1. There are five clauses.

T  F      2. The first clause is dependent because of the word There.

T  F      3. The subject for the first clause is There.

T  F      4. The third clause is dependent because of the word when.

T  F      5. The subject for the fourth clause is windows.

T  F      6. The main verbs for the second clause are would not want.

T  F      7. There should be a comma between and and I to separate the first two clauses.

T  F      8. The word too should be to.

**Scroll down for answers and explanations.**

GRAMMAR PRACTICE 2 – ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

There are too few windows in this house and I would not want to live in a gloomy home. Furthermore, when they are small, the number of windows would have to be even greater, and these tiny ones hardly let in any light.

T  1. There are five clauses.

There are too few windows in this house    
 and I would not want to live in a gloomy home.   
 Furthermore, when they are small,   
 the number of windows would have to be even greater,   
 and these tiny ones hardly let in any light.

F  2. The first clause is dependent because of the word There. –

A dependent clause begins with a condition word. The words *there* and *here* are not condition words.

F  3. The subject for the first clause is There.    
  
 The words there and here are like place holders. When you see them, look on the other side of the verb to find the subject. To test this theory, locate the subject (the word performing the action of the verb), and change it from singular to plural or vice versa and notice if it impacts the verb. In this clause, change the subject from windows to window:

**There is too few windows.**  
 Because this doesn’t work, we know that the word window controls the verb, so *windows* is the subject, not the word there.

The word *house* is not the verb because it is part of a prepositional phrase: *in this house*.

A preposition is “anything an airplane can do to a cloud” plus some other things. Since an

airplane can be “in” a cloud, this is a preposition. You are not going to find the subject

inside of a prepositional phrase. If you are still unsure of a part of speech, look up the word in a dictionary.

The subject is *windows*.

T  4. The third clause is dependent because of the word when. –  
  
 When is a condition word and even if it isn’t exactly the first word of the sentence, it is still at

the beginning of the clause and it still makes the clause dependent. Condition words set up

conditions that require more information. Using a period at the end of a stand-alone dependent

clause creates a sentence fragment, just part of a sentence. This sentence 🡪 *If I am late.* 🡨 is a

sentence fragment. The word *If* sets up a condition, which makes the clause dependent. A

dependent clause needs to be attached to an independent clause. Think of it this way: the

clause *if I am late* sets up a condition to say something, so it is incomplete. *If I am late, I must*

*hurry.* The independent clause 🡪 *I must hurry* 🡨 makes this a complete sentence.

And the word Furthermore, by the way, is a conjunctive adverb.

F  5. The subject for the fourth clause is windows. –  
  
 The word *windows* is part of a prepositional phrase.  Disregard the prepositional phrase in your when establishing the subject.

                     S                              V       V    ~~V~~

            the number ~~of windows~~ would have to be even greater

The subject is *number*.

F  6. The main verbs for the second clause are would not want. –  
  
 The word not is not a verb, so the main verbs are would want. It is acceptable to interrupt main verbs.

Now let’s consider that entire clause: *and I would not want to live in a gloomy home*

Note that the main verbs do not include to be because that is an infinitive.

Infinitives are verbs that begin with *to*: to speak, to be, to go, to listen, etc.

In Spanish, infinitives are actually one word: hablar, estar, ir, escuchar, etc.

 It is not typically acceptable to interrupt infinitives.

That is called a split infinitive.

Consider how in Spanish that would not even be possible.

NONSTANDARD: I want you *to* completely *eat* your vegetables.

STANDARD: I want you *to eat* your vegetables completely.

The trend in splitting infinitives is moving into greater acceptance, and you will see split infinitives in more current writing. But it is best to avoid doing that, so your instructor does not think you do not know better. When your essays become much more professional sounding, your professors will likely allow greater leeway in your diction and syntax.  They will trust that you do know better and are making those choices for effect.

Or they will simply not notice because your writing has such a lovely and dynamic flow.

Splitting infinitives can work depending upon audience, but not so much in formal writing.

F  7. There should be a comma between and and I to separate the first two clauses. –  
  
 There should be a comma between the two clauses, but the comma comes before the word and. Recall the pneumonic about Comma Boy and his Backup? The backup is the coordinating conjunction and the backup backs up the hero (the comma).

V S S V V *infinitive*

There are too few windows in this house, and I would not want *to live* in a gloomy home

First clause Comma Second clause

F  8. The word too should be to. –  
  
 Too means too much or too many, so it is correct here.