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Have you ever used ALL CAPS to emphasize a word in a line? It is “all caps” that stands out, visually, in that line. But look again at the second line:

It is the “all caps” that stands out, visually, in the last line.

In the second sentence, the words “all caps” stands out rhythmically—we hear an added emphasis on those words, given their place in the sentence.

These words have been positioned within the line for emphasis. They have been positioned as the delayed subject in a **cleft sentence**.

“It is only to the individual that a soul is given.” ~Albert Einstein

“It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.” ~Mark Twain

“It amazes me what humans can do, even when streams are flowing down their faces and they stagger on, coughing and searching, and finding.” ~Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*

“It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York.” ~Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

If you return these sentences to their normal word order, the emphasis of the cleft pattern falls away, as does the succinct outline of the thought.

A soul is given only to the individual.

Physical courage is common in the world. Moral courage is rare. This relationship between physical and moral courage in the world is curious.

What humans can do, even when streams are flowing down their faces and they stagger on, coughing and searching, and finding, amazes me.

The summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs was a queer, sultry summer, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York.

To understand what a cleft sentence is, we must first understand that a sentence is composed of a series of phrases, including noun phrases and verb phrases. Additional information (such as time or place) is often provided.

John threw a party at his parents' house last week for his graduation.





