

Writing Center

Workshop Lesson Plan

Fixing Fragments and Run-ons

Lesson Objectives:

1. To clearly define a complete sentence, a sentence fragment, and a run-on sentence
2. To illustrate the confusion created by fragments and run-ons
3. To provide strategies to prevent and correct both fragments and run-ons

Preparation: Print materials and cut the Warm-Up activity if this has not been done already; there are four exercises on a single page. Review the lecture notes and answer key for practice activities.

Handouts: Warm-up Activity, Student Handout, and Practice Activity

Technology: N/A

Introductory Activity: 5-10 minutes

1. Introduce yourself, the Writing Center, and the lesson
2. Student introductions – name and class
3. Distribute Warm-up Activity and instruct students to fix the sentences to the best of their ability
4. Review correct answers and explain the changes that are required to avoid run-on sentences and sentence fragments. Use this point to transition into the lecture

Lecture Notes: 20-25 minutes

1. Review definitions and examples of fragments and run-ons
2. Demonstrate ways to fix run-ons and fragments. Apply these to examples in the warm-up activity

Practice Activity: 20-25 minutes

1. Individual practice – Student Activity worksheet
 - a. Have students identify if the sentences are run-ons, fragments, or complete sentences with proper punctuation. If time allows, have students correct them
 - b. Have students correct the paragraph with run-on sentences and sentence fragments using sentence combining and/or adding/deleting information – use the subordinating conjunction sheet on back of exercises as needed

Closing Notes: 5 minutes

1. Review main ideas of lesson
2. Take any last questions
3. Encourage students to come back to the Writing Center

Opportunities for Additional Practice: Visit Purdue Owl and the Writing Center for more practice

Writing Center

Workshop Lesson: Fixing Fragments & Run-ons

Student Activity: Warm-Up

Cut this page into fourths for students. Have them fix these sentences and make them grammatically correct.

Because his car was in the shop. Running down the street. The dog with the yellow collar that wouldn't stop barking. School important.	The show begins at 7:30 make sure you're there before 7:15. In school homework is important teachers give you the assignment you go home and complete the assignment. Judy has a lucky life, she never seems to have a serious accident.
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Writing Center
Workshop: Fixing Fragments & Run-ons
Lecture Notes

****Highlighted sections are not on the Student Handout.**

Warm Up Explanation

Because his car was in the shop. (What did he do before his car was in the shop?)	The show begins at 7:30. Make sure you're there before 7:15.
Running down the street. (This is a noun phrase with a present participle.)	In school, homework is important. Teachers give you many assignments. You go home and complete the assignment.
The dog with the yellow collar that wouldn't stop barking. (What is the dog doing? There is no verb here, and "that" creates an adjective clause.)	Judy has a lucky life. She never seems to have a serious accident.
School important. (The verb is missing. Should be "School is important.")	(NOTE: There are multiple ways to correct these run-ons.)

On the left side of your handout are sentence fragments. None of the sentences express a complete thought because an essential part is missing - either the verb or an independent clause.

On the right side of your handout are run-on sentences. Each sentence on the right has two subjects or two complete ideas that are not separated by a period.

(Explain the difference briefly and elaborate using the rules listed below.)

A **fragment** is a word or group of words that do not form a complete sentence.

There are **three** requirements for a complete sentence:

1. A verb
2. A subject
3. A complete thought

Fragment Errors

<p><i>1. A dependent clause trying to be a sentence</i></p> <p>Example: Since the candidate was a graduate of Wayne Community College in 1985.</p> <p>This fragment has a subject and a verb, but the subordinating conjunction at the beginning (since) makes it an incomplete thought that cannot stand on its own.</p>	<p><i>2. Present participle (-ing verb) in noun phrase</i></p> <p>Example: Approximately 275 students graduating with degrees in college transfer programs.</p> <p>In this type of fragment, there is not a subject and a verb. The problem is the -ing verb used alone in the sentence. To correct the problem, you could change the -ing verb to another verb, add a helping verb, or use the -ing verb as an adjective describing the subject and add a whole new verb for the sentence.</p>	<p><i>3. Embedding the fragment</i></p> <p>Example: The fact that famous people make reckless life decisions. Has become increasingly more evident.</p> <p>This example really contains two fragments. One part contains the subject set up as a sentence, and the other part contains the verb set up as a sentence.</p>	<p><i>4. A modifier that is cut-off</i></p> <p>Example: Known to many as the godfather of soul. James Brown is gaining a reputation for domestic abuse.</p> <p>There is more than one way to connect the modifier to the sentence.</p>
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Note: Commands are not considered sentence fragments. A command such as “Hurry Up!” or “Sit down!” has an implied subject of you (the listener). Despite seeming like they don’t have a subject, commands are complete sentences.

Ways to Fix Sentence Fragments

1. **Add a verb.**
 - a. School **is** important.
 - b. Running down the street **made me tired**.
 - c. The dog with the yellow collar that wouldn’t stop barking **kept me up all night**.
2. **Connect fragments together.**
 - a. The fact that famous people make reckless life decisions has become increasingly more evident.
 - b. Known to many as the godfather of soul, James Brown is gaining a reputation for domestic abuse.
3. **Make sure each dependent clause is connected to an independent clause. (Watch your subordinating conjunctions – give out the sheet listing these)**
 - a. Because his car was in the shop, we **needed to take the bus**.

- b. Since the candidate was a graduate of Wayne Community College in 1985, **she had a good chance of getting the job.**

Run-On Errors

A run-on is the result of connecting two complete sentences with a comma (which is then called a comma splice) or connecting two complete sentences with no punctuation.

Fused sentence: two main clauses connected with no punctuation

The new mini-semester will help students graduate earlier the first mini-semester won't begin until Fall 2005.

Comma splice: the use of a comma to join two independent clauses

This weekend's weather forecast is very cold, it is likely to snow.

More than one idea: Run-on sentences many suffer from both of the above issues as writers attempt to put more than one idea in a sentence.

Please do not talk on your cell phone on the train because sometimes when you are on your phone you may disrupt someone, that someone could be trying to relax after a long day of work.

Ways to Fix Run-Ons

1. Break them into two sentences.

- a. Judy has a **lucky life**. **She** never seems to have a serious accident.

2. Connect them with a comma and coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) or a semicolon.

- a. The show begins at 7:30, **so** make sure you're there before 7:15.
b. This weekend's weather forecast is very cold, **and** it is likely to snow.
c. This weekend's weather forecast is very cold; it is likely to snow.

3. Connect dependent clauses to independent clauses using subordinating conjunctions (*since, before, after, because, although, even though, etc.*) Students will have a list of conjunctions on the back of their handout. **REMEMBER: If the dependent clause comes first, use a comma. If it comes second, do not use a comma.**

- a. **Because** the show begins at 7:30, make sure you're there before 7:15.
b. **Since** the weekend's weather forecast is very cold, it is likely to snow.
c. Judy has a lucky life **because** she never seems to have a serious accident.
d. The new mini-semester will help students graduate earlier **even though** the first mini-semester won't begin until fall 2005.

**Writing Center
Workshop Lesson: Fixing Fragments & Run-ons
Student Handout**

Fragments

A **fragment** is a word or group of words that do not form a complete sentence. There are **three** requirements for a complete sentence: a verb, a subject, and a complete thought.

Fragment Errors

<p><i>1. A dependent clause trying to be a sentence</i></p> <p>Example: Since the candidate was a graduate of Wayne Community College in 1985.</p>	<p><i>2. Present participle (-ing verb) in noun phrase</i></p> <p>Example: Approximately 275 students graduating with degrees in college transfer programs.</p>	<p><i>3. Embedding the fragment</i></p> <p>Example: The fact that famous people make reckless life decisions. Has become increasingly more evident.</p>	<p><i>4. A modifier that is cut-off</i></p> <p>Example: Known to many as the godfather of soul. James Brown is gaining a reputation for domestic abuse.</p>
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Ways to Fix Sentence Fragments

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3. **Make sure each dependent clause is connected to an independent clause. (Watch your subordinating conjunctions – give out the sheet listing these)**
 - a. Because his car was in the shop, **we needed to take the bus.**
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Run-On Sentences

A run-on is the result of connecting two complete sentences with a comma (which is then called a comma splice) or connecting two complete sentences with no punctuation.

Fused sentence: two main clauses connected with no punctuation

The new mini-semester will help students graduate earlier the first mini-semester won't begin until Fall 2005.

Comma splice: the use of a comma to join two independent clauses

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More than one idea: Run-on sentences many suffer from both of the above issues as writers attempt to put more than one idea in a sentence.

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Ways to Fix Run-Ons

1. **Break them into two sentences.**
 - a. Judy has a **lucky life**. **She** never seems to have a serious accident.
2. **Connect them with a comma and coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) or a semicolon.**
 - a. The show begins at 7:30, **so** make sure you're there before 7:15.
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 - a. **Because** the show begins at 7:30, make sure you're there before 7:15.
 - b. **Since** the weekend's weather forecast is very cold, it is likely to snow.
 - c. Judy has a lucky life **because** she never seems to have a serious accident.
 - d. The new mini-semester will help students graduate earlier **even though** the first mini-semester won't begin until fall 2005.

Writing Center
Workshop Lesson: Fixing Fragments & Run-Ons
Practice Activity

Remember a complete sentence must have a:

• Subject	• Verb	• Complete thought
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If a sentence is missing one of the above, it is a fragment. If it has more than one complete thought without proper punctuation, it is a run-on.

In the below sentences, identify if the sentence is a run-on (RO), a fragment (F), or complete (C).

- _____ 1. The man that I saw yesterday.
- _____ 2. He is not an exceptional student, he is only average.
- _____ 3. To know everything is quite impossible.
- _____ 4. Because I have no time.
- _____ 5. Sitting in my car waiting for the traffic light to change.
- _____ 6. The rainfall this year was abundant the crops will be plentiful.
- _____ 7. Having finished her dinner, Joy sat down to an evening of television.
- _____ 8. America, the greatest country in the world.
- _____ 9. I went in, I bought the gift I drove straight home.
- _____ 10. Let's go!

Identify and correct the fragments and run-ons in the following paragraph.

Autumn is a beautiful time in the city. The weather is changing from the scorching summer heat to the frigid winter cold, the temperature is just right. There are so many things to love about autumn. The colorful leaves, the crisp smell, football. Autumn is my favorite season. Some people call it fall, but I find this to be inaccurate. Although the leaves fall. I feel very alive. Autumn also provides great time for reflection I think about what I have accomplished so far this year. I usually do this on long walks outside. Because I may not be outside for very long during the winter. The cold keeps me bundled up on the couch. Clinging to my television remote. But the cool autumn air on my skin and looking up at the sun as the leaves rattle in the breeze. Autumn has a special place in my heart, I enjoy every minute of it I can.

Table of Subordinating Conjunctions

Additional	Opposite of expected	Contrast/Opposite	Illustrate/Show	The Same/Similar
And Furthermore Moreover Also In addition	Although Though Even though Nevertheless Ever so Nonetheless	While Whereas Though In contrast On the contrary On the other hand Instead However Still Otherwise	For example To illustrate For instance To demonstrate	Just as Similarly Likewise In the same way

Condition	Time Words	Results/Consequences	Restate
If Even If Unless Whether	Before After While Until Previously Meanwhile After that Next Since then	Because Since Now that	That is to say In other words In fact

Truman College Writing Center
Workshop Lesson: Fixing Fragments & Run-Ons
Practice Activity ANSWER KEY

Remember a complete sentence must have a:

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In the below sentences, identify if the sentence is a run-on (RO), a fragment (F), or complete (C).

- F 1. The man that I saw yesterday.
- RO 2. He is not an exceptional student, he is only average.
- C 3. To know everything is quite impossible.
- F 4. Because I have no time.
- F 5. Sitting in my car waiting for the traffic light to change.
- RO 6. The rainfall this year was abundant the crops will be plentiful.
- C 7. Having finished her dinner, Joy sat down to an evening of television.
- F 8. America, the greatest country in the world.
- RO 9. I went in, I bought the gift I drove straight home.
- C 10. Let's go!

Identify and correct the fragments and run-ons in the following paragraph.

Autumn is a beautiful time in the city. The weather is changing from the scorching summer heat to the frigid winter **cold, [RO] the** temperature is just right. There are so many things to love about autumn. **The colorful leaves, the crisp smell, football [F].** Autumn is my favorite season. Some people call it fall, but I find this to be inaccurate. Although the leaves fall. I feel very alive. Autumn also provides great time for **reflection [RO] I** think about what I have accomplished so far this year. I usually do this on long walks outside. **Because I may not be outside for very long during the winter [F].** The cold keeps me bundled up on the couch. **Clinging to my television remote [F]. But the cool autumn air on my skin and looking up at the sun as the leaves rattle in the breeze [F].** Autumn has a special place in my **heart, [RO] I** enjoy every minute of it I can.